

## The Influence of Torquato Tasso's Poetry on Monteverdi's Madrigals

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**Abstract :** Using rhetorical analysis, this paper analyzes thirteen madrigalian settings of Torquato Tasso's (1544-1595) poetry by Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) published between 1587 (Book One) and 1619 (Book Seven). Such analysis suggests that the composer consistently responded to the expressivity and increased formal freedom typical of Tasso's poetry by making greater use of musico-rhetorical figures, as described by the German theorist Joachim Burmeister (1564-1629) in his treatise *Musica poetica* (1606). The use of rhetorical analysis when examining the influence of the poet Tasso on Monteverdi can illustrate the influence of literary components on music. One cannot overestimate the importance of these texts and their influence on composers of the day. The evidence presented in this paper strongly suggests that exposure to the poems of Torquato Tasso early in his career encouraged Claudio Monteverdi to increasingly adopt a more rhetorical approach in his madrigal compositions.

**Keywords :** Claudio Monteverdi, musico-rhetorical analysis, renaissance, torquato tasso

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