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Vittoria Colonna Meets Ignatius of Loyola in Philippe de Monte's *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci* (1581)

ABSTRACT In 1581, the Imperial *Kapellmeister* Philippe de Monte published his first book of spiritual madrigals, which he dedicated to the Jesuit superior general Claudio Acquaviva. Laurentius Coteman, a former pupil of Monte's who had become a Jesuit, supplied the poetry, including many texts by Vittoria Colonna. Although Colonna's poems are often associated with reformist theology, Coteman may have interpreted them through the lens of Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, a pivotal text for Jesuit spirituality. Through the appropriate interpretative lens, Monte's musical settings of Colonna's sacred poems were thus able to convey Jesuit spirituality to their performers and listeners.

KEYWORDS Philippe de Monte, Laurentius Coteman, Vittoria Colonna, Ignatius of Loyola, spiritual madrigals, spiritual poetry, Jesuits

ABSTRAKT Vittoria Colonna spotyka Ignacego Loyolę w *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci* (1581) Philippe'a de Monte. W 1581 r. cesarski kapelmistrz Philippe de Monte opublikował swoją pierwszą księgę madrygałów religijnych, którą zadedykował generałowi zakonu jezuitów, Claudiowi Acquavivie. Były uczeń Montego, Laurentius Coteman, który wstąpił do Towarzystwa Jezusowego, odpowiadał za dobór tekstów poetyckich, obejmujących liczne wiersze autorstwa Vittorii Colony. Chociaż poezja Colony bywa często łączona z teologią reformacyjną, Coteman mógł interpretować ją przez pryzmat *Ćwiczeń duchowych* Ignacego Loyoli – tekstu o fundamentalnym znaczeniu dla duchowości jezuickiej. Tym samym, zyskawszy oprawę muzyczną Montego, religijne wiersze Colony mogły służyć jako dźwiękowe nośniki jezuickiej duchowości.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE Philippe de Monte, Laurentius Coteman, Vittoria Colonna, Ignacy Loyola, madrigali spirituali, poezja religijna, jezuiti

On 10 June 1581, Philippe de Monte (1521–1603), *Kapellmeister* at the court of Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (r. 1576–1612), signed the dedicatory letter for *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci*, his first printed collection of polyphonic settings of Italian spiritual poetry.¹ In this letter, Monte gave three reasons for selecting the newly elected superior general of the Society of Jesus, Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615), as dedicatee.² First, Monte explained that he had just finished composing these spiritual madrigals when he learned of Acquaviva's electoral victory. As a token of his satisfaction with this news, Monte decided to dedicate the collection to the new Jesuit superior general. Secondly, the spiritual character of the music's poetry made Acquaviva an ideal choice for dedicatee. According to Monte, music's edifying qualities aligned with the Jesuit goal to bring individuals closer to God and guide them in their pursuit of a virtuous and honourable life. Lastly, Monte also found it necessary to dedicate these spiritual madrigals to the Jesuit superior general, as it was a Jesuit named Lorenzo Cottemanno who supplied him with the poetry to set to music.

Daniele V. Filippi has identified the Jesuit Cottemanno as the Liège-born Laurentius Coteman. He had been a pupil of Monte's at the imperial chapel of Maximilian II (r. 1564–76) in Vienna before joining the Society of Jesus in 1577.³ From a catalogue of the Jesuit Roman province from 1579, Filippi infers that Coteman probably was in Rome when he sent Monte the poetry for *Il primo libro*.⁴ At that time, the Jesuit colleges in Rome – the Roman College, German College and Venerable English College – were developing many musical traditions. On Sundays and feast days, the Mass and Office were celebrated with polyphony. Award ceremonies and solemn celebrations were embellished with a variety of vocal and instrumental music, while college dramas included choruses, and public defences of theses in theology or philosophy featured sung motets and (spiritual) madrigals, often accompanied on the organ. Criticism and concern about these musical practices were often voiced within the Society. The use of liturgical music was therefore regulated and subjected to frequent evaluation to safeguard the spiritual well-being of the congregation. The rectors also

1 For a critical edition of Monte's 1581 book of spiritual madrigals, see Philippus de Monte, *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci*, ed. Piet Nuten, Brussels 1958.

2 For a transcription and translation of the dedicatory letter, see Daniele V. Filippi, "Earthly Music, Interior Hearing, and Celestial Harmonies: Philippe de Monte's First Book of Spiritual Madrigals (1581)", *Journal of the Alamire Foundation* 3 (2011) no. 2, p. 211, <https://doi.org/10.1484/J.JAF.1.102352>.

3 On Laurentius Coteman's biography, see Daniele V. Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits to Send Verses from Rome": The Society's Networks and the European Dissemination of Devotional Music", in: *Exploring Jesuit Distinctiveness: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Ways of Proceeding within the Society of Jesus*, ed. Robert A. Maryks, Boston, Massachusetts 2016, p. 63.

4 Ibid.

monitored recreational music-making by the students in the colleges to prevent the circulation of harmful, lascivious music.⁵

Coteman was likely aware of music's potential harm to the welfare of its performers and listeners, and thus of its necessity to be spiritually edifying. These concerns may have prompted him to send Monte poems on spiritual subjects to set to music. Filippi thus notes that Monte's spiritual madrigals, combining "sophisticated poetry and contrapuntal invention", would have served as "a valid alternative to a more worldly repertoire".⁶ Coteman's Jesuit background may have influenced his poetic choices on a deeper level as well, making him select spiritual poetry that resonated with the Society's spirituality. This article therefore examines whether Coteman's poetic compilation for Monte features texts reflective of Jesuit spirituality. A text central to the Society's spirituality is Ignatius of Loyola's (1491–1556) *Spiritual Exercises* (1548), a collection of primarily meditations, contemplations and different forms of prayer. In these exercises, Loyola sets out the goal of "preparing and making [one] ready to get rid of all disordered affections [...] so that one might seek and find the divine will [...] for the salvation of the soul".⁷ This article therefore explores the possibility of reading three poems from *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci* as resonating with passages from the *Spiritual Exercises*.⁸

In earlier scholarship on Monte's 1581 collection, Filippi's work has focused the most on its Jesuit connection. He has discussed the Society's role in the book's genesis and speculated on its potential performance contexts. Additionally, he has offered a general thematic overview of the poetry, along with brief musical analyses of three spiritual madrigals with texts on musical mysticism.⁹ Among these latter three compositions, *Vorrei l'orecchia haver qui chiusa e sorda* has received more extensive scrutiny from Siegfried Schmalzriedt, who has used it to illustrate the compositional distinctiveness between Monte's motets and spiritual madrigals.¹⁰ Musical style is also central to Walter Pass's proposition that Monte's spiritual madrigal output, including his 1581 collection, is a manifestation of late sixteenth-century musical mannerism at

5 On the uses, regulations and perspectives on music within the Society of Jesus during the sixteenth century, see Frank T. Kennedy, "Jesuits and Music: The European Tradition 1547–1622", University of California 1982 (PhD dissertation), pp. 1–172; Thomas D. Culley and Clement J. McNaspy, "Music and the Early Jesuits (1540–1565)", *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 40 (1971), pp. 213–45.

6 D.V. Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits", p. 77.

7 Michael Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises: Text and Commentary. A Handbook for Retreat Directors*, Leominster 2016, p. 1.

8 A similar case can be made for five other poems from *Il primo libro*, which are discussed in the author's forthcoming doctoral dissertation.

9 See D.V. Filippi, "Earthly Music"; D.V. Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits"; Daniele V. Filippi, "Polyphonic Meditations for 'Miserable Times': Music and Devotion in the Spiritual Madrigals of Philippe de Monte", *De musica disserenda* 20 (2024) nos. 1–2, pp. 59–82, <https://doi.org/10.3986/dmd20.1-2.03>.

10 See Siegfried Schmalzriedt, "Philippe de Montes geistliche Madrigale *Vorrei l'orecchia haver* und *Amor alza le voci*", in: *Die Wiener Hofmusikkapelle III*, ed. Edward D. Sebastian, Vienna 2011, pp. 57–72.

the Habsburg court in Prague.¹¹ The studies by Schmalzriedt and Pass, however, are less concerned with the book's Jesuit connection. By focusing on the collection's poetic content and reading it through the lens of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, this article therefore expands the scholarship on *Il primo libro*'s Jesuit affiliation. Furthermore, it considers how the poems – with their Ignatian connotations and sophisticated musical settings by Monte – found a receptive audience at the imperial court of Rudolf II. There is, in fact, documentary evidence suggesting that they were performed in this particular context. In this way, the article also contributes to research by Katherine S. Powers,¹² Alexander J. Fisher,¹³ and Alexandra Ziane¹⁴ on the late sixteenth-century spiritual madrigal as a vehicle of Jesuit spirituality.

The methodological approach taken in here is based on that of Fisher in his reading of Orlando di Lasso's (1532–94) *Lagrime di San Pietro* (1595). In that collection, Lasso sets twenty stanzas on the aftermath of Peter's threefold denial of Christ drawn from Luigi Tansillo's (1510–68) homonymous poetic cycle. The collection concludes with a Latin motet voicing the condemnation by Christ crucified. Fisher interprets the poetry's narrative structure, combined with Lasso's musical choices regarding overall organization and style, as reflecting the contemplation of sin outlined in the "First Week" of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*.¹⁵ Unlike Lasso's *Lagrime*, however, Monte's 1581 collection of spiritual madrigals is not conceived as a cycle. The poetry addresses diverse subjects and lacks an overarching narrative. Furthermore, the music is not organized according to a modal scheme like that of the *Lagrime*. Therefore, this article does not address Monte's book in its entirety and does not assert that all of its poetry can be approached through the lens of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Instead, it proposes a reading of the texts of three spiritual madrigals set against the background of specific, short passages from the "Second Week" of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

The poetry in *Il primo libro* consists exclusively of spiritual sonnets, with no mention of the poets. Previous scholarship by Piet Nuten and Filippi, however, has identified poems by Laura Battiferri degli Ammannati (1523–89) and Vittoria Colonna (1490–1547) in Monte's 1581 book.¹⁶ This article focuses on three spiritual madri-

11 See Walter Pass, "Die originelle Ansicht des Unendlichen: Die Madrigali spirituali von Philipp de Monte und der Manierismus", in: *Colloquium Musica Bohemica et Europaea: Brno 1970*, ed. Rudolf Pečman, Brno 1972, pp. 145–57.

12 Katherine S. Powers, "Jesuit Patronage of the Spiritual Madrigal", *Discoveries: South-Central Renaissance Conference News and Notes* 18 (2001) no. 1, pp. 3–14.

13 Alexander J. Fisher, "'Per mia particolare devotione': Orlando di Lasso's *Lagrime di San Pietro* and Catholic Spirituality in Counter-Reformation Munich", *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 132 (2007) no. 2, pp. 167–220, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrma/fkm006>.

14 Alexandra Ziane, *Amor divino – amor profane: Liebe in geistlicher Musik und bildender Kunst in Rom um 1600*, Paderborn 2011, pp. 117–32.

15 A.J. Fisher, "'Per mia particolare devotione'", pp. 172–80.

16 Piet Nuten, *De "Madrigali spirituali" van Filip de Monte (1521–1603)*, Brussels 1958, pp. 155–56; D.V. Filippi, "Earthly Music", p. 215.

gals with texts by Colonna, selected for their treatment of unique themes within the context of the collection. Colonna is one of the most renowned poets from the cinquecento.¹⁷ Scholarship on her often emphasizes her involvement with the *spirituali*, a diverse group of intellectuals centred around the Spanish exiled theologian Juan de Valdès (1490–1541). Valdès advocated for ecclesiastical and theological reform, proposing, among other things, to limit the church's role in the believer's spiritual welfare and to accept the doctrine of "Justification by Faith" (*sola fide*). Although his views coincided in many respects with those of the northern reformers, Valdès advocated for the preservation of papal authority and condemned Martin Luther's (1483–1546) decision to separate from the Catholic Church.¹⁸ Because of her close affiliation with the *spirituali*, Colonna came under suspicion of heresy by the Roman Inquisition after her death, which possibly contributed to the decline of her work's popularity after the 1560s.¹⁹ However, the posthumous controversy surrounding Colonna did not prevent the Jesuit Coteman from selecting many of her spiritual sonnets to send to Monte, as the majority of the texts in the 1581 book are by her. While this article does not claim that Colonna was directly influenced by the *Spiritual Exercises* when writing these poems, it suggests that Coteman may have selected them based on his own Jesuit interpretation.

After his 1581 collection, Monte composed four additional books of spiritual madrigals: *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a sei voci* in 1583, *Il secondo libro de madrigali spirituali a sei & sette voci* in 1589, *Il terzo libro de madrigali spirituali a sei voci* in 1590 and *Eccellenze di Maria Vergine [...] a cinque voci* in 1593.²⁰ Except for the *Eccellenze*, a Jesuit connection runs as a common thread through these collections of music.²¹ This article first highlights the Jesuit links of the 1583, 1589 and 1590 books. An overview of the Jesuit affiliations of the two identified poets in Monte's 1581 collection – Laura Battiferri degli Ammannati and Vittoria Colonna – then follows. Finally, the three sonnets from the 1581 book are examined through the Ignatian lens, followed by a consideration of their reception through Monte's music at the imperial court.

17 The literature on Vittoria Colonna is vast. On Colonna's biography, see Ramie Targoff, *Renaissance Woman: The Life of Vittoria Colonna*, New York 2018. For the most recent contribution on her literary output, see *Vittoria Colonna: Poetry, Religion, Art, Impact*, eds. Virginia Cox and Shannon McHugh, Amsterdam 2022; *A Companion to Vittoria Colonna*, eds. Abigail Brundin, Tatiana Crivelli and Maria S. Sapegno, Leiden 2016. On Colonna's involvement with the Jesuits, see Veronica Copello, "Nuovi elementi su Vittoria Colonna i cappuccini e i gesuiti", *Lettere Italiane* 69 (2017) no. 2, pp. 320–27.

18 Massimo Firpo, *Valdesiani e spirituali: studi sul Cinquecento religioso italiano*, Rome, pp. 31–32. On Colonna's involvement with the *spirituali*, see Abigail Brundin, *Vittoria Colonna and the Spiritual Poetics of the Italian Reformation*, London 2008.

19 A. Brundin, *Vittoria Colonna and the Spiritual Poetics*, pp. 37–66.

20 The *Eccellenze* are an integral setting of Orazio Guarguante's homonymous poetic cycle in *ottava rima*.

21 On the exceptional position of the *Eccellenze* in Monte's spiritual madrigal output, see D.V. Filippi, "Polyphonic Meditations for 'Miserable Times'", pp. 67–69.

PHILIPPE DE MONTE'S BOOKS OF SPIRITUAL MADRIGALS AND THE JESUITS

When he published *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci* in 1581, Philippe de Monte had already served as chapel master at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor for about thirteen years.²² Monte – most likely a native of the Flemish city of Mechelen – had been employed in several European centres before succeeding Jacobus Vaet (1529–67) as imperial chapel master at the court of Maximilian II in Vienna in 1568. He remained in the post when Rudolf II ascended the imperial throne in 1576 after Maximilian's death.²³ For reasons still unclear, Rudolf refused to let Monte retire, and the composer held the position of imperial chapel master until his death in 1603 at the age of 81.²⁴

Monte left an enormous corpus of both sacred and secular music. Most of his music was published and probably composed during his more than thirty-year tenure as imperial chapel master. He is the most prolific composer of madrigals known today, with thirty-nine books printed between 1554 and 1603, totalling over 1,200 pieces of music.²⁵ These include his five collections of spiritual madrigals, comprising 144 musical works and making him the most prolific composer of spiritual madrigals.²⁶

In addition to his 1581 collection, Monte's books of spiritual madrigals from 1583, 1589 and 1590 can also be linked to the Society of Jesus, as noted earlier. Some of these books, however, are more intimately associated with the Jesuits than others. Monte dedicated *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a sei voci* (1583) to Hans Fugger (1531–89), who acted as a patron during Monte's residence in Antwerp in the 1550s. In addition to being avid patrons and enthusiasts of music, the Fugger family from Augsburg also staunchly supported the Jesuits.²⁷ Two poems set to music in this collection – Colonna's *Vergine pura che de'raggi ardenti* and Gabriele Fiamma's (1533–85) *Son questi i chiari lumi, onde sereno* – also feature in contemporary collections of catechetical songs issued by the Jesuits of Genoa and Turin, respectively. According to Filippi, these concordances may suggest that, like the 1581 book, the Jesuits also

22 For Monte's biography and work, see Georges van Doorslaer, *La vie et les oeuvres de Philippe de Monte*, Hildesheim 1921; Thorsten Hindrichs, *Philipp de Monte (1521–1603): Komponist, Kapellmeister, Korrespondent*, Göttingen 2002.

23 T. Hindrichs, *Philipp de Monte (1521–1603)*, pp. 92–111.

24 *Ibid.*, 112–38.

25 *Ibid.*, 173–74.

26 For an overview of Monte's oeuvre, see Robert Lindell and Brian Mann's, "Monte, Philippe de [Filippo di]", in: *Grove Music Online*, published online 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40085>. For a general survey of Monte's books of spiritual madrigals, see P. Nuten, *De "Madrigali spirituali"*.

27 Mark Häberlein, *The Fuggers of Augsburg: Pursuing Wealth and Honor in Renaissance Germany*, Charlottesville 2012, pp. 192–93. On the Fugger family's musical interests, see Franz Krautwurst, "Die Fugger und die Musik", in: *Die Fugger und die Musik: "Lautenschlagen lernen und lieben": Anton Fugger zum 500. Geburtstag*, ed. Renate Eikermann, Augsburg 1993, pp. 41–48.

furnished Monte with sacred poetry for his second collection of spiritual madrigals.²⁸ Filippi's theory becomes more compelling considering that Colonna's poetry comprises a significant portion of the texts set to music in both the 1581 and 1583 books of spiritual madrigals.

Il secondo libro de madrigali spirituali a sei e sette voci (1589) has a clear Jesuit stamp, as it features a seven-part musical setting of "Virgo vetustis edita regibus". This neo-Latin poem was written by the famous and influential Jesuit Peter Canisius (1521–97) and concludes his book *De Maria virgine incomparabili et Dei genitricis sacrosancta* (1577).²⁹ Analogous to Monte's 1581 book, the Jesuits are explicitly mentioned on the title page and in the dedicatory letter of *Il terzo libro de madrigali spirituali a sei voci* (1590). The title page states that the collection was conceived to celebrate the dedication of the Jesuit church of St Michael in Munich, the construction of which was financed by Duke William V of Bavaria (r. 1579–97).³⁰ In the dedicatory letter, it becomes clear that it was a Jesuit named Hieronimo Ferricelli who provided Monte with the spiritual poetry to set to music.³¹

THE JESUITS AND THE POETS OF *IL PRIMO LIBRO DE MADRIGALI SPIRITUALI*
A CINQUE VOCI

Although the names of the poets are missing in the original prints of Monte's first four books of spiritual madrigals, it is possible to attribute nine out of fifteen sonnets in Monte's 1581 collection through comparison with literary sources. Eight of these are by Vittoria Colonna, one is by Laura Battiferri degli Ammannati, and the remaining six are still anonymous.³² Apart from their literary talent, Battiferri and Colonna were also admired by their contemporaries for their religious zeal. Of particular importance for this article is their affiliation with the Society of Jesus.

After the death of her first husband in 1549, Battiferri married the sculptor and architect Bartolomeo Ammannati (1511–92), with whom she actively supported the Jesuits.³³ The couple contributed financially to the construction of the Jesuit church of San Giovannino in Florence, where the first mass was celebrated in 1584.³⁴ Amman-

28 D.V. Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits", pp. 66–67.

29 Ibid., pp. 70–71.

30 The title page reads: *Il Terzo Libro de Madrigali Spirituali à Sei Voci, fatti nella dedicatione della Chiesa de' Padri del Giesu in Monaco dedicata à San Michele Archangelo; dal Serenissimo Duca Guglielmo di Bauiera, &c.*

31 D.V. Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits", pp. 71–73.

32 D.V. Filippi, "Earthly Music", pp. 216–18.

33 Laura Battiferri's first husband was the Bolognese organist Vittorio Sereni, who died in 1549. For a biographical overview of Battiferri, see Laura Battiferri degli Ammannati, *Laura Battiferri and her Literary Circle: An Anthology*, ed. and transl. Victoria Kirkham, Chicago 2007, pp. 1–54.

34 Victoria Kirkham, "Laura Battiferri degli Ammannati benefattrice dei gesuiti fiorentini", *Quaderni storici* 35 (2000) no. 2, p. 346.

nati also designed the church and supervised its construction.³⁵ The couple's support for the Society of Jesus became evident as they declared the Florentine Jesuits of San Giovannino as their heirs, after not producing any children. Furthermore, Battiferri's sympathy for the Jesuits is expressed in her poetry as well. Her sonnet *Sotto l'invitta e militante insegna* portrays the Jesuits as brave warriors engaged in battle with Christ's enemies, while in *Duce sovran di quella saggia e forte* she directs her laudatory verses to the Jesuit superior general Claudio Acquaviva.³⁶ Therefore, the fact that Monte's 1581 collection opens with a sonnet specifically authored by Battiferri – in this case, *Se gli occhi inalzo a rimirar talhora* – aligns well with the book's dedication to the Jesuit superior general.

Similar to Battiferri, Vittoria Colonna was widowed at the relatively young age of thirty-four, when her husband, Francesco Ferrante D'Avalos (1489–1525), succumbed to injuries sustained in battle.³⁷ Colonna never remarried, and she immortalized her late husband in her first substantial poetic corpus, now known as the *Rime amorose*.³⁸ According to the contemporary literary figure Carlo Gualteruzzi (1500–77), Colonna began writing exclusively spiritual verses in 1536.³⁹ There is evidence that she encountered many Jesuits and sympathized with the Society of Jesus during the last decade of her life. For example, in his early history of the Society, the Jesuit Simão Rodrigues de Azevedo (1510–79) writes that, prior to the Society's papal recognition in 1540, he and his fellow Jesuit Claude Le Jay (1504–52) met Colonna in Ferrara in 1537. Impressed by their religious fervour, the poet ensured that these Jesuits were properly fed, and comfortably but modestly housed. Moreover, Veronica Copello suggests that Colonna and Loyola corresponded regularly, and may even have met each other in person, based on an extant letter from Colonna to Loyola, in which the poet writes in a strikingly familiar register.⁴⁰ In 1543, Colonna also joined the Compagnia della Grazia, which managed and supported the Casa Santa Marta, established by Loyola to aid repentant prostitutes. Furthermore, in 1545, Colonna repeatedly asked Loyola to send a Jesuit to preach at the convent of Sant'Anna de' Funerari in Rome, where she spent her final years.⁴¹

35 D.V. Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits", p. 65.

36 V. Kirkham, "Laura Battiferra degli Ammannati", pp. 341–44. For an edited Italian version with English translation of these sonnets, see L. Battiferra degli Ammannati, *Laura Battiferra and her Literary Circle*.

37 Vittoria Colonna, *Sonnet for Michelangelo: A Bilingual Edition*, ed. and transl. Abigail Brundin, Chicago 2005, pp. 6–10. For a comparison between Battiferri and Colonna, see A. Brundin, *Vittoria Colonna and the Spiritual Poetics*, pp. 184–89.

38 Anna Wainwright, "Outdoing Colonna: Widowhood Poetry in the Late Cinquecento", in: *Vittoria Colonna: Poetry, Religion, Art, Impact*, eds. Virginia Cox and Shannon McHugh, Amsterdam 2022, pp. 96–97.

39 Tatiana Crivelli, "The Print Tradition of Vittoria Colonna's *Rime*", in: *A Companion to Vittoria Colonna*, Leiden 2016, p. 101.

40 V. Copello, "Nuovi elementi su Vittoria Colonna", pp. 321–22.

41 Ibid., pp. 320–23.

Apart from her association with the Jesuits toward the end of her life, Colonna is primarily known for her involvement with figures from the *spirituali*, such as the humanist Pietro Carnesecchi (1508–67). The Roman Inquisition viewed Carnesecchi with suspicion and tried him three times on charges of heresy.⁴² During his final trial in 1566–67, which led to his execution, Carnesecchi attested to Colonna's sympathy for the *spirituali* and believed that some of her poetry resonated with their reformed spirituality.⁴³ Furthermore, the accused claimed that Colonna had acquired works by foreign reformers, including Luther. According to Abigail Brundin, Colonna's posthumous involvement in this trial may explain the decline in the publication of her works during this period, as the authorities may have suppressed further editions, or publishers may have refrained from engaging with the work of an author suspected of heresy.⁴⁴ It is therefore striking that the religious controversy surrounding Colonna did not prevent Coteman, as a member of a religious order very loyal to the Catholic Church, from selecting many of her spiritual sonnets for Monte's 1581 collection, which eventually would be dedicated to the Jesuit superior general. If all the poems in this book are indeed derived from Coteman's compilation, as Monte states in the dedicatory letter, then that would indicate the circulation and appreciation of Colonna's poetry within Jesuit circles.

Filippi observes that "the texts that Laurentius Coteman sent to Monte very closely follow the versions of Colonna's manuscript for Michelangelo [...] rather than the 'definitive' versions published a year before Colonna's death as *Le rime spirituali*".⁴⁵ The manuscript in question is a collection of spiritual sonnets that Colonna gifted Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564) probably in 1540. Brundin suggests that the majority of these poems are from Colonna's later stage of poetic production, as only seventeen had appeared in print when Michelangelo received the manuscript.⁴⁶ According to Brundin, the sonnets contain many references to reformed spirituality. In a letter to Colonna, probably written around the same time, Michelangelo states that he initially wanted to reciprocate certain "things" (*cose*) she had gifted him but decided not to, recalling that God's grace cannot be bought and that its recipients should gladly accept it.⁴⁷ Although Michelangelo does not specify Colonna's gifts, Brundin suggests that these may have included the manuscript of spiritual sonnets. She then interprets Colonna's act of giving the manuscript to Michelangelo also from a reformist perspective: just as Christians, through faith alone (*sola fide*), should happily accept God's grace even when they feel unworthy of it, so too did Michelangelo gratefully accept Colonna's gifts without reciprocation.⁴⁸

42 A. Brundin, *Vittoria Colonna and the Spiritual Poetics*, pp. 42–43.

43 Ibid., pp. 48–49.

44 Ibid., p. 73.

45 D.V. Filippi, "Earthly Music", p. 219.

46 V. Colonna, *Sonnets for Michelangelo*, p. 33.

47 Ibid., p. 32 n. 106.

48 Ibid., pp. 26–33.

Copello suggests that the manuscript, or at least a copy of it, started circulating among the Roman Jesuits after Michelangelo's death in 1564, which would explain how these spiritual sonnets later came into the hands of Coteman.⁴⁹ There are two reasons to believe that the artist was in close contact with the Society of Jesus, which would explain the possible introduction of the manuscript in Jesuit circles.⁵⁰ First, Michelangelo agreed in 1554 to design the new Jesuit church of the Gesù in Rome, officially refusing payment for the commission and acting only out of his love for God.⁵¹ Secondly, Emily Fenichel convincingly argues that one of Michelangelo's late drawings, *Christ Appearing to His Mother*, testifies to his familiarity with Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*. In this drawing, the resurrected Christ appears to Mary, an extra-biblical subject rarely used in Italian art. Loyola mentions this scene in his *Spiritual Exercises* as an event worthy of contemplation, although he admits that it is not included in Scripture. Fenichel therefore concludes that Michelangelo's inspiration for the drawing can be explained through his familiarity with the *Spiritual Exercises*.⁵²

The question, however, remains as to why Coteman selected poetry from an author who, albeit posthumously, was regarded with suspicion by ecclesiastical authorities. One possible explanation would be that Coteman did not know who authored the poetry he was planning to send to Monte. Given the evidence for the circulation among the Roman Jesuits of Colonna's manuscript of spiritual sonnets for Michelangelo, however, it is hard to imagine that the fact she wrote these poems remained unnoticed to Coteman. Coteman's background may have led him to read this spiritual poetry not in the context of reformed spirituality but from a Jesuit perspective.⁵³ To illustrate this alternative approach, which coexists with Brundin's reformist interpretation, the following section examines three of Colonna's sonnets featured in Monte's 1581 book of spiritual madrigals through the lens of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*.

IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA'S *SPIRITUAL EXERCISES* AND *IL PRIMO LIBRO DE MADRIGALI SPIRITUALI*
A CINQUE VOCI

The incipits from *Il primo libro* are given below in Table 1. The three sonnets discussed in detail are indicated by spaced lettering. Like many of the poems in the manuscript for Michelangelo, all three poems were unpublished when Colonna

49 V. Copello, "Nuovi elementi su Vittoria Colonna", p. 326.

50 On the impact of Jesuit spirituality in Michelangelo's work, see Emily Fenichel, *Michelangelo's Art of Devotion in the Age of Reform*, Cambridge 2023, pp. 122–31.

51 Fenichel observes that Michelangelo had also accepted the commission for St Peter's solely out of his love of God, but in reality he was handsomely paid for it. See *ibid.*, p. 125.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 130.

53 For example, compare the Ignatian approach to Colonna's *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente* in the present article with Brundin's interpretation of the poem from a Valdesian perspective. See V. Colonna, *Sonnets for Michelangelo*, pp. 44–45.

gifted the manuscript in 1540.⁵⁴ The first two sonnets, entitled *L'alto consiglio, alhor ch'èlegger volse* and *Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese*, are the only Marian texts in Monte's 1581 collection. Analogous to the second book of spiritual madrigals from 1583, these Marian poems are conspicuously grouped together at the beginning of the collection. The third sonnet, entitled *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente*, is positioned approximately halfway through the book and testifies to a deep desire to perceive Christ with almost all the senses. Because of its strong emphasis on sensuous experiences, *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente* stands out thematically from the other sonnets in the collection.

Table 1. Poems from *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci* (1581) in the original order (incipits are taken from Nuten's edition of Monte's 1581 collection of spiritual madrigals)

INCIPIT	POET
<i>Se gli occhi inalzo a rimirar talhora</i>	Laura Battiferri degli Ammannati
<i>L'alto consiglio, alhor ch'èlegger volse</i>	Vittoria Colonna
<i>Mentre io sciolto correa da me lontano</i>	Anonymous
<i>Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese</i>	Vittoria Colonna
<i>Signor chi n'esporrà gli alti tuoi modi</i>	Anonymous
<i>Quando il turbato mar s'alza, e circonda</i>	Vittoria Colonna
<i>Su l'alte eterne ruote il piè fermasti</i>	Vittoria Colonna
<i>Se'l breve suon, che sol quest'aer frale</i>	Vittoria Colonna
<i>Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente</i>	Vittoria Colonna
<i>Puri innocenti, il vostra invito e forte</i>	Vittoria Colonna
<i>Vorrei l'orecchia aver qui chiusa e sorda</i>	Vittoria Colonna
<i>Benché da dotta man toccata sia</i>	Anonymous
<i>Hoggi Signor non con molt'oro et ostro</i>	Anonymous
<i>Or che non più di te né d'altro calmi</i>	Anonymous
<i>Quand'io scorgo i larvati basilischi</i>	Anonymous

Before reading these poems through the Ignatian lens, it is imperative to consider the goal and structural organization of the *Spiritual Exercises*. When Loyola was composing his *Spiritual Exercises* during the 1520s and 1530s, spiritual examination for self-improvement was already a firmly established practice in monastic environments and semi-religious communities. This practice was typified by reading, memorizing and contemplating Christ's life or humanity's history. Loyola drew heavily on late

⁵⁴ The sonnets under consideration in this article were first published by Vincenzo Valgrisi in 1548. See the database *RePIM – Repertorio della Poesia Italiana in Musica, 1500–1700*.

medieval spiritual exercises and meditations, including Ludolf of Saxony's (c.1295–1378) *Vita Christi* and Thomas à Kempis's (c.1380–1471) *Imitatio Christi* (c.1420). What primarily distinguishes Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* from its predecessors is its *modus operandi*. As medieval spiritual exercises are intended to be read repeatedly by the exercitant, Loyola instead designates a director to explain and instruct the exercises, as outlined in the "Annotations" of the *Spiritual Exercises*.⁵⁵ The director guides the exercitant, while the exercitant in turn must obey the director. At the same time, the director is both forbidden to impose his will on the exercitant, and is expected to observe Loyola's instructions very closely. Following this procedure, exercitants ultimately attain control over their affections, embracing a life in servitude to God. Moreover, while most medieval spiritual exercises were primarily conceived for a learned and thus elite audience, Loyola wanted his *Spiritual Exercises* to reach all layers of society. By introducing a director who read out and explained the *Spiritual Exercises* to the exercitant, literacy was no prerequisite for Loyola's intended audience, although Loyola notes that the exercitant's social background could determine the extent to which he or she could progress through the work.⁵⁶ In this regard, Moshe Sluhovsky refers to a specific passage from the Society's constitutions, officially approved in 1558, which states that the majority of people should only complete the first stage, or "First Week", of the *Spiritual Exercises*.⁵⁷ Although Loyola strongly advises following the entire *Spiritual Exercises* during a four-week retreat, he also allows the director to limit himself to a curtailed version, accommodating the exercitant's personal situation.⁵⁸ Loyola's model, which in practice may vary according to the exercitant's needs and predispositions, corresponds to the structural organization of the exercises in four parts.

I provide the text and translation of Colonna's *L'alto consiglio, alhor ch'èlegger volve, Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese* and *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente* below, clarifying their language and references for modern-day readers. Simultaneously interspersed are brief digressions on Monte's musical settings of discussed textual passages. In the following discussion, I then clarify the parallels between the poems and Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*.

The first Marian sonnet in *Il primo libro*, entitled *L'alto consiglio, alhor ch'èlegger volve*, reads as follows:

55 M. Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, pp. 1–21.

56 Moshe Sluhovsky, "St. Ignatius of Loyola's 'Spiritual Exercises' and their Contribution to Modern Introspective Subjectivity", *The Catholic Historical Review* 99 (2013) no. 4, pp. 649–66.

57 Ibid., p. 664.

58 Ibid., p. 663. Many of these ideas can be found in the "Annotations" preceding Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*. See, M. Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, pp. 1–21.

*L'alto consiglio, alor ch'èlegger volse
Madre a Dio in terra, con divina cura,
Vedendo già cader nostra natura,
Lei sola tenne e'n grembo a sé l'accolse.*

*Dal giusto sdegno suo colui la tolse,
Che sol forma le leggi e'l ciel misura,
E fuor d'ombra d'error, candida e pura,
Dal nodo universal non mai la sciolse.*

*Perché non la legò, né meno in forse
La lasciò di cader, ma caro in mano
Sempre serbò quel bel cristallo intero,*

*E per far l'ordin suo più dritto il torse
Per altro solo a lui noto sentero,
E lo condusse al camin nostro umano.⁵⁹*

The holy wisdom, when he wished to elect
A mother for God on Earth, with divine care,
Seeing that our nature was already fallen,
Selected her alone and gathered her into his lap.

He saved her from his righteous condemnation,
He who alone creates laws and lays out the heavens,
And free from any shadow of sin, honest and pure,
He never unbound her from the universal knot.

Because he never bound her or
Let her fall, but lovingly he kept that beautiful crystal
Always whole and sheltered in his palm,

And to make his way straighter, he took it
From another path known only to him
And let it to our own mortal road.⁶⁰

Following Brundin's reading, the quatrains of this sonnet allude to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, which asserts that God purified the Virgin Mary from original sin prior to her birth. According to this doctrine, Mary, through God's grace, occupies a privileged position among humankind.⁶¹ The doctrine of the Immaculate

59 I use Brundin's modern Italian editions and English translations of Colonna's spiritual sonnets for Michelangelo. See V. Colonna, *Sonnets for Michelangelo*. Brundin's editions may differ slightly from those in Monte's 1581 collection of spiritual madrigals.

60 Ibid., pp. 120–23.

61 Ibid., p. 164 n. 223.

Conception only became a Catholic dogma in 1854 with the papal bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, issued by Pope Pius IX (r. 1846–78). In the sixteenth century, however, theological debates and polemics surrounding the doctrine were already ongoing. Among its fierce opponents were the Dominicans, while the Franciscans were one of its primary defenders.⁶² Like the Franciscans, the Jesuits also became propagators of the Immaculate Conception.⁶³ Among the doctrine's influential Jesuits adherents Wenceslaus Sebastian counts Peter Canisius, Francisco de Toledo (1532–96), Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621), Gregory of Valencia (1550–1603), Gabriel Vásquez (c.1549–1604) and Francisco Suárez (1548–1617). The Society of Jesus officially embraced the Immaculate Conception in 1593.⁶⁴ According to Emidio Campi, Colonna is normally cautious in both her poetry and prose when voicing an opinion on the Immaculate Conception.⁶⁵ It is, therefore, striking that Colonna makes numerous allusions to the doctrine in *L'alto consiglio, alhor ch'iegger volve*, which must, in turn, have attracted the Jesuit Coteman's attention when he was selecting the poetry for *Il primo libro*.

In the first quatrain, Colonna refers to the Immaculate Conception by mentioning humanity's fallen nature ("cader nostra natura") and the exceptional favour that Mary enjoys from God ("Lei sola tenne e'n grembo a sé l'accolse"). Monte highlights the fall of man musically through an instance of word-painting (see Ex. 1).⁶⁶ On the second syllable of "cader", both *quinto* and *alto* feature a descending pentachord from e' to a, while the *basso* simultaneously falls downward by a fifth to F (bars 12–13). Monte then ensures that Mary's uniqueness, depicted in the fourth line ("Lei sola tenne e'n grembo a sé l'accolse"), contrasts musically with humanity's sinful nature. He achieves this by separating the setting of this line from the preceding passage through a strong cadence on D – the piece's *finalis* – which also serves as the madrigal's first musical caesura (bar 14), and by infusing this section with upward melodic movements in all voices, symbolizing an ascent towards heaven (bars 15–17). Furthermore, the *canto* and *basso* present these ascending figures within a *molle* hexachord. Lionel Pike notes that the soft hexachord is "particularly appropriate for the illustration of sweetness or similar ideas".⁶⁷ In this way, Monte's music conveys both the Virgin's holiness and loveliness.

62 For an historical overview of the debates and polemics surrounding the Immaculate Conception from the early fifteenth century until the middle of the sixteenth century, see Thomas M. Izbicki, "The Immaculate Conception and Ecclesiastical Politics from the Council of Basel to the Council of Trent: The Dominicans and Their Foes", *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte – Archive for Reformation History* 96 (2005) no. 1, pp. 145–70, <https://doi.org/10.14315/arg-2005-0108>.

63 Markus Friedrich, *The Jesuits: A History*, transl. John N. Dillon, Princeton 2016, pp. 168–69.

64 Wenceslaus Sebastian, "The Controversy after Scotus to 1900", in: *The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception: History and Significance*, ed. Edward Dennis Sebastian, Notre Dame, Indiana 1958, p. 242.

65 Emidio Campi, "Vittoria Colonna and Bernardino Ochino", in: *A Companion to Vittoria Colonna*, eds. Abigail Brundin, Tatian Crivelli and Maria S. Sapegno, Leiden 2016, pp. 391–98.

66 For Monte's use of word-painting in his secular madrigal output, see Brian Mann, *The Secular Madrigals of Filippo di Monte, 1521–1603*, Ann Arbor 1983.

67 Lionel Pike, *Hexachords in Late-Renaissance Music*, Aldershot 1997, p. 32.

Ex. 1. Philippe de Monte, *L'alto consiglio, alhor ch'egger volse* from *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci* (1581), bars 12–17, author's own transcription. C = *canto*, Q = *quinto*, A = *alto*, T = *tenore*, B = *basso*

The musical score is for five voices: Canto (C), Quinto (Q), Alto (A), Tenore (T), and Basso (B). The lyrics are in Italian. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (bars 12-17) features a 'Caesura' at bar 16. The second system (bars 15-17) features 'Ascending figures' highlighted in yellow. Annotations include 'Descending pentachord' in green and 'Fall of a fifth' in blue.

System 1 (Bars 12-17):

- C:** gia ca - der no - stra na - tu - ra Lei
- Q:** 8 gia ca - der no - stra na - tu - ra
- A:** 8 gia ca - der no - stra na - tu - ra
- T:** 8 gia ca - der no - stra na - tu - ra
- B:** 8 gia ca - der no - stra na - tu - ra

System 2 (Bars 15-17):

- C:** so - la ten - ne e in grem-bo a se l'ac - col - se e in grem - bo a
- Q:** Lei so - la ten - ne e in grem-bo a se e in grem-bo a
- A:** Lei so - la ten - ne Lei so - la ten - ne
- T:** Lei so - la ten - ne e in grem-bo a e
- B:** Lei so - la ten - ne Lei so - la ten - ne e in grem-bo a

Colonna extends the allusion to the Virgin's privileged nature in the second quatrain, writing about her exemption from God's condemnation ("Dal giusto sdegno suo colui la tolse") and being untainted by sin ("E fuor d'ombra d'error, candida e pura"). The mention of "the universal knot" ("nodo universal") in the final line of the second quatrain is an additional reference to Mary's immaculateness. Originally

introduced by the church father Irenaeus (c.130–202), the image of the knot refers to Adam's fall and thus also humanity's sinful nature.⁶⁸ Applying this imagery to the last line of the second quatrain, Brundin concludes that "Mary was never unbound because she was never bound, having been born immaculate".⁶⁹ By setting the last line to music twice ("Dal nodo universal non mai la sciolse"), Monte reiterates Colonna's words depicting Mary as unbound to the universal knot of sin, thereby underscoring both musically and textually the Virgin's purity. Repeating the final line, or at least a segment of it, is a musical technique that recurs throughout *Il primo libro* and is, in fact, common in sixteenth-century vocal music. As the spiritual madrigals in this collection are all divided into two parts – reflecting the sonnet's structural division into two quatrains and two tercets – these reiterations create a climactic effect, announcing the end of each part. In the context of *L'alto consiglio, alhor ch'èlegger volve*, this musical device serves two functions, both signalling the end of the first part and emphasizing the Immaculate Conception, to which the sonnet has already alluded multiple times.

The second Marian sonnet, titled *Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese* and separated from *L'alto consiglio, alhor ch'èlegger volve* by an anonymous sonnet on worldly fallacy in *Il primo libro*, reads as follows:

*Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese
Divino in terra, e quello in ciel l'accende;
Quella stessa bontà chiara or comprende
L'intelletto, che in parte già comprese.*

*Le parole, che pria l'orecchia intese,
Per celeste armonia l'anima intende;
Con Dio immortal quel grado ora in ciel prende
Di Madre che con l'uom qui mortal prese.*

*Cangiar obietto o variar pensero
Uopo non le fu mai, perché i bei sensi
Fosser da la ragion ripresi e vinti;*

*Ch'infìn dal primo giorno solo al vero
Aperse gli occhi, e li spirti ebbe accensi
Sempre d'un foco ripurgati e cinti.*

One holy fire alone inflamed Our Lady
Here on Earth, and the same one warms her in Heaven:

68 Maria del Fiat Miola, "Mary as Un-tier and Tier of Knots: Irenaeus Reinterpreted", *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 24 (2016) no. 3, p. 342, <https://doi.org/10.1353/earl.2016.0029>.

69 V. Colonna, *Sonnets for Michelangelo*, p. 164 n. 224.

And her mind now understands that clear and wondrous bounty,
Which in part it already perceived.

The words, which her ears heard on Earth,
Her soul now understands in their celestial harmonies:
And now she assumes her role in heaven as mother
To immortal God, as she was mother to the mortal man.

She never felt the need to alter her path or
Change her mind for her clear senses
To be sustained and overcome by reason

For from the first day she opened her eyes
Only to the truth, and she kept her spirit inflamed
By a single fire, purged and protected.⁷⁰

This sonnet contains textual cues referring to two Marian themes, which Colonna combines to create her personal praise of the Virgin. The first theme can be distilled from the second quatrain and the final tercet, where Colonna alludes to the Annunciation from the Gospel of Luke.⁷¹ In the second quatrain, she mentions “the words” that Mary’s “ears heard on Earth” (“Le parole, che pria l’orecchia intese”), and in the final tercet, she writes about the “day she opened her eyes to the truth” (“Ch’infin dal primo giorno sola al vero / Aperse gli occhi”). In Monte’s musical setting, all five voices sing the first of these two lines twice (see Ex. 2). A cadence on A – the piece’s *finalis* – in the upper three voices in bar 19 separates these two statements. In this way, Monte musically emphasizes the moment during the Annunciation when the archangel Gabriel declares to Mary that she will bear the Son of God.

Brundin identifies a second Marian theme in the first quatrain, where Colonna evokes the doctrine of the Assumption of the Virgin. The Assumption is based on apocryphal writings and holds that Mary ascended to heaven as Christ’s bride after her death.⁷² Colonna’s words resonate with the doctrine, as she writes that the “holy fire” that inflamed Mary on Earth now “warms her in Heaven” (“Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese / Divino in terra, e quello in ciel l’accende”). Monte mirrors Mary’s ascent to heaven musically through contrasts in rhythm and vocal register. All five voices proceed with long note values in their lower vocal registers on “Divino in terra” before entering separately with fast-moving figures in the higher registers on “e quello in ciel l’accende”. In the second quatrain, Colonna also alludes to the Assumption, stating that Mary now “assumes her role in heaven as mother to immortal God” (“Con Dio immortal quel grado ora in ciel prende / Di madre”).

70 Ibid., pp. 97–98.

71 See Luke 1:26–38.

72 V. Colonna, *Sonnets for Michelangelo*, p. 157 n. 146.

Ex. 2. Philippe de Monte, *Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese* from *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci* (1581), bars 17–22, author's own transcription. C = *canto*, A = *alto*, Q = *quinto*, T = *tenore*, B = *basso*

17

Repeat

C Le pa-ro-le che pria l'o-rec-chia in-te-se

A Le pa-ro-le che pria l'o-rec-chia in-te-se

Q pre-se Le pa-ro-le che pria l'o-rec-chia in-te-se

T pre-se Le pa-ro-le Le pa-ro-

B Le pa-ro-le Le pa-ro-le Le pa-

20

C Le pa-ro-le che pria l'o-rec-chia in-te-se

A Le pa-ro-le che pria l'o-rec-chia in-te-se che pria l'o-rec-chia in-te-se

Q che pria l'o-rec-chia in-te-se che pria l'o-rec-chia in-te-se

T -le che pria l'o-rec-chia in-te-se

B -ro-le che pria l'o-rec-chia in-te-se

Interpreting *Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese* from the perspective of the Assumption, however, clashes with Campi's observation that Colonna does not usually take an outspoken position on Marian doctrines without Biblical basis.⁷³ According

⁷³ E. Campi, "Vittoria Colonna and Bernardino Ochino", p. 393.

to Campi, Colonna usually follows a careful variation of the doctrine, in line with Lutheran and Zwinglian conceptions of the Virgin's position in Christian devotion, which rejects "Mary's bodily and spiritual resurrection and assumption" and instead proposes her "soul's entry into the glory of heaven."⁷⁴ Perhaps *Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese* and *L'alto consiglio, alhor ch'èlegger volse* are the exceptions that confirm Campi's rule concerning Colonna's prudence in voicing an unequivocal stance on disputed Marian doctrines.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, Colonna's emphatic references to the Assumption in *Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese* may explain why the Jesuit Coteman included this poem in his compilation for Monte. Although Marian devotion was widespread and thus not exclusive to the Jesuits, the Society was one of its most ardent propagators. The numerous Marian congregations founded by the Jesuits – sometimes named after Marian doctrines such as "the Assumption of Mary" – attest to the importance the Jesuits attached to Marian devotion.⁷⁶

Aside from Marian themes that enjoyed wide popularity, Coteman may also have been drawn to the resonances of these poems with the *Spiritual Exercises*. As a Jesuit, Coteman certainly had a thorough knowledge of Loyola's text. The themes and contents of these Marian sonnets evoke passages from the Incarnation and Annunciation contemplations, which are part of the "Infancy Contemplations" from the "Second Week" in the *Spiritual Exercises*. During the "Second Week", the exercitant considers and contemplates Christ's life from conception to Palm Sunday.⁷⁷ The "Infancy Contemplations" are primarily centred around scenes from Christ's childhood, starting with contemplations of the Incarnation and Annunciation – events that in fact took place before his birth.⁷⁸ In particular, thematic and terminological similarities can be observed between the "first prelude" in these contemplations and *L'alto consiglio, alhor ch'èlegger volse*:

The first prelude is to recall the history of the subjects to be contemplated [i.e. the Incarnation and Annunciation]: in this case how the Three Divine Persons were looking down upon the face and circuit of the world, filled with people, and how on seeing that all were going down

74 Ibid., p. 393 n. 61; Christoph Burger, "Spätmittelalterliche und reformatorische Marienpredigten", in: *Medialität, Unmittelbarkeit, Präsenz: Die Nähe des Heils im Verständnis der Reformation*, eds. Johanna Haberer and Berndt Hamm, Tübingen 2012, pp. 121–25.

75 Brundin also recognizes allusions to the Assumption in another sonnet from the manuscript for Michelangelo, entitled *Con che pietosa carità sovente*. See V. Colonna, *Sonnets for Michelangelo*, pp. 90–91.

76 M. Friedrich, *The Jesuits*, p. 244. On the musical practices of the Jesuit Marian congregations in the Belgian provinces from the sixteenth until the eighteenth century, see Céline Drèze, "Musical Practices among Marian Sodalities in the Gallo- and Flandro-Belgian Provinces from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries", *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 3 (2016) no. 3, pp. 398–414, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22141332-00303004>. On the use of polyphonic litanies in Jesuit Marian congregations in the German-speaking lands at the turn of the seventeenth century, see Alexander J. Fisher, "Thesaurus Litaniarum: The Symbolism and Practice of Musical Litanies in Counter-Reformation Germany", *Early Music History* 34 (2015), pp. 45–95, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261127915000066>.

77 M. Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, pp. 5–6.

78 Ibid., p. 88.

into Hell, they decreed in their eternity that the Second Person would become human to save the human race. Thus when “the fullness of time” came, they sent the angel Gabriel to our Lady.⁷⁹

Colonna's sonnet and Loyola's instructions sketch a similar image: just as Loyola instructs the exercitant to contemplate “the Three Divine Persons” looking down upon the sinful human race, Colonna similarly describes the “Holy Wisdom” beholding the “fallen nature” of humankind (“L'alto consiglio [...] Vedendo già cader nostra natura”). Antonia Fondaras identifies several passages from Paul's words in 1 Corinthians, where “Holy Wisdom” is equated with the “Second Person” of the Trinity, who was made incarnate through Mary.⁸⁰ Loyola likewise alludes to the incarnate Holy Wisdom in the first prelude, when he states that “the Second Person” was incarnated to “save the human race”.

In *Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese*, the emphasis on the sense of hearing resonates with the “second point” of the Incarnation and Annunciation contemplations. Loyola explains it as follows:

The second point is to hear what the persons on the face of the earth are saying – the way they talk to each other and how they swear and blaspheme, etc.; in the same way, to hear what the Divine Persons are saying, namely: “Let us bring about the redemption of the human race, etc.”; what the angel and Our Lady are talking about. I will then reflect in order to draw profit from their words.⁸¹

The “second point” is essentially an instruction to contemplate aurally the words and sounds produced by different sources, which is mirrored in Colonna's *Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese*. Just as Colonna ponders the moment when the archangel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will bear the son of God (“Le parole, che pria l'orecchia intese”), Loyola also instructs the exercitant to imagine hearing “what the angel and Our Lady are talking about”. In addition, Colonna highlights the aural aspect of the “second point”, writing that since the Assumption, the Virgin finally understands the words uttered by Gabriel during the Annunciation “in their celestial harmonies” (“Per celeste armonia”).⁸²

79 Ibid., p. 91.

80 1 Cor. 1:22–23: “For both the Jews require signs, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews indeed a stumblingblock, and unto the Gentiles foolishness”. And 1 Cor. 1:30: “But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and justice, and sanctification, and redemption”. See Antonia K. Fondaras, “‘Our Mother the Holy Wisdom of God’: Nursing in Botticelli's Bardi Altarpiece”, *Storia dell'arte* 111 (2005), pp. 7–34.

81 M. Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, p. 92.

82 Celestial music was a common trope in sixteenth-century descriptions of the heavens. For an overview of its implications in musical practices in Italian cities, see Daniele V. Filippi, “Sonic Afterworld: Mapping the Soundscape of Heaven and Hell in Early Modern Cities”, in: *Cultural Histories of Noise, Sound and Listening in Europe, 1300–1918*, eds. Ian Biddle and Kirsten Gibson, Burlington 2017, pp. 186–204.

The “Second Week” in Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises* is also pertinent to the third poem of Colonna’s, titled *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente*. This sonnet is a particularly sensuous rendition of the desire for Christ’s presence:

*Fido pensier, se intrar non pòi sovente
Entro’l cor di Iesù, basciali fore
Il sacro lembo, o pur senti l’odore;
Volagli intorno ogni or più vivo ardente.*

*S’altro non miri, avrai sempre presente
Il suo bel lume che il tuo proprio errore
Sol t’allontana, e perde ogni valore
L’alma se non lo scorge, ascolta e sente.*

*Non ti smarrir, rinforza il vago volo,
Che quando ei dà il desio non molto tarda
A dar virtù per giunger tosto a l’opra.*

*Vuol la nostra salute, e bada e guarda
L’ardito suo guerrier come s’adopra
S’ei si vede al periglio inerme e solo.*

Faithful thought, if you cannot often enter⁸³
Within the heart of Jesus then kiss from without⁸⁴
His sacred hem, or else inhale his perfume;
Fly near him every hour more charged with love.

If you see nothing else you will always be close to
His sacred light, which alone can distance you from your
Own sin, and your soul loses all its worth
If it does not behold Him, listen to Him, and feel Him.

Do not lose your way, but renew your eager flight,
So that when he grants you the desire he will not delay long
In giving you the virtue to accomplish your aims.

He longs for our salvation, and he watches and oversees⁸⁵
How his brave warrior defends himself
When he must face danger unarmed and alone.⁸⁶

83 Brundin’s translation reads “Faithful spirit, if you cannot often enter”. See V. Colonna, *Sonnets for Michelangelo*, p. 105.

84 Brundin’s translation dilutes the intensity of “*basciali*”, which she renders as “embrace”. See *ibid.*

85 “He longs for our salvation, so watch and heed” in Brundin’s translation. See *ibid.*, p. 107.

86 *Ibid.*, pp. 104–7.

Colonna opens this sonnet by articulating her desire for her thoughts to “enter within the heart of Jesus” (“intrar [...] Entro’l cor di Iesù”).⁸⁷ Brundin identifies the longing for corporeal unity as a trope featured in other works of Colonna’s, such as her sonnet *Divino spirto, il cui soave ardore* and her prose meditation, *Pianto della Marchesa di Pescara sopra la passione di Christo* (1557).⁸⁸ In the latter, Colonna writes that Mary wishes for bodily unification with her divine son, as she holds his lifeless body in her arms.⁸⁹ Brundin further notes that this concept of unity is reminiscent of the theology proposed by Valdés, who regarded the union with Christ as the ultimate path to divine knowledge.⁹⁰ However, Colonna’s craving for unification may not be fulfilled in *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente*, and she therefore urges her thoughts to get close to Jesus, in an attempt to “kiss from without His sacred hem, or else inhale his perfume” (“basciali fore / Il sacro lembo, o pur senti l’odore”). Brundin traces this passage back to 2 Corinthians 2:14, where the diffusion of the fragrance of Jesus’s knowledge alludes to the propagation of the Gospel.⁹¹ Colonna again adds a sensuous dimension to this sonnet in the final line of the second quatrain, where she encourages her thoughts “to behold Him, listen to Him, and Feel Him” (“lo scorge, ascolta e sente”). Colonna’s mention of four different senses – touch, smell, sight and hearing – in *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente* is exceptional within her oeuvre of spiritual poetry. Although other poems of Colonna’s depict sensuous experiences, such as *Stella del nostro mar chiara e sicura* or *Dimmi, lume del mondo e chiaro onore* (set to music in Monte’s 1583 book of spiritual madrigals), they are usually limited to the sense of sight. Monte’s setting of *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente* reflects the sonnet’s thematic focus on the senses. He sets “basciali fore” twice, with the first statement sung by the *canto* and *alto*, and its repeat by the *quinto*, *tenore* and *basso* (see Ex. 3, bars 8–10). A cadence on G – the piece’s *finalis* – in the *canto* and *alto* in bar 9 separates the first statement from its repeat. A similar approach applies to “o pur senti l’odore”, with these words first sung by the three upper voices. After a cadence on G in the *canto* and *alto* in bar 12, the full ensemble launches the repeat (bars 12–14). The segment pertaining to the senses in the final line of the second quatrain (“se non lo scorge, ascolta e sente”) is also set to music repeatedly. Analogous to *L’alto consiglio, alhor ch’elegger volse*, these reiterations function both as rhetorical figures, emphasizing the meaning of the words, and as structural devices, marking the end of the madrigal’s *prima parte*.

87 On the semantics of “thought” (*pensier*) in Colonna’s spiritual poetry, see Maria S. Sapegno, “The *Rime*: A Textual Conundrum?”, in: *A Companion to Vittoria Colonna*, eds. Abigail Brundin, Tatiana Crivelli and Maria S. Sapegno, Leiden 2016, pp. 167–68.

88 A. Brundin, *The Spiritual Poetics*, p. 138.

89 Abigail Brundin, “Vittoria Colonna and the Virgin Mary”, *The Modern Language Review* 96 (2001) no. 1, pp. 61–81, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3735716>.

90 A. Brundin, *The Spiritual Poetics*, p. 44.

91 2 Cor. 2:14: “Now thanks be to God, who always maketh us triumph in Christ Jesus, and manifesteth the odour of his knowledge by us in every place”. See V. Colonna, *Sonnet for Michelangelo*, p. 159 n. 173.

Ex. 3. Philippe de Monte, *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente* from *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a cinque voci* (1581), bars 7–14, author's own transcription. C = canto, Q = quinto, A = alto, T = tenore, B = basso

7

Repeat

C - tro il cor di Gie - su ba - cia-li fo - re

Q En - tro il cor di Gie - su ba - cia-li fo -

A - tro il cor di Gie - su ba - cia-li fo - re

T En - tro il cor di Gie - su ba - cia-li fo -

B En - tro il cor di Gie - su ba - cia-li fo -

10

Repeat

C Il sa - cro Lem - bo o pur sen - ti l'o - do - re o

Q - re Il sa - cro Lem - bo o pur sen - ti l'o - do - re o

A il sa - cro Lem - bo o pur sen - ti l'o - do - re o

T - re Il sa - cro Lem - bo o

B - re Il sa - cro Lem - bo o

13

C pur sen - ti l'o - do - re Vo - la - gli in - tor - nògn hor

Q pur sen - ti l'o - do - re Vo - la - gli Vo - la - gli in - tor - nògn

A pur o pur sen - ti l'o - do - re Vo - la - gli in - tor - no Vo - la - gli in

T pur sen - ti l'o - do - re

B pur sen - ti l'o - do - re

The second quatrain presents the imagery of darkness (“S’altro non miri”) and light (“Il suo bel lume”), which is reminiscent of Isaiah 9:2.⁹² As Colonna underscores the necessity of remaining close to Christ’s sacred light in the pursuit of salvation (“che il tuo proprio errore / Sol t’allontana”), so does Jesus promise liberation from darkness for those who follow him in John 8:12.⁹³ Just as God urges humanity in Jeremiah 6:16 to choose the path of salvation, where their souls will find peace, so too does Colonna encourage her thoughts in the first tercet to continue their flight towards Christ (“Non ti smarrir, rinforza il vago volo”).⁹⁴ According to Copello’s interpretation of *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente*, Colonna characterizes humanity, or human thought, as Jesus’s “brave warrior” (“L’ardito suo guerrier”), which is faced with “danger unarmed and alone” (“S’ei si vede al periglio inerme e solo”), alluding to the enticements of evil. Yet Christ keeps a close eye on his “brave warrior” (“bada e guarda”), longing incessantly for humanity’s salvation (“Vuol la nostra salute”).⁹⁵

Notwithstanding the Valdesian influence identified by Brundin, Coteman may have associated the emphatic sensuous dimension of *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente* with the “Prayer of the Senses”, introduced in the “Second Week” of Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises*.⁹⁶ This prayer represents the culmination of the day’s contemplations and requires the exercitant to imagine the properties of persons and things to be contemplated.⁹⁷ Loyola himself explains it as follows:

The first point is to see the persons with the imaginative sense of sight, meditating and contemplating their circumstances in detail, and to draw some profit from this sight. The second point [is] to hear with the sense of hearing what they say or might say, and to reflect in oneself and to draw some profit from this. The third point [is] to smell and to taste with the senses of smell and taste the infinite gentleness and sweetness of the divinity, and of the soul and of its virtues, and of everything else, according to whoever the person contemplated may be; and to reflect within oneself and draw profit from this. The fourth point [is] to touch with the sense of touch, for example embracing and kissing the places where these persons tread and sit, always seeking to draw profit from this.⁹⁸

Loyola thus instructs the exercitant to engage the senses via the faculty of the imagination, enabling them to “draw profit” from each contemplation. According to Michael

92 Isaiah 9:2: “The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light: to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, light is risen”.

93 John 8:12: “Again therefore, Jesus spoke to them, saying: I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life”.

94 Jeremiah 6:16: “Thus saith the Lord: Stand ye on the ways, and see and ask for the old paths which is the good way, and walk ye in it: and you shall find refreshment for your souls. And they said: we will not walk”.

95 Vittoria Colonna, *La raccolta di rime per Michelangelo*, ed. Veronica Copello, Florence 2020, p. 164.

96 M. Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, p. 74.

97 Ibid., p. 97.

98 Ibid., p. 98.

Ivens, “profit” alludes to the graces that the exercitant seeks to obtain by undertaking the *Spiritual Exercises*, namely “spiritual freedom and finding the will of God”.⁹⁹ So too does Colonna spur her thoughts to experience Christ through the senses of touch, smell, hearing and sight (“basciali fore / Il sacro lembo, o pur senti l’odore [...] se non lo scorge, ascolta e sente”). This sensuous vicinity will then bring divine knowledge and salvation.

When compiling the poetry for Monte, Coteman may have discerned similar resonances between Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises* and Colonna’s *L’alto consiglio, alhor ch’è legger volse, Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese* and *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente*. As vehicles for this spiritual poetry, Monte’s musical settings would thus not only have fulfilled the Jesuit ideal of spiritually edifying music but also have been capable of conveying aspects of Ignatian spirituality to their singers and listeners. Needless to say, only those familiar with the *Spiritual Exercises* could have made such associations. The most receptive audience to the Ignatian resonances would then have been the Jesuits themselves.

RECEPTION OF MONTE’S 1581 SPIRITUAL MADRIGALS

There are indications that spiritual madrigals – perhaps including those by Monte – were performed in the Jesuit colleges in Rome. For example, the instructions for the chapel master of the German College attest to the recreational singing of madrigals, most likely spiritual ones.¹⁰⁰ At the Venerable English College in 1585, the chapel master Felice Anerio (c.1560–1614) published three collections of spiritual madrigals for five voices, suggesting that the genre was also part of the musical repertoire there.¹⁰¹ In addition, Katherine Powers speculates that Monte’s 1581 spiritual madrigals may have been performed at the Roman College during the festivities marking Acquaviva’s visit shortly after his election as Jesuit superior general.¹⁰² Moving beyond speculation, a letter from 1603 sent by the Jesuit Robert Bellarmine, then Archbishop of Capua, to Giovanni Battista Confalonieri (1561–1648) in Rome, attests to his singing of Monte’s 1581 spiritual madrigals with the local seminarians. In this letter, the archbishop asks his correspondent to provide him with Monte’s 1583 book of spiritual madrigals, as he already possesses the one from 1581.¹⁰³ Filippi argues that the music lover Bellarmine introduced the singing of spiritual madrigals in the seminary of Capua because of his earlier musical experiences in Roman and Neapolitan Jesuit houses.¹⁰⁴

99 Ibid., p. 7.

100 Katherine S. Powers, “The Spiritual Madrigal in Counter-Reformation Italy”, University of California 1997 (PhD dissertation), pp. 110–12.

101 Ibid., p. 115. Two of these collections are now lost, see *ibid.*, pp. 78–79.

102 Ibid., pp. 112–15.

103 Angelo De Santi, “Il Ven. Card. Roberto Bellarmino e la musica”, *La civiltà cattolica* 3 (1919), pp. 371–87.

104 D.V. Filippi, “Ask the Jesuit to Send Verses from Rome”, pp. 73–75.

Additional documentary evidence alluding to the performance of the 1581 spiritual madrigals is linked to the Habsburg Court in Vienna, where Monte served as Emperor Rudolf's II chapel master. The evidence concerns a letter from 29 May 1582 addressed to Duke William V of Bavaria, written by Ludwig Haberstock, an agent for the Duke at the Viennese court.¹⁰⁵ In this letter, it becomes clear that Haberstock is impressed by Monte's spiritual madrigals and believes that William's chapel master, Orlando di Lasso, should also start composing such works. Therefore, he asks the duke to have Lasso contact the Roman Jesuits to acquire poetry suitable for musical settings as spiritual madrigals:

Furthermore, I send Your Princely Lordship again a madrigal by Philippe de Monte, written by his own hand. The text is about Christ's birth and the music is very good, but it needs to be sung with great care. However, Herr Philippe has previously had an entire collection of such things printed in Venice – if I recall correctly either this year or early 1581. If desired, Your Princely Lordship may direct inquiries to Augsburg about this [collection]. There is no copy here, even the composer himself does not have one. Otherwise, I would not have failed to send Your Princely Lordship one.¹⁰⁶ Should all the other compositional commissions leave your Herr Orlando the leisure to enjoy such things, then the appropriate method is to ask the Jesuits to send him such verses from Rome, just as Herr Philippe and others have done before.¹⁰⁷

Although it is difficult to determine precisely which compositions Haberstock is talking about, this letter nevertheless testifies to the performance of Monte's spiritual madrigals at the Imperial court in 1582 and to their positive reception by Haberstock

105 In an earlier letter dated 24 April 1582, Haberstock had already suggested to Duke William that Lasso should acquire spiritual poetry from the Roman Jesuits to set to music. Haberstock also appended four compositions of Monte's to this letter: two spiritual madrigals about Mary Magdalene, one spiritual madrigal for Easter and one setting of *Congregati sunt [inimici nostri?]*. See Orlando di Lasso, *Kompositionen mit deutschem Text. I: Die drei Teile fünfstimmiger deutscher Lieder München 1567, 1572 und 1576*, ed. Horst Leuchtmann, Wiesbaden 1970 (= *Sämtliche Werke / Lasso Orlando*. Alte Reihe 18), p. LIV n. 1. While several spiritual madrigals of Monte's allude to Easter, the only ones on Mary Magdalene are *Sparse il bel volto di color di Tiro* from 1583 and *La bella Donna, a cui dolente preme* from 1589. See Philippus de Monte, *Il primo libro de madrigali spirituali a sei voci*, ed. Georges van Doorslaer, Brussels 1972 (= *Corpus of Early Music* 27); Philippus de Monte, *Il secondo libro madrigali spirituali a sei e sette voci*, ed. Piet Nuten, Brussels 1958.

106 "Daneben vberschickh E. f. g. Ich abermalen ein Madrigal von Philippo de Monte, welches er von aigner hannd geschriben, der Text ist von der geburt Christi, vnnd die Music seer Guet, will aber seer fleissig gesungen sein, Er sr. Philippo hatt vor der Zeit, gleichwol, da Ich recht gedennckh, erst diß oder zum lenngsten Jungstuerschinnen 81.ⁿ Jars ein ganntze muta. solcher geistlicher sachen zu Venedig inn truckh ausgehen lassen, denen mügen E. f. g. Zu augspurg nachzefragen beuelhen, Hie hatt man khain exemplar, auch der author selbst nit, wollte sonnst nit vnnderlassen haben E. f. g. ains zuwegen Zebringen. So uerr H Orlando von annderen Ihme anbevolhen Compositionen so muessweilig were, dz Er sich mit dergleichen belustigen wollt, were der weeg, dz Er durch mittl der Herrn Jhesuiten Ihme solche verss von Rhom khomen liess, dannen heer Er s Philippo dise vnnd anndere, durch dasselbe mittl Zuwegen gebracht [...]" O. di Lasso, *Kompositionen mit deutschem Text*, p. liv n. 1. Author's own translation.

107 D.V. Filippi, "Ask the Jesuits", p. 68.

and possibly other courtiers as well.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, the letter mentions Monte's 1581 book and indicates that, although no copy of the print was available at court, Haberstock was aware of the Jesuit involvement in its genesis. But could the Ignatian resonances in Colonna's Italian poetry – set to music by Monte – have been understood at Rudolf's predominantly German-speaking court? The following, final section considers how, beyond the Italian Jesuit contexts discussed above, Rudolf's German-speaking courtiers might have received Colonna's spiritual sonnets, with their Ignatian connotations and set to music by Monte as spiritual madrigals.

Would courtiers at Rudolf's court have understood the Italian language and sophisticated music of Monte's spiritual madrigals? Although the court housed people of different nationalities, Jaroslava Hausenblasová observes – based on the court ledgers from Rudolf's reign (1576–1612) – that it consisted predominantly of people from the German-speaking regions of the Holy Roman Empire.¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, it is very likely that many of the German-speaking courtiers understood and spoke Italian to some degree. The “Grand Tour” became part of the education of the German nobility during the 1570s. Mathis Leibetseder argues that this educational journey was already common among the German elite earlier in the sixteenth century.¹¹⁰ One of the most important destinations of the “Grand Tour” was the Italian peninsula. Therefore, many German-speaking noblemen were immersed in the Italian culture and language during their education. Later on, they flaunted their knowledge of Italy to others as a social marker. Some of them assumed positions at the courts in the German-speaking regions of the Holy Roman Empire, thereby enhancing the already strong transmission of Italian culture in the court societies there.¹¹¹ European courts in general experienced, as Shanti Graheli puts it, “a booming Italian fashion across literature and science, painting and sculpture, decorative and performative arts”.¹¹² Graheli also presents evidence that during the second half of the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century, members of the non-Italian European elite learned Italian by reading Francis Petrarch's (1304–74) *Canzoniere* and Ludovico Ariosto's (1474–1533) *Orlando furioso* (1516). She therefore concludes that these texts were read outside the Italian-speaking world not only by professional translators and literary specialists, but also by members of the nobility who sought to learn the Italian language, literature and poetry.¹¹³ Thus, it is likely that at least some among Rudolf's German-speaking courtiers were familiar with

108 Ibid., pp. 68–69.

109 Jaroslava Hausenblasová, *Der Hof Kaiser Rudolfs II: eine Edition der Hofstaatverzeichnisse 1576–1612*, Prague 2002, p. 111–14.

110 Mathis Leibetseder, “Across Europe: Education Travelling of German Noblemen in a Comparative Perspective”, *Journal of Early Modern History* 14 (2010) no. 5, p. 421, <https://doi.org/10.1163/157006510X525274>.

111 Ibid., pp. 422–23.

112 Shanti Graheli, “Learning the Italian Canon. The Experience of Foreign Readers in the Early Modern Age”, in: *Handschrift im Druck (ca. 1500–1800)*, eds. Sylvia Brockstieger and Rebecca Hirt, Berlin 2023, p. 79.

113 Ibid., pp. 79–100.

Italian poetry. Adam von Dietrichstein (1527–90), one of Rudolf's close advisers, had mastered Italian, as shown by his use of the language in his letters to his son, who studied at the Jesuit college in Olomouc.¹¹⁴

Alongside the growing interest in Italian literature and poetry in German-speaking lands, there also came a vogue for Italian music. According to Susan Lewis Hammond, "the Italian madrigal was Italy's most successful musical export in the sixteenth century" and it "circulated as a commercial product, a compositional model, a performance ideal, and an object for collection and exchange among rulers, patriicians, merchants, students, and musicians".¹¹⁵ Whether as performance repertoire or a collectable commodity, the Italian madrigal was well received among the German-speaking elite during this period.¹¹⁶ Considering Monte's compositional output, it appears that this cultural trend also applied to the imperial courts of Maximilian II and Rudolf II. During his tenure as chapel master, Monte published most of his madrigal books. More importantly, Thorsten Hindrichs observes that, apart from the emperors, Monte also dedicated several books of madrigals to high-ranking courtiers, suggesting that the madrigal was well received at the imperial court. For example, he dedicated *Il quarto libro de madrigali a sei voci insieme alcuni a sette* (1580) to Wolf Rumpf von Wullross (1536–1606), one of the most powerful men at Rudolf's court, and *Il sesto libro de madrigali a sei voci* (1591) to Jakob Kurz von Senftenau (1554–94), the emperor's *Vizekanzler*.¹¹⁷

This cultural context at court thus created an environment where the madrigal's poetry and music were likely both understood and appreciated. Haberstock's allusions to the positive reception of Monte's 1581 spiritual madrigals therefore reflect the interest the Italian madrigal enjoyed in Vienna. To assess the probability that the courtiers interpreted Colonna's spiritual verses in a manner similar to Coteman's proposed Jesuit reading, it is necessary to consider the influence of the Society at the Viennese court.

According to Markus Friedrich, the Jesuits "tried to penetrate as many areas of early modern society as possible and set about their work".¹¹⁸ Although the first Jesuits were often looked upon with suspicion and only had a limited network, they rapidly managed to gain sympathy and support from the European royalty and aristocracy.¹¹⁹ Their Habsburg affiliation was facilitated through Leonor de Mascareñas (1503–84), the governess of Maria of Austria (1528–1603) and Joanna of Austria (1535–73), the daughters of Emperor Charles V (r. 1519–56). Maria, who became Holy Roman

114 Gábor Almási, *The Uses of Humanism: Johannes Sambucus (1531–1584), Andreas Dudith (1553–1589), and the Republic of Letters in East Central Europe*, Leiden 2009, p. 137.

115 Susan L. Hammond, *Editing Music in Early Modern Germany*, Aldershot 2007, p. 2.

116 Ibid.

117 T. Hindrichs, *Philipp de Monte (1523–1603)*, pp. 130–35.

118 M. Friedrich, *The Jesuits*, p. 261.

119 Ibid., pp. 262–70.

Empress through her marriage with Maximilian II and was the mother of Rudolf II, played an essential role in the Society's establishment in Vienna.¹²⁰ During Maximilian's reign, the Austrian rulers – the emperor included – recruited the Jesuits to propagate the Catholic faith through pastoral works and education, while simultaneously adopting a policy of debate and compromise with the Protestants; however, the Jesuits advocated for harsh measures to counter the spread of heterodoxy. By the late 1570s, during the initial years of Rudolf's reign, the Jesuits' pleas were heard, as the attitude towards the Protestants became more confrontational. For example, in June 1578, Protestant ministers and schoolmasters were expelled from Vienna.¹²¹ It therefore seems that the Society convinced Rudolf to pursue a less conciliatory policy in confessional matters, although he continued to host many Protestants at his court.¹²² This change of policy should also come as no surprise considering his mother's benevolent attitude towards the Society. At the instigation of his mother, Rudolf also spent most of his upbringing in Spain at the austere Catholic court of Philip II (r. 1556–98).¹²³ There, Rudolf visited the monastery of Santa Maria de Montserrat, where Loyola famously underwent his spiritual conversion.¹²⁴ During his youth and for a short period of time during his reign, Rudolf also had a Jesuit confessor.¹²⁵ His less compromising attitude in confessional matters, compared to that of his father, becomes further evident from the permission he granted to the ultra-Catholic Georg Eder (1523–87) to publish his *Das guldene Flüss christlicher Gemain und Gesellschaft* in 1579. Eder was banned from writing on religious subjects by Maximilian II in 1573 after publishing his *Evangelische Inquisition Wahrer und falscher Religion* (1573), in which he accuses the emperor and his courtiers of damaging the Catholic church.¹²⁶ In a letter from 1585, Eder also clearly expressed his staunch support of the Society of Jesus, stating that “whoever is not like a Jesuit, is not a Catholic”.¹²⁷ Why Rudolf ignored his father's condemnation of Eder remains a matter of speculation.¹²⁸

120 Ibid., p. 263.

121 Gernot Heiss, “Princes, Jesuits and the Origins of Counter-Reformation in the Habsburg Lands”, in: *Crown, Church and Estates*, eds. Robert J.W. Evans and Trevor V. Thomas, London 1991, pp. 92–109.

122 J. Hausenblasová, *Der Hof Kaiser Rudolfs II*, pp. 114–18.

123 Elaine Fulton, *Catholic Belief and Survival in Late Sixteenth-Century Vienna: The Case of Georg Eder (1523–87)*, Aldershot 2007, p. 129 n. 29.

124 Gertrude Von Schwarzenfeld, *Rudolf II: Der saturnische Kaiser*, Munich 1961, p. 22.

125 Bernhard Duhr, *Die Jesuiten an den deutschen Fürstenhöfen des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Freiburg im Breisgau 1901, p. 21.

126 E. Fulton, *Catholic Belief and Survival*, pp. 123–29; Elaine Fulton, “Mutual Aid: The Jesuits and the Courtier in Sixteenth-Century Vienna”, in: *Communities of Devotion: Religious Orders and Society in East Central Europe, 1450–1800*, eds. Maria Crăciun and Elaine Fulton, London 2016, pp. 214–47.

127 E. Fulton, *Catholic Belief and Survival*, p. 123.

128 Ibid., p. 129.

Although Rudolf's interest in spiritual matters waned in favour of the occult sciences as he grew older, the Jesuits were able to influence his confessional policy during the late 1570s and 1580s. While there is no evidence testifying to his undertaking of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, it is not unlikely that Rudolf had some knowledge of them, considering his ties with the Society throughout his life. Therefore, Rudolf might have understood the Ignatian resonances in Colonna's sonnets upon hearing Monte's spiritual madrigals being performed at court. A similar case can be made for Rudolf's brother Archduke Ernest of Austria (r. 1576–95), who sought the religious guidance of the Jesuits more than his older brother did. His confessor was a member of the Society and also delivered sermons before the archduke.¹²⁹ These intimate ties with the Society make it plausible that Ernest was very familiar with the *Spiritual Exercises*, and thus may have grasped the Ignatian associations in Colonna's poetry. The same applies to the previously mentioned Georg Eder, who, apart from being a Catholic polemicist, was also one of Rudolf's high-ranking courtiers, belonging to the *Reichshofrat* until 1583. While attending the University of Cologne in the 1540s, Eder met the Jesuits through the eminent figure of Peter Canisius. Mutually inspired by their religious zeal and shared commitment to restoring true Catholicism in the confessionally complex Vienna, Eder and the Jesuits formed a natural alliance and maintained close ties.¹³⁰ Consequently, Eder may well have been another example of a courtier close to Rudolf II who understood and interpreted Colonna's sonnets through the Ignatian lens when Monte's spiritual madrigals were performed at the Viennese court.

CONCLUSION

The rationale behind the Jesuit Laurentius Coteman's decision to select Vittoria Colonna's sacred sonnets for a future collection of spiritual madrigals by the imperial *Kapellmeister* Philippe de Monte is not immediately self-evident. Because of his Jesuit background and the fact that he probably knew the author of the poetry, Coteman's choice appears paradoxical: Colonna had been intimately connected to Italian reformers during her life, was mentioned at the Inquisitorial trial against Pietro Carnesecchi almost two decades after her death, and her sacred poetry has commonly been interpreted as resonating with reformed spirituality. To assess the possible reasons for his choice of Colonna's spiritual verses, this article proposes that Coteman made his selection based on his own Jesuit reading. To this aim, three sonnets from Monte's 1581 spiritual madrigal collection are interpreted against the backdrop of specific passages from the "Second Week" in Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*. Thematic

129 B. Duhr, *Die Jesuiten und den deutschen Fürstenhöfen*, pp. 21–22.

130 E. Fulton, "Mutual Aid", pp. 214–47.

and terminological resonances are observed between the “first prelude” from the Incarnation and Annunciation contemplations and Colonna’s *L’alto consiglio, alhor ch’èlegger volse*. This Marian sonnet makes several allusions to the contentious doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, which the Society of Jesus fervently propagated. In the other Marian sonnet from Monte’s 1581 book, *Un foco sol la Donna nostra accese*, Colonna refers both to the doctrine of the Assumption and the biblical event of the Annunciation. Colonna’s focus on the acoustics of the conversation between the Virgin and the Archangel Gabriel during the Annunciation parallels Loyola’s instruction to contemplate “what the angel and our Lady are talking about” in the “second point” from the Incarnation and Annunciation contemplations.¹³¹ Lastly, Colonna’s intense desire to experience Christ through sight, hearing, touch and smell in her *Fido pensier, se intrar non puoi sovente* aligns with Loyola’s directions in his “Prayer of the Senses” to recruit all five senses in contemplating the properties of persons and things.

Documentary evidence attesting to the performance of spiritual madrigals in the Roman Jesuit colleges may suggest that Colonna’s sonnets, with their Ignatian resonances and set to music by Monte, found a receptive audience there. A letter from Ludwig Haberstock, sent to Duke William V of Bavaria in 1582, hints specifically at the performance of Monte’s spiritual madrigals from his 1581 collection at the imperial court in Vienna. Furthermore, this letter indicates that the Jesuit involvement in the book’s genesis was publicly known at the court, although a copy of the print was not available at the time of Haberstock’s writing. This article thus sheds light on the accessibility of Colonna’s Italian sonnets – together with their Ignatian connotations and set to music as spiritual madrigals by Monte – at the largely German-speaking imperial court. First, Colonna’s Italian poetic language must have found a receptive audience among German-speaking elites, who demonstrated a keen interest in Italian poetry. During their travels across Europe in their youth, these elites became familiar with and learned to appreciate the works of Italian authors. Secondly, as part of the general vogue for Italian culture among the German-speaking elites, the imperial court was fertile ground for the Italian madrigal, illustrated by the more than thirty madrigal collections published by the *Kapellmeister* Monte alone, some of which he also dedicated to high-ranking courtiers. Lastly, the influence the Jesuits had on three prominent figures at court – Emperor Rudolf II, Archduke Charles of Austria and Georg Eder – makes it possible that they were also receptive to the Ignatian resonances in Colonna’s poetry. Thus, through the right interpretative lens, Monte’s musical settings of Colonna’s spiritual sonnets were able to convey Jesuit spirituality.

131 M. Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, p. 92.

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VITTORIA COLONNA SPOTYKA IGNACEGO LOYOLĘ W *IL PRIMO LIBRO DE MADRIGALI SPIRITUALI A CINQUE VOCI* (1581) PHILIPPE'A DE MONTE

W niniejszym artykule analizuję związki między trzema sonetami Vittorii Colonnny (ok. 1490–1547) – do których muzykę skomponował cesarski kapelmistrz Philippe de Monte (1521–1603) i zawarł w pierwszej księdze pięciogłosowych madrygałów duchownych (1581) – a *Ćwiczeniami duchowymi* Ignacego Loyoli (1491–1556), tekstem o fundamentalnym znaczeniu dla duchowości jezuickiej. W świetle dowodów źródłowych wskazujących na wykonywanie owych utworów na dworze Rudolfa II (lata panowania 1576–1612) w Wiedniu badam również kwestię przystępności włoskich wierszy nasyconych ignacjańskimi konotacjami, wraz z muzyką Montego, dla przeważająco niemieckojęzycznego środowiska.

W pierwszej kolejności omawiam wątki jezuickie pierwszych czterech ksiąg madrygałów religijnych kompozytora. Następnie skupiam się na poetkach obecnych w zbiorze z 1581 r. – Laurze Battiferri degli Ammannati (1523–89) i Vittorii Colonnii – oraz ich relacjach z Towarzystwem Jezusowym. W dalszej części przedstawiam interpretację trzech sonetów Colonnny przez pryzmat dzieła Loyoli: dwóch wierszy maryjnych (*L'alto consiglio* i *Un foco sol*) oraz *Fido pensier*, utworu koncentrującego się na zmysłowym doświadczeniu duchowym. Na koniec analizuję recepcję madrygałów Montego, niosących ze sobą ignacjańskie echa, na wiedeńskim dworze cesarskim.

Na tle *Ćwiczeń duchowych* wyłaniają się tematyczne i terminologiczne zbieżności między „kontemplacjami o Wcieleniu i Zwiastowaniu” a wspomnianymi sonetami maryjnymi. Podobnie akcentowanie zmysłowej duchowości w *Fido pensier* współgra ze wskazówkami zawartymi w ignacjańskiej „modlitwie zmysłami”. Duże zainteresowanie poezją włoską wśród niemieckojęzycznych elit – w połączeniu z faktem, że dwór Rudolfa stanowił niezwykle podatny grunt dla kultuwowania madrygału – sugeruje, iż repertuar ten był w owym kontekście zarówno wysoko ceniony i rozumiany. Ponadto wpływ jezuitów na kilkoro wybitnych przedstawicieli dworu wskazuje na dużą otwartość odbiorców na ignacjańskie przesłanie tych kompozycji.

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