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“Traces of Ferrarese Song in Giaches de Wert’s *Primo libro de’ madrigali a quattro voci* of 1561”

A relationship between the young Giaches de Wert and Cipriano de Rore is indisputable, but there are very few clear indications of when it began. However, a careful reading of historical and musical evidence against de Wert’s *I a 5* (1558) and *I a 4* (1561) shows that there is no great stylistic distance between their works and those contemporaneously produced in Ferrara. If anything, the female-voiced settings of *I a 4* continue the process of amalgamating the structural qualities of song with more complex affective compositional interventions seen first in the Ferrarese madrigal of the 1540s and developed further in the 1550s. The presence of Bradamante and their transparent debt to *arie* binds them to Tuttovale Menon’s *Madrigali d’amore* (1548); their melodic expressivity to Francesco dalla Viola’s works in the *Madrigali de la Fama* (1548); and their harmonic complexities to de Rore’s *II a 4* (1557). These qualities woven together produce a fresh, and truly dramatic, locution of the solo female voice, for both specific characters (Bradamante; Dido) and the unnamed female protagonist.