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“Nata per morire”

*Music memory and memory of music in Early Modern
Europe*

OUTLINE OF THE PROJECT

My project aims to appraise the role of memory within the musical discipline from a theoretical as well as practical standpoint in the Early Modern Europe.

The relationship between music and memory can be investigated according to four distinct, but also strictly interrelated, perspectives:

- 1) The relationship between orality and writing in a musical world that was essentially governed and made intelligible by oral discourse.
- 2) The ‘dialogue’ between music and memory in the mnemotecnic treatises, in which aspects of the musical discipline are often discussed.
- 3) The role and function of the art of memory in the organization, visualization and transmission of musical knowledge, with particular regard to the European encyclopedic perspective of the sixteenth and seventeenth Centuries.
- 4) The role and function of the art of memory in shaping compositional technique, with particular regard to *ex-tempore* improvisational practices.

In my paper I tried to develop, in particular, some aspects related to topics 1 and 4. The concept of *locus communis* will be discussed according to a wider perspective, mainly related to topic 3, during the seminar.

*Inverting musical development: from Literacy to Orality
through Memory*

No Musical Objects, no Musical Renaissance

To try to re-examine, more than fifty years after its formulation, the theory by Nino Pirrota attesting to the existence of a 'written' and 'unwritten' tradition, which interact in shaping the context of musical experience, in Italy, during the Fifteenth Century, might seem substantially useless, but the conceptual framework on which this theory was later codified and developed by followers and pupils of the great Italian musicologist has had an enduring life in shaping the historiographical debate of contemporary musicology.

From the perspective of the relationship between music and memory, I am particularly interested, in discussing the basic concepts on which the theory was developed, because these basic concepts extend their influence, as an interpretative tool, far beyond the context of the Fifteenth Century Italian music.

At the core of the conceptual framework there is a dualistic and antithetical approach: *native Italian music* versus *foreign Franco-Flemish music*; *Humanism* versus *Scholasticism*; *Polyphony* versus *Pseudo-polyphony*; and finally, the most important antithesis: *Written* versus *Unwritten*. This antithetical series of concepts produce two different traditions, which act in the same context.

First of all what about the general context? I, obviously, abstain myself from discussing the historiographical concept of Renaissance: in this perspective, it will be sufficient to recall, that the theory was elaborated to explain the apparent absence of Italian written music during the Quattrocento, which was considered the golden century of the Italian Renaissance. In this golden century, in fact, we find plenty of wonderful artistic objects: paintings, buildings, sculptures, and literary texts. And music? Unfortunately Italian music has no objects to add to this wonderful gallery, because, as recently stated by a distinguish Italian scholar, a pupil of Pirrotta, Italian music “regressing to purely performative activities not intended for written transmission” (“regredisce ad attività puramente performativa non destinata alla trasmissione scritta”): so no objects, no Renaissance. Unfortunately, this inexplicable ‘regression’ momentarily breaks the teleological progression from orality to writing, and we are forced to anticipate the beginning of the Italian musical Renaissance a century before (*Ars Nova*) or posticipate it a century later.

Let’s try to discuss now the first antithesis: native Italian music versus foreign Franco-Flemish music. Because Italy, in this period, was, at most, a geographical expression, the concept of an Italian music identity is, on the one hand, generic and, on the other hand, abstract. More important: is Italian music simply the music composed by Italian composers, or also the music that the Italians performed and heard, the music that Italians contributed decisively to produce, creating the social consensus necessary to promote different kinds of musical performance?

Second antithesis: Humanism versus Scholasticism. Apart from the fact that a rigid opposition of these two concepts is highly questionable, I will summarize in a few words Pirrotta’s thesis: the golden age of Italian *Ars nova* was an exceptional experience linked to ecclesiastic circles imbued with scholastic philosophy. With the rise of a humanistic movement contrary to the practice of polyphony, the social conditions that have promoted Italian polyphonic practice cease, and regression to orality starts. The assertion that the humanistic movement as a whole was hostile to polyphony is highly questionable and based on partial and insufficient evidence, but even more

questionable is the censorial power attributed to the humanists. A power so pervasive as to inhibit, at least for sixty years, the composition of polyphonic works by Italian composers. Further, if the cultural context was so hostile to polyphony, why does Italy welcome the most important Franco-Flemish composers in the most prestigious courts and churches? The cultural context changes selectively on an ethnical basis? What is discouraged for Italians is promoted for foreigners?

Third antithesis: Polyphony versus Pseudo-polyphony. When the text is lacking, music can be only simple, light: the improvisatory or quasi-improvisatory style of Mediterranean taste is opposed to the heavy textuality of northern polyphony, complex and deeply elaborated. The presence / absence of written sources is the material object that physically separates these two worlds: the regressive orality and the progressive writing, as these words by Pirrotta testifies:

During the fifteenth century instead, in contrast with what happened in other artistic activities, Italy, rather than showing a stylistic dependence on the musical language of international polyphony, appears quite unproductive. For many decades, until almost the end of the century, it is impossible to mention names of Italian composers, nor to find quality music for which one can hypothesize that they were composed by Italians.

Durante il Quattrocento invece, in contrasto con quanto avveniva nel campo di altre attività artistiche, l'Italia, più ancora che mostrare una dipendenza stilistica dal linguaggio musicale della polifonia internazionale, appare addirittura improduttiva. Per molti decenni, fino quasi alla fine del secolo, non è possibile citare nomi di compositori italiani, né indicare musiche di qualità delle quali si possa ipotizzare che fossero composte da italiani (*Musica e Umanesimo*, 1985).

The presence / absence of the couple composer / work is highly embarrassing for the historian of music, and the solution is highly ideological: no written music signifies simply no music at all, or almost no quality music,

because it is impossible even to speculate that a musician could compose in the mind good elaborated polyphonic music. This ideological and antithetical framework was encapsulated in two different traditions, written and unwritten: the first represents the mainstream of historical development, the second a momentary aberration quickly removed: fortunately at the end of the century Italian written sources start to reappear: the honour of Italian music, as well as the dignity itself of Western music, is safe!

This picture is revealing of the conceptual dependence of musical text on literary text. This inferiority complex towards the nobler sister Literature, which has characterized the birth and subsequent flowering of historical musicology, had been finally exorcised by the triumphant re-evaluation of musical textuality, but the exorcism had hidden a reality that has emerged with great difficulty in musical historiography.

This exorcism has produced, indeed, the removal, instead of the fruitful integration into consciousness, as any good psychoanalyst might wish for his patient. Indeed, the many shadows inherent in the transition from orality to musical writing were swept away by an evolutionary conception mainly devoted to the discussion of the metabolization of orality into writing: if, during the Fifteenth century, Italian native music lies in the realm of pure or quasi-pure orality, the expression “residue of orality” has been recently used by a distinguished Italian scholar to characterize the compositional practices linked to orality and memory in the Sixteenth Century. The use of this expression is highly revealing of a diffused mentality, which often unconsciously, directs the shaping of musical development.

A well-known image [FIG. 1], taken from a manuscript of the second half of the fifteenth century, of the Estense Library, is an exemplary visual translation of multiplicity that characterizes the courtly musical universe: the institutional functions of “trombetti”, the polyphonic singing, as well as the singing to the lute, are fixed by iconographic representation in an unrealistic synchronic contemporaneity, which elects, as ideal environment, the courtly garden.



FIG. 1: *Biblioteca Estense di Modena, Ms. lat. 209, x. 2. 14*

This courtly garden functions as a memory place (*locus*) in which the different courtly musical practices are inserted and visualized: if, as would seem obvious, it is impossible that these different musical practices can be performed together, they, however, *live together* in the same physical and symbolical space, the court. This image reveals to us what courtiers and musicians could perform and listen to in an Italian court of the Fifteenth centu-

ry. It speaks about integration and interrelationship, without any division, any rupture and any censorship.

The ontological status of musical genres depicted in the image could be well represented by Leonardo da Vinci's concept of music. In his *Paragone delle arti*, he stressed the ephemeral nature of the musical discipline, which "dies instantly after its creation". For Leonardo, the perception of music would seem completely independent of the material object: the score may simply not exist, but where it exists, does not seem to have substantially affected the status of music, a discipline essentially conceived as a diachronic process and not as a synchronic text:

Music has two ills: one is mortal, the other is related to its decrepitude [feebleness]; the mortal one is always linked to the moment that follows its creation; its feebleness causing repetitiousness makes it hateful and vile.

La musica ha due malattie, delle quali l'una è mortale, l'altra è decrepitudinale: la mortale è sempre congiunta allo istante seguente a quella della sua creazione; la decrepitudinale la fa odiosa e vile nella sua replicazione (*Codice Atlantico*, 322).

The second ill is a consequence of the first: the sudden disappearance of sound perception, means that music is consumed by time. Because, as soon as the sound ends, the music dies, the only antidote to feebleness would be its continuous renewal: an unsustainable form of eternity, which would presume an ideal iteration, *ad infinitum*, of musical performance.

Probably, the perceptive point of view adopted by Leonardo requires the theorizing of the different relationships that painting, poetry and music entertain with memory. For painting, the perception matches with the material object, because it is entirely produced by the relationship that the subject establishes with the artifact: the picture. Even for poetry, the perception seems to match, at least partially, with the material object, by virtue of a process of transformation of the modalities of reception of poetry, from col-

lective listening to individual reading, which had emphasized the textuality of poetry.

Musical performance seems to completely match musical creation. According to the experience of Leonardo as a musician, musical composition perceptually matches musical performance: the music does not exist prior to being performed and the music does not exist after being performed.

This concept may seem, today, totally partial and incomplete, but reflects a fundamental dimension of the conceptual status of the discipline: a simple truth that speaks of men for whom the creation of music is its appearance on the horizon of perception, its death is its disappearance from this same horizon. Changing our point of view from the desperate research of the couple composer / work to the perception of the multidimensional dialectic of courtly musical experience, the need to isolate two traditions falls immediately. If the concept of tradition has to be defined according to the logic of social action, group identity and collective memory, in my opinion, the two traditions have never existed.

Perhaps unconsciously, Pirrotta and his followers have used the concept of tradition as a 'residual category', a type of false consciousness susceptible to manipulation by dominant ideological and teleological concepts, which are likely to be an impediment to understanding, are likely to be an imposition of a modeling paradigm, that tries to separate what, in fact, seems to belong to a unique world.

This story demonstrates the need to re-discuss in depth the role, the functions and the meaning of written musical sources during the Renaissance. The lack of written sources produces, necessarily, an inconsistent musical experience: perhaps inconsistent for our mentality, but probably not inconsistent for their mentality, as the 'regressive' position of Leonardo demonstrates. The centrality of written sources is probably a necessity to celebrate the existence of musicology as a discipline, but it is, often, an impediment to the historical understanding, to an understanding of music as human history, not as museal history: Could it be possible to conceive, for example, another kind of regression, the regression to writing?

Between Orality and Writing

The identity of western music's historical development has been mainly based on a process of legitimization of music as a text. To achieve this purpose, many different theories, have been elaborated to explain the transition from orality to writing: emphasizing, in this process, sometimes the primacy of sound, or, inversely, the primacy of sign, they reached, more or less, the same conclusion: notwithstanding the many distinguishing features of musical text, it attains, during the centuries, its own epistemological autonomy, legitimating a dignity fully comparable to the dignity of literary text. The conceptual dependence of musical text on literary text can be easily proved by analysing the origins of musical philology, which was born borrowing its tools from literary philology.

In the light of recent studies on musical compositional process and memory orality and writing seem to be the two dimensions of the same world, producing a continuous switching between them, 'polarity of a continuum' that constructs a highly complex cultural inheritance.

A disconcerting letter by Luzzaschi, about the use of De Rore's *cartella musicale**, is a precious witness of this switching, which characterizes the compositional practices in the Sixteenth Century:

I, Luzzasco Luzzaschi, Ferrarese citizen, swear that this *cartella* belonged to the most famous and the most excellent Cipriano De Rore [...], on which *cartella* be used to write the compositions made first by him in his mind, as was always his custom. I being at that time his student, saw him write on the aforementioned *cartella* the Gloria of a Mass that he made in Ferrara and other compositions made at various times.

Io Luzzascho Luzzaschi Cittadino Ferrarese, faccio fede che questa cartella fù del famosissimo, et Eccellentissimo Cipriano de Rore [...],

*The cartella is a slate on which the renaissance composer usually wrote down his compositions.

sopra la qual Cartella scriveva le compositioni fatte prima da lui a mente, com'era sempre suo costume. Io in quel tempo essendo suo discepolo lo vidi à scrivere sopra detta Cartella la Gloria d'una Messa che fece in Ferrara et altre sue compositioni fatte in tempi diversi (*affidavit*, 29 settembre 1606).

Starting from Luzzaschi's discourse –whose reliability as a source of understanding the compositional process of Cipriano was amply demonstrated by Jessie Ann Owens–, to what kind of world should we assign the music of the Flemish composer? Obviously the world of writing, since his works have been transmitted through manuscripts and printed sources, but, if we believe the words of his disciple, we have to assign them, equally, the world of orality, since De Rore seems to have written his *Gloria* in the mind.

In the light of this letter, is it useful to trace any rigid separation between orality and writing? Is it useful to conceive a transition between orality and writing, or rather, Luzzaschi's words testify to the co-presence, the interplay, the mutual amplification of orality and writing?

Let us try to complete the ideal process described by Luzzaschi: the polyphonic piece, conceived in the mind, is written down on the *cartella*, probably revised, perhaps performed, and finally, published. What is notably quite absent from this process? The score. It seems not to intervene at any stage of the process, not even in the final stage of printing, because the standard format of a music book, in this period, is partbooks^{**}: but where is the text? The material structure of partbooks does not allow for an instantaneous reading: the text is broken up into a number of parts conceived for performance, so that only this last can reconstruct the syntactic integrity and the perceptive quality of the work.

Partbooks organization lacks the overall synchronic control of the score, which is, according to me, an indispensable tool for the emergence of the modern notion of the musical text. Singing using partbooks develops a diachronic control, which, rather, improves the capacity of aural interaction

^{**}A partbook is a format for printing or copying music in which each book contains the part for a single voice or instrument (for example, a six part composition requires six partbooks).

between the members of the ensemble: each singer can heard, but cannot see what the other singers are singing.

The material structure of a cultural object is not neutral, it deeply affects how this same cultural object is put to use: what notion of the text the circulation of partbooks throughout Europe for centuries has constructed? A score-oriented object would have contributed to the construction of the same notion of musical text?

I have deliberately chosen to use the term literacy in the title of my paper. Literacy is difficult to define, and has no precise equivalent in other languages. *Litteratus* is the Latin word most closely corresponding to “literate”, indicating a familiarity with Latin language. The literate, in short, could be defined as someone who could read and write a language for which there was a set of structured rules, applicable to a written and to a spoken language.

But literacy is not textuality: one can be literate without the overt use of texts, and one can use texts extensively without evidencing genuine literacy. To investigate musical literacy signifies, on the one hand, to understand the oral and written elements in the musical works themselves, and, on the other hand, to investigate the audiences for which they were intended and the mentality in which they were received. In other words, the term literacy presumes a continuous multidirectional dialectic between oral and written.

To understand this change we have usually privileged the conceptual framework *from... to*, from orality to writing, the same conceptual framework I provocatively adopted, inverting the direction of the musical development. *From maker to composer* is, for example, the title of a famous article by Rob Wegman. But perhaps, the change could be better understood investigating the always different combinations of oral *and* written, of maker *and* composer, not irreconcilable identities, but rather ‘polarity of a continuum’ that can well coexist even in the same person, because “humanity does not pass through phases as a train passes through stations: being alive, it has the privilege of always moving yet never leaving anything behind. Whatever we have been, in some sort we are still”, observed C. S. Lewis (*The Allegory of Love*).

The urge to find the key sources that testify to the change, causes sometimes anachronistic and prejudicial readings. Wegman considers a letter by Thomas Oedenhofer, written at Vienna on March 13, 1460, “the earliest document known to me where improvisation is explicitly described in opposition to composition”:

He and also his daughter Sibilla, compose counterpoint, performing, immediately, in the act of singing what may be brought under [their] eyes.

Scit et filia sua Sibilla contrapunctum facere et e vestigio, que subiecta fuerint oculis, cantando formare.

But, in my opinion, Oedenhofer, simply, stated that what can be performed by heart and what can be read on paper are conceptually exactly the same object. No opposition can be identified between improvisation and composition, because a rigid opposition of these two concepts does not belong to the mentality of the writer.

In fact, this assertion fits perfectly with an ancient tradition for which writing in the mind and writing on the paper are not qualitatively different tasks. This passage of the *Retorica ad Herennium* elucidates the analogical interior mechanism of imparting concepts in the mind, with the external mechanism of writing concepts on a wax tablet:

Those who know the letters of the alphabet can thereby write out what is dictated to them and read aloud what they have written. Likewise, those who have learned mnemonics can set in places what they have heard, and from these places deliver it by memory. For the places are very much like wax tablet or papyrus, the images like letters, the arrangement and disposition of the images like the script, and the delivery is like the reading.

Quemadmodum igitur qui literas sciunt, possunt id, quod dictatur, eis scribere et recitare quod scripserunt, item mnemonica didicerunt, possunt, quod audierunt, in locis conlocare [et] ex his memoriter pronuntiare. Nam loci cerae aut cartae simillimi sunt, imagines litteris, dispositio et conlocatio imaginum scripturae, pronuntiatio lectioni (*Retorica ad Herennium*, III, 17, 30).

Those who know the alphabet can write on paper, and those who know the mnemotecnics can write in the mind, by placing their knowledge in *loci* (places, backgrounds), which are similar to wax tablets, and in which memory is organized. Della Porta explicitly establishes the conceptual link between literary writing and music writing, in this fascinating analogy that musically reinterpreted the entire programme of the art of memory:

The place accomplishes the same function of the paper, or of the musicians' *cartella*: the persons are the lines of the staff, the images are the notes placed on the staff (*Ars Reminiscendi*, 1566).

Il luoco fa quello effetto in questo essercizio che fa la carta invernicata o pietra de' compositori di musica: le persone sono le righe che ivi sono, le imagini sono le note che vi si fanno sopra.

The places (*loci*) are the paper or the *cartella* on which the composer writes down his music; the persons are the lines of the musical staff; the images are the musical notes: the act to writing music is completely reinterpreted according to the conceptual framework of the art of memory's writing in the mind.

What is there in common between these three different witnesses by Luzzaschi, Oedenhofer and Della Porta? They, obviously, belong to different ages, contexts and experiences but seem to converge in representing a compositional process which moves from inside to outside, from the mind's *loci* to the paper's *loci*, because what was elaborated inside is basically similar to what could have been elaborated outside.

In its search for authorship and textuality, this process is precisely what historical musicology has often ignored. We have misunderstood a tradition that acts for centuries, for which orality *is* a form of writing. The key organizing principle, which regulates the dialectic between internal and external writing, is memory. Memory, conceived as a book, transforms its data according to various processes of assimilation and selection of the material, that are extremely important in understanding creative remembering.

But what are the distinguish features of musical memory and remembering? According to Zarlino it is internal memory that allows us to store musical knowledge:

If a man doesn't store the sounds and the intervals of musical voices into the memory, cannot obtain any profit [...], because it is impossible to write down them.

Se l'huomo non ritiene i Suoni, & gli Intervalli delle voci Musicali nella memoria, non fa profitto alcuno [...] perché non si possono à via alcuna scrivere (*Dimostrazioni harmoniche*, 1589).

Quite paradoxically, Zarlino devoted his life to storing musical knowledge in external memory: the book. But this same paradox tells us that this book is ontologically a physical place in which written and oral memory blend together: on the one hand, oral traditions are incorporated into a written text, and, on the other hand, the written text reactivates oral traditions. Writing may transform memory by fixing it, but the musical community had continued for centuries to communicate values and the interpretative structures within which to understand this written knowledge, orally. If the recollection of sounds and musical intervals can be stored only in the mind, musical knowledge functioned in a world that was essentially governed and made intelligible by oral discourse.

Gerolamo Dalla Casa (*Il vero modo di diminuir*, 1687), for example, decided to take the pen in his hand to show the true art of divisions, for the benefit of any person. Even more explicit the preface of Galeazzo Sabbatini's

Breve et facile regola (1628), in which he hopes to achieve, by writing, the same success he had achieved with oral teaching:

... I did not believe that this practice was successful, as has so far been successful in oral teaching, and if I have the same success in written teaching, the highest praise and gratitude I will have towards Your Highness.

... e meno credeva che [questa pratica] mi riuscisse, come in sin hora mi è molto ben riuscita in voce, e se l'istessa fortuna incontrerò anche per iscritto, maggior lode et obbligo insieme si dovrà à V. S.

The editing and the fruition of these books involve a double process: on the one hand the authors decided to translate their knowledge, stored in their internal memory, in the external memory, to extend this same knowledge beyond the boundaries of oral discourse; on the other hand, the user, to master efficaciously the book's content, had to re-translate the external memory into internal memory, reactivating an oral practice only temporarily fixed on the page. This inversion is a distinguishing feature of musical remembering: in the same period, for example, a treatise on philosophy was probably not specifically written to reactivate an oral tradition. But this inversion concerns not only unwritten practices fixed on the page for pedagogical purposes, such as divisions or *basso continuo*, it affects, also, the compositional process.

The *Cento variati passaggi* [FIG. 2] codified by Adriano Banchieri are a paradigmatic example of this inversion in the compositional process:

I borrowed, for the benefit of composers, a hundred of different passages from famous composers of our time, which contain bare notes and which are applied according to local memory (*Cartella musicale*, 1614).

Cento variati passaggi [...] Dedotti in celebri compositori [*sic*] de i nostri tempi, & con le note semplici à giovamento di chi compone, applicate in termine di memoria locale.

216 C A R T E L L A.
CENTO VARIATI PASSAGGI
 Accentuati alla moderna, Latini, & Volgari;

Dedotti in celebri compositori de i nostri tempi, & con le note semplici à giouamento di chi compone, applicate in termine di memoria locale.

Del P. D. Adriano Banchieri Monaco Olivetano.
 Et distinti in quattro ordini cioè
 Vinticinque alla Voce Soprana. 25. Alla Voce Contr'Alta.
 Vinticinque alla Tenora, & 25. Alla Parte Graue.

ALLA VOCE SOPRANA.

	MEMORIA.	PASAGGIO.
1	In Deo	In Deo.
2	Sperabo	spera bo
3	Homo factus est	Ho mo fa ctus est.
4	Et iterum	& i rerum.
5	Flos virginitatis	Flos vir ginita tis.

FIG. 2: A. BANCHIERI, *Cartella musicale*, 1614

The Olivetan monk, on the one hand, certifies the existence of a number of memory's places ("memoria locale"), and, on the other hand, he promotes their implementation. In other words, he codifies in artificial memory the mechanism that allows him to store a series of musical images

that construct the internal archive of the composer: the *memoria* is the bare skeleton of the cadential gestures, the *passaggio* is the same cadential gestures ornamented.

The adoption of mnemotecnics for structuring these *Cento passaggi*, an analogous system to that adopted by treatises on diminution, testifies to the fact that even the composer doesn't use these examples directly from paper: for mastering them he has had to previously store the melodic formulae in the mind. Let us return to Luzzaschi's letter: according to Luzzaschi, Cipriano usually wrote down on the *cartella* what he had previously written in the mind. Can the mechanism described by Banchieri shed any light on this process? I think so, and I think that for Luzzaschi as well as for Banchieri the privileged means of creative remembering seems to be internal memory: internal memory seems to be the privileged background for structuring the compositional process.

What conception of rhetorical *inventio* does Banchieri imply, without mentioning the names of the composers from whom he patiently de-contextualized his melodic formulae? The author does not indicate the names of the composers because, as he expressly states, nobody can claim these melodic formulae as their own. They do not belong to someone, but to everyone: these melodic formulae are *loci communes* that feed the inexhaustible re-writing of the existing, according to a rhetorically oriented *inventio*, which requires a melodic material socially ratified to ensure the musical performance of the liturgical service.

In a context where, as Banchieri says, even if you found the supposed author of a melodic formula, nobody can truly affirm that he was the first to employ it, the reuse of the existing could not simply be the *inventio*'s standard concept?

For Erasmus, for example, the great master of the rewriting of the existing, the individuality of the author lies in his ability to change established patterns, in his ability to modify their assembling, and precisely these virtues constitute, according to Glareanus, Erasmus's music teacher, the excellence of Obrecht:

The third in this class is undoubtedly Jacob Obrecht, who was certainly the teacher of Erasmus. Because he had great promptness of talent and great abundance of invention, it is said that he composed an egregious Mass, admired by the learned, in just one night.

Tertius in hac classe haud dubius est Iacobus Hobrechth [...], quippe qui D. Erasmo Roterodamo Praeceptor fuit [...]. Hunc praeterea fama est, tanta ingenii celeritate ac inventionis copia viguisse, ut per unam noctem, egregiam, et quae doctis admirationi esset, Missam componeret.

Perhaps, Glareanus in delineating this portrait of the musician may have thought of the Erasmian concept of *copia*, a wealth of *topoi* and abundance of invention patterns that produce proliferation (the *cornucopia*, in fact): as the orator must construct a *thesaurus* of *res et verba*, so the musician must build a similar *thesaurus* of musical patterns, and it is probably because of this *inventionis copia* that Obrecht was able to compose a mass in just one night. So, the compositions of skilled musicians abound in an infinite abundance (*copia*) of patterns, as also Gallus Dressler reminds us:

The compositions of skilled musicians abound of an infinite copiousness of patterns.

Exemplorum infinitam copiam subpeditabunt probatorum musicorum Compositiones (G. Dressler, *Praecepta musicae poeticae* (1563).

Their abstraction, de-contextualization, and inclusion in the mnemonic archive of the musician fertilizes the *inventio*, nurturing its fundamental generative function.

When will this concept of musical *inventio* definitely die? I do not know, but I confess that rather than questioning on the emergence of modernity, I'd like to be a witness to diversity, a diversity of musical discipline that, perhaps, has never completely disappeared, but is only gradually hidden, at least in our eyes. As the incarnation of this conceal-

ment comes to my mind at least a name, the name of one of the great *id-ola* of Western music: Wolfgang Amedeus Mozart. Maybe the genius directly inspired by God of Milos Forman's film, who writes down pages and pages of music apparently effortless could be considered the great epigone of a forgotten tradition that subterraneously has acted for centuries.