

Stephen Stubbs

## *L'armonia sonora*: continuo orchestration in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*

In performing Italian music of the early 17th century, the modern interpreter must often answer the question, 'Which instrument or combination of instruments should realize the bass?' Several publications from the first decade of the 17th century shed light on the norms and expectations of execution and instrumentation of the basso continuo in various kinds of music, but only the score of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* gives us a series of indications for the changing orchestration of the bass in a specific musical context. To understand fully the meaning of these indications we should first review the most important information from other sources.

Lodovico Viadana, in his *Cento concerti ecclesiastici* (Venice, 1602), claims to be responding to the practical needs of church musicians in composing music for one to four voices with a bass line for the organ ('con il Basso continuo per sonar nel Organo Nova Inventione'). His important rules for the execution of the bass mention no medium other than the organ.

Giulio Caccini, in his foreword to *Le nuove musiche* (Florence, 1602), explains the aims of 'the new music' for solo voice and basso continuo. To achieve the desired effect of musical speech (*in armonia favellare*), these compositions must be performed with a certain noble *sprezzatura*. This humanist term, borrowed from Castiglione's *Il cortegiano* (1528), is difficult to translate, but Caccini's further instructions make it clear that he means a stylistically informed freedom to adapt tempo, dynamics, rhythm and ornamentation in order better to serve the meaning of the text.<sup>1</sup> In keeping with this flexibility of performance, Caccini says that the singer may sing to the accompaniment of a single chitarrone or other string instrument (contemporary manuscripts containing Caccini's monodies with tablature for lute make it clear that this was a common alternative)<sup>2</sup> without being forced to accommodate himself to others. Caccini may have self-accompaniment in mind here, although not exclusively, as he goes on to praise

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the particular skill in accompaniment of Antonio Naldi, an early chitarrone player. In the entire foreword, only the chitarrone is specifically mentioned for the realization of the bass, and in one phrase Caccini calls the continuo 'il Basso per lo Chitarone', just as Viadana had called his 'il Basso continuo per sonar nel Organo'. Caccini says that the chitarrone is the instrument best suited to accompany the voice (in particular the tenor voice).

Combinations of instruments simultaneously realizing the bass (if this was indeed the form of notation used) are recorded as early as the *intermedi* to Bargagli's *La pellegrina* at the Florentine wedding celebrations of 1589.<sup>3</sup> Vittoria Archilei sang once to a large lute and two chitarroni, and at another point to a lute, a chitarrone and a *lirone*. On the same occasion Peri sang to a single chitarrone and Caccini played the harp; both composed music for the celebrations, as did Cavalieri. These three were to engage in earnest competition for the glory of having invented the new style of *recitar cantando* and theatrical productions in *stile rappresentativo* that would result in three virtually simultaneous publications in 1600/1601—Peri's and Caccini's rival settings of Rinuccini's *L'Euridice* and Emilio de' Cavalieri's *Rappresentazione di Anima, et di Corpo* (Rome, 1600).<sup>4</sup>

None of these publications contains continuo instrumentation in the scores; however, Cavalieri (who had won the race to the press) included a highly informative foreword which makes several pertinent observations. One would assume that this foreword is by the publisher, Alessandro Guidotti, who also composed the dedication to Cardinal Aldobrandino. He speaks throughout in the third person of the instructions, wishes and judgements of Signor Emilio de' Cavalieri concerning the performance of this and similar works. However, Cavalieri's letters reveal that he considered himself the author of this foreword. It is a document of the first importance for understanding the aesthetics and practice of the *rappresentazione per recitar cantando*, the genre to which Monteverdi's *Orfeo* belongs. The first emphasis is

on moving the listener to experience the most diverse *affetti*—pity and joy, tears and laughter. The means to achieve this end are a constant variety of musical, poetic, dramatic and visual effects. In particular, as regards our subject, 'Signor Emilio would praise the changing of instrumentation to conform to the *affetto* of the singer.' These instruments, in order not to be seen, should play behind the scenes and must be played well (or sonorously) and should vary in number depending on whether one plays in a theatre or chamber. He also warns that such recitational music should not be played to an audience of more than 1,000 people, as this would make it impossible to understand all of the words and might cause the singers to force their voices and lessen the *affetto*. To illustrate some continuo combinations, the author says that the *lirone*, harpsichord and chitarrone make an excellent effect together,<sup>5</sup> as do the soft organ with a chitarrone.<sup>6</sup> No mention is made of where in the music one might best deploy these groupings. The only specific assignment of continuo instruments is given almost as a stage direction: 'Piacere and his two companions would do well to have instruments in their hands to play while they sing. One should have a chitarrone, another a Spanish guitar and the third a little Spanish tambourine.' The music for Piacere and his companions is in the light dance-song style often called 'canzonetta' or 'villanella', which is derived from the Neapolitan villanesca.<sup>7</sup> The copy of the *Rappresentazione* now housed at the Biblioteca Universitaria in Urbino contains a few chords jotted in tablature by a (presumably) contemporary chitarrone player. If this was used by him as a performing score, we can deduce that the chitarrone played with both *Anima* and *Corpo* as they speak with each other in their first dialogue. What other instrumentalists may have played with him cannot be ascertained.

We have examined the *basso per l'organo* of Viadana, the practical church musician; the humanist Caccini's new art of song to a single plucked instrument; and the touch of exoticism and worldliness in Cavalieri's association of the guitar and percus-



1 Bonifazio Veronese de Pitati (c.1487–1553), *Dives and Lazarus* (detail) (Venice, Accademia)

sion with the dance-song of Pleasure. (These three examples also neatly represent the three main musical currents which gave rise to the basso continuo.) We are now ready to proceed to that source which strives to encompass the contemporary array of instruments for continuo and defines an aesthetic system for their use—Agostino Agazzari's *Del sonare sopra'l basso* (Siena, 1607).

Agazzari's book is extremely compact; it consists of just 12 pages. He begins with a classification of all the instruments which play 'over the bass' ('sopra il basso') into two groups—those of the fundament and those of the ornament:

As foundation, there are those which guide and sustain the entire body of the voices and instruments of the said concerto; which are organ, cembalo etc., and similarly in the case of few or single voices, lute, *tiorba*, *arpa* etc. As ornament there are those which disport themselves and play counterpoints, and thus render the harmony more agreeable and sonorous; such as the lute, *tiorba*, *arpa*, *lirone*, *cetera*, *spinetto*, *chitarrina*, *violino*, *pandora* and the like.<sup>8</sup>

It is quite clear what the instruments of foundation are supposed to do. We have Agazzari's own demonstration of the texture of a full keyboard realization in a consistently compact four-part texture. That the art of playing fully and fundamentally on the chitarrone was somewhat different can be

observed in Kapsberger's tablature realizations of the bass line printed in his *Libro primo di arie passeggiate* (Rome, 1612). Here the texture varies from one to six parts; Kapsberger takes advantage of the chitarrone's special sonority by often adding bass notes an octave below the bass line.

A more difficult question is: What is the meaning of Agazzari's 'instruments of ornament'? Does he really mean that players of all these instruments (including violins) should be capable of playing their own spontaneous part or realization above the bass?

Agazzari describes this function in detail with reference to the lute:

Therefore, whoever plays the lute, which is the noblest instrument among them all, must play nobly, with much invention and variety, and not, as some do who, because they have a facile hand, do nothing but play runs and diminutions from beginning to end, especially in the company of other instruments which do the same, when nothing is heard but chaos and confusion, displeasing and offensive to the listener.

Chords are sometimes to be struck, with gentle repercussions; sometimes passages slow or quick are to be played, as well as imitations at different pitches and at various points, also ornaments such as *gruppi*, *trilli* and *accenti*, each at its appropriate time entwining with the voice and bringing delight to the auditors.

And that which I have said of the lute as the principal

instrument, I wish to be understood of the others according to their nature.

Agazzari goes on to mention much more briefly the chief qualities of some of the other instruments and how best to bring them out. The *lirone* must be played with 'long, clear and sonorous bow-strokes'; the *tiorba* 'with its full and sweet consonance should have its bass strings elegantly touched which is the particular excellence of this instrument'; and the *arpa doppia* can play the entire compass 'as well in the soprano as in the bass ... with sweet plucking and responses between the two hands'.

This is all helpful in gaining a general picture of the capacities of the instruments; it is also inspiring to realize what freedoms were given and what qualities expected of these musicians. But what will help us to approach in detail the way in which leading musicians of the early 17th century might have exercised the function of an ornamental realization of the bass?

I believe that what we need is to be sought mainly in the solo instrumental literature of the time. In prefaces to collections of music for lute, chitarrone, organ and harpsichord, player-composers such as Kapsberger (1604 and 1640), Alessandro Piccinini (1623) and Girolamo Frescobaldi (1637)<sup>9</sup> described a vocabulary of performing techniques for the toccata which suggest a kinship to the speech-song of Caccini and Monteverdi: Caccini's dichotomy between the through-composed madrigal and the strophic aria with dance rhythms is reflected in these collections, with their distinction between toccata and dance. The seeming irony that a new emphasis on serving the text should give rise to an abstract instrumental style which sought to 'speak in tones' may be explained by the fact that such players as Kapsberger—accompanists in the new style of song playing from a basso continuo—quickly departed from the older polyphonic mode of thought. These performers began to think harmonically, and to replace the decorative division with the affective arpeggio. In his first book for chitarrone of 1604 we are struck by Kapsberger's

abundant use of two new signs—the arpeggio sign and the slur, which he calls *strascino*. The second toccata is made up entirely of arpeggios and is entitled *arpeggiata*, while the first toccata's notation is blackened by slurs, which are virtually continuous. Another prominent feature of this style is a remarkably complex and subtle use of rhythm, including semiquaver triplets. This rhythmic subtlety is often used to achieve effects of *accelerando* and *rallentando* which again relate to the *senza battuta* effects of speech-song.

Another possible meaning of 'ornament', although Agazzari does not describe this practice, is ornamentation not 'above the bass' but 'of the bass' itself. In Stefano Landi's opera *Sant'Alessio* (Rome, 1632) the opening *sinfonia* is scored for three violins and a double bass-line. The lower bass in slower values is for the harpsichord, the upper one, which is a kind of division of the bass part, is for the 'lutes, harps, theorboes and violins [cellos]'. This seems to correspond to Agazzari's *fundament* and *ornament*, but with a clear indication of ornamentation applied to the bass itself. Several further sources for the chitarrone confirm that this instrument was often used as a kind of plucked division bass, as opposed to a chordal 'realizer' of the bass, although this function was also clearly filled in other situations.<sup>10</sup>

What Agazzari does not do is differentiate one musical context from another. He always refers to 'il concerto' but makes no distinction between church and chamber; nor does he say whether his dictums are equally applicable to large concerted music and recitative. We learn only that the harpsichord and organ should form the *fundament* for larger groups, whereas with few or solo voices the lute, theorbo or harp will serve. In one paragraph he does, however, neatly sum up the responsibilities of playing the bass with a single instrument and the etiquette of simultaneous realization:

But everything must be done with prudence: for if the instruments [of accompaniment] are alone in the consort, they must do everything and season the consort; if they are in company, they must regard one another, giving each his

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time and place and not interfering; if there are many they must each wait their turn: and not act like sparrows in a cage, sounding all at once and seeing which one cries the loudest.

We might hope to find an illustration of how to employ continuo combinations in Agazzari's own *Eumelio* (Venice, 1606), a short *dramma pastorale*, but this score is as lacking in such information as all those previously mentioned. So, for all of Agazzari's wit and inspiration, the modern musician is left with far too many unanswered questions about the deployment of the 'continuo orchestra' in a specific musical context.

The score of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, first printed in 1609, records the event of its first performance at the Mantuan court in 1607. No foreword such as Cavalieri's is given to convey Monteverdi's thoughts on the execution of this or similar works, so we have nothing of a prescriptive nature, but in the orchestral list and the many indications in the score we are given an abundance of descriptive information. Unfortunately, the description is far from complete, and neither do the list and indications agree with one another about the exact numbers of instruments involved. But, these quibbles aside, we have much to learn from what is in the score. If we can understand the principles upon which the selection of continuo instruments was made in the places indicated, we will be able to make sound choices for the rest of the piece and for other works of the period.

Let us propose a series of hypotheses about how Monteverdi and his contemporaries might have made such choices and then test them against the evidence.

**Role** A precise continuo group might be associated with one character for the duration of his role. We have the evidence of Cavalieri's *Piacere* continuo that this was sometimes done. Also a letter from Monteverdi to Annibale Iberti gives important instructions for the performance (in 1615) of his ballo *Tirsi e Clori*:

I would have it performed in a half-moon, at whose corners should be placed a chitarrone and a harpsichord,

one playing the bass for Clori and the other for Tirsi, and these should each have a chitarrone in their hands to play as they sing; if there could be a harp for Clori in place of the chitarrone that would be even better.

It is perhaps important that *Piacere* and his companions share with Tirsi and Clori the element of self-accompaniment in which an unchanging accompaniment is reinforced by verisimilitude. In Monteverdi's *Orfeo* there are several roles which may have had a single unchanging continuo throughout. Caronte, for example, is assigned the regal in his first speech and there are no further indications to contradict this.

*Affetto* The possibility that Monteverdi also observed Cavalieri's dictum about 'changing the instrumentation to conform with the *affetto* of the singer' is best demonstrated in the role of Orfeo himself. Of the 22 continuo indications in the score, nine are devoted to the accompaniment of Orfeo (table 1).

The first indication for Orfeo's accompaniment does not occur until midway through Act 2, after he

has received the news of Euridice's death. Up to this point all of the continuo instrumentation for Arcadia in a mood of jubilation for the wedding of Orfeo and Euridice has consisted of combinations of chitarroni and harpsichords as well as violone and harp in the choruses. When the nymphs and shepherds sing 'Lasciate i monti' they are accompanied by five instruments of the violin family, three chitarroni (only two are listed in the orchestral list), two harpsichords, a harp, a violone and a small flute. The first incursion of the *organo di legno* comes with the dramatic entrance of Messaggiera. She is given the combination of organ and chitarrone which is also assigned to two shepherds as they lament—'Chi ne consola, ahi lassi'. The fact that Orfeo shares this instrumentation, which Cavalieri had already mentioned as having a good effect, with other Arcadian figures in close proximity means that there is no attempt here at character differentiation through instrumentation. Perhaps we can conclude that this is a good instrumentation for Arcadians in a serious or grieving affect. If

Table 1 Continuo indications for Orfeo's part

<i>Text</i>	<i>Continuo</i>
	<i>Act 2</i>
1 Tu se' morta	Un organo di legno e un Chitarone
	<i>Act 3</i>
2 Possente spirto	Orfeo al suono dell'Organo di legno e un Chitarrone
3 Sol tu nobile Dio	Furno sonate le altri parti da tre Viole da braccio, e un contrabasso
4 Ei dorme	Orfeo canta al suono del Organo di legno solamente
5 Mentre versan	Qui entra nella barca e passa cantando al suono del Organo di legno
	<i>Act 4</i>
6 Ma che odo?	Qui fa strepito dietro la tela. Segue Orfeo cantando nel Clavicembano Viola da braccio, & Chittarone
7 O dolcissimi lumi	Qui si volta Orfeo, & canta al suono del Organo di legno.
8 Ma qual eclissi	Qui canta Orfeo al suono del Clavic. Viola da braccio basso, & un chitar.
	<i>Act 5</i>
9 Questi i campi di Traccia	Duoi Organi di legno, & duoi Chitaroni concertorno questo canto. sonando l'uno nel angolo sinistro de la Sena, l'altro nel destro.

harpsichords and chitarroni (and, on at least one occasion, the harp) accompany the nymphs and shepherds in their celebrations, there is good reason to suppose that Orfeo and Euridice have similar accompaniments until the change of atmosphere at Messaggiera's 'Ahi caso acerbo'.

The centrepiece of the work is 'Possente spirito', in which Orfeo employs the full range of his art to mollify Caronte and gain entrance to the underworld. He is again given the basic accompaniment of organ and chitarrone, but a series of obbligato instruments (two violins, two cornetts, harp, then three-, then four-part strings in turn) underscore the particular affect of each passage. This could be viewed as a composed illustration of Agazzari's complementary elements—the instruments of foundation and the instruments of ornament. The passage 'Sol tu nobile Dio' is particularly interesting, as the four-part strings holding long chords produce what is perhaps the earliest notated *recitativo accompagnato*. There is evidence that players of violin and viola da gamba family instruments were often capable of spontaneous realizations of this nature: see, for example, Schütz's *Historia der ... Aufferstehung ... Jesu Christ* (Dresden, 1623), Domenico Mazzocchi's *Musiche sacre e morali* (Rome, 1640) and, closest to our subject, the *Lamento d'Arianna* in the original production of Monteverdi's lost opera in 1608.<sup>11</sup>

With all his art, Orfeo succeeds not in awakening the pity of Caronte, but at least in putting him to sleep. Here, as he sings 'Ei dorme' and again as he slips into the boat and crosses to the underworld, he is accompanied by the organ alone. This is perhaps no more than an aid to quiet stealth, and, in any case, provides the most extreme contrast with the kaleidoscopic display of the previous passage.

In Act 4 we are given the clearest idea of how quickly and dramatically the scoring can change when the emotions of the protagonist are in a mercurial state. Orfeo stops in the middle of his hymn of praise to his own 'omnipotent lyre', which has allowed him to overcome the hard hearts of Hades and win back his Euridice. He suddenly doubts

whether she is really following him or whether he is being tricked by the gods of the underworld. He hears a noise behind him and imagines that Furies may be attacking or removing Euridice. In his fearful agitation he is accompanied here by a trio of harpsichord, *viola da braccio basso* and chitarrone.

As he turns and sings longingly to the fading image of Euridice he is accompanied by a single organ. The trio of instruments returns as he sings 'Ma qual eclissi ohime v'oscura?'. The three changes are packed into eight bars of music. We encounter the formula of harpsichord, *viola da braccio* and chitarrone for the first time in Act 2, when a shepherd reacts in surprise and bewilderment to the mournful entrance of Messaggiera into the scene of celebration. On the evidence of these three speeches it is easy to imagine that Monteverdi found the crunch, rattle and zing potential of these three instruments an excellent vehicle to convey agitated and fearful speech. Again, the intervention of the organ alone produces an effect of stasis and quiet which throws the 'agitation trio' into greater relief.

The final indication for Orfeo raises new questions. Two teams of organ and chitarrone are deployed on the right and left sides of the scene. Why? And what did each team play? The inclusion of echo effects in this, the longest of all Orfeo's monologues, might mean that one team was reserved for the echoes. This seems to be the least likely solution: such effects would surely be better achieved by a stage-area ensemble with echoes from a backstage team rather than the left-right distribution. Several other sources do specify instruments that should be heard from behind the scene, so such a solution would have been available. Peri and Cavaliere had specified that all the instruments were to be hidden behind the scene, but Monteverdi seems to have been interested in the effect of some instruments on-stage and some off. The right-left distribution more likely called up the dichotomies of good and evil, heaven and hell, joy and despair that would have been recognized by the Renaissance mind in general and which was part of Renaissance stagecraft in particular. As Orfeo arrives back in

the Thracian fields he is indeed torn between the despair of his loss and the joys of his memory.

He rhapsodizes the perfections of Euridice and bitterly condemns all other women as unworthy. This double affective content may provide us with general guidelines as to where the right- or left-hand groups are to play, but it still does not give a precise and logical way to divide the accompaniment. I am grateful to Andrew Lawrence-King for the suggestion, in our many discussions of this and other *Orfeo* questions, that Monteverdi may have given us the clue in his shifting key signatures (with or without B $\flat$ ) and tonal orientation throughout the passage.

**Place and atmosphere** By means of general character of place and atmosphere Monteverdi creates a large-scale ABA structure for the entire work—Arcadia (Prologue, Acts 1 and 2), Hades (Acts 3 and 4), Arcadia (Act 5). The instructions for the *sinfonia* before Act 3 read: 'Here enter the trombones, cornetts, regals, and the violins, organs and harpsichords are silent and the scene changes.' This can be literally applied only to the *sinfonia* at hand, as violins, organ and harpsichord are all called upon to accompany Orfeo in the following two acts. Nevertheless, this change of instrumentation (and back again before Act 5) serves as a general guideline for the sounds of the underworld.

**Sonority** Association of sonority might be another criterion for continuo distribution. As Monteverdi expressed the desire for a harp to accompany the soprano Clori, and Caccini preferred the chitarrone for the tenor voice, it is also possible that Monteverdi found the regal a good support for Caronte's bass. Even more likely, he found both basses and regals to be a good illustration of the underworld. On the evidence of Monteverdi's instructions here, sonority alone would seem to be a secondary concern, but one that we can use in filling in the blanks.

**Musical style and context** Cavalieri and others associated the guitar with the lighter dance-song styles, Caccini associated the chitarrone with

'noble' monody, and Viadana associated the organ with church music. Monteverdi's indications allow no such stylistic division, as the chitarrone is virtually ubiquitous, the guitar is missing altogether, and the organ seems to be associated with stillness rather than piety.

**Symbolism** A final, tempting criterion, that of symbolism, must be regarded with caution. While Caronte's regal may be symbolic of the underworld, we should resist the temptation of seeing the harp as symbolic of heaven or the chitarrone as symbolic of Orfeo's lyre. The only obbligato passage for the harp is the strophe of 'Possente spirto' which reads: 'To her [Euridice], I turn my path through the dark air, not yet a hell, for wherever there is so much beauty a paradise is also there.' One might assume that the harp is there to convey the idea of heaven in hell. But the association is at least equally with the idea of Euridice and Orfeo's love for her. The harp is also present in the celebrations at the beginning, where it is simply part of the pastoral (i.e. idealized earthly) pleasures of Arcadia. If the chitarrone is Orfeo's lyre, then all the nymphs and shepherds have theirs as well. Several of the new instruments of this period are conscious evocations of the Greek lyre and kithara (prominently the *lyra* or *lirone* as well as the chitarrone), but Orfeo's lyre is more probably symbolized by the obbligato string groups that accompany him both in Arcadia and hell. Orfeo's connection in the Renaissance mind to the bowed 'lyra' can be observed in many pictures (see illus.2); in a musical context, Domenico Belli's *Orfeo dolente* (Venice, 1616) lends further weight to this interpretation. Throughout this work Orfeo's speeches are framed with four-part ritornellos with the comment: 'Orfeo sonando con la lira il seguente ritornello.'<sup>12</sup> Conversely, one might argue that all of the string instruments in *Orfeo* (violins, *viole da gamba*, chitarroni, ceteroni<sup>13</sup> and harp) together and separately, represent the 'Armonia sonora de la lira del ciel' with which 'La Musica' promises from the beginning to enchant mortals' ears and arouse their souls.





Caccini, *L'Euridice composta in musica in stile rappresentativo da Giulio Caccini detto Romano* (Florence, 1600); Emilio de' Cavalieri, *Rappresentatione di Anima e di Corpo* (Rome, 1600).

5 The single continuo reference in the foreword to Peri's *L'Euridice* states that music was played behind the scene on a harpsichord, a chitarrone, a large lyra and a large lute.

6 'E per dar qualche lume di quelli, che in luogo simile per prova hanno servito, una Lira doppia, un Clavicembalo, un Chitarone, o Tiorba che si dica, insieme fanno buonissimo effetto: come ancora un Organo suave con un Chitarone.' Following Cavalieri, I have used the terms *tiorba* (theorbo) and *chitarrone* interchangeably throughout and have reproduced the inconsistent original spellings of the latter. The standard modern spelling is 'chitarrone'.

7 Two publications give an impression of how the guitar and chitarrone might function together in this style as they both include tablature for the chitarone as well as *alfabeto* for the guitar: Johann Hieronymus Kapsberger, *Libro*

*primo di villanelle a 1.2. & 3. voci* (Rome, 1610); Flamminio Corradi, *Le stravaganze d'amore* (Venice, 1616).

8 Many of the translations from Agazzari here are based on those in F.T. Arnold, *The art of accompaniment from a thorough-bass as practised in the xviiith and xviiiith centuries* (London, 1931). Arnold's imposing life's work is by far the most complete and important publication on all the most important sources. In two volumes it runs to a total of 918 pages. This is an essential research tool to anyone studying any aspect of the history of the basso continuo and it is much to be regretted that the excellent and inexpensive Dover reprint (New York, 1965) has been out of print for many years.

9 Girolamo Kapsberger, *Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarone* (Venice, 1604); Johann Hieronymus Kapsberger, *Libro quarto d'intavolatura di chitarone* (Rome, 1640); Alessandro Piccinini, *Intavolatura di liuto, et di chitarone, libro primo* (Bologna, 1623); Girolamo Frescobaldi, *Toccate d'intavolatura di cimballo et organo* (Rome, 1637).

10 A particularly interesting source for the question of the texture of chitarrone (or theorbo) accompaniment is the manuscript Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Mus. G. 239. An important article on the source by Mirko Caffagni appeared in the *Journal of the Lute Society of America*, xii (1979).

11 A. Solerti, *Gli albori del melodramma*, i (Milan, 1904) p.99.

12 That the singer portraying *Orfeo* might have literally realized the four-part polyphony on a *lirone* is virtually impossible because of the strictly chordal nature of that instrument. He may well have had an instrument in his hands and may even have played it as a continuo to the string parts, but it seems clear that the strings were there to convey the impression of a magical lyre. See n.3 above for antecedents in the *intermedi*.

13 The ceterone, which bears the same relationship to the Renaissance cittern as the chitarrone does to the lute, appears here for the first time in *Orfeo* and in the plural! It does not appear in the list of 'Stromenti' at the beginning.

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