

**Beyond the Prologue:
A Study of Lasso's *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*
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Lasso's motet cycle *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* has been regarded as one of the most striking examples of the sixteenth-century chromaticism. Above all, its Prologue is one of the most analyzed pieces of Renaissance music: at least four authors have devoted an article or a chapter of a book to analysis of this piece. Interestingly, the authors employed different approaches and reached different conclusions. Edward Lowinsky claims Lasso's *Prophetiae* as a magnificent example of a new "triadic atonality." William J. Mitchell employs quasi-Schenkerian technique to prove the coherence of this piece. Karol Berger devises his own analytical method using an idea of the hierarchy of degrees of the scale extracted principally from a treatise by Nicola Vicentino. William E. Lake explains Lasso's compositional technique by situating chords in layers along the circle of fifths and classifying their connections by types of progression.

In this paper I looked into the other songs applying Lake's analytic methodologies. It is needless to say that root motions by a major third and by a fifth play a central role as Lake pointed out in music mainly consisting of major triads like this song cycle as a whole. However, my analysis revealed that in some places chord connections do not conform to this method and that stepwise motion of the bass often plays an important role in such places. These non-functional connections could make an impression of a sliding between similar sonorities, blurring the tonal center. It is also implied that Lasso could have consciously combined this technique with the textual and motivic manipulation.

In conclusion, this motet cycle shows compositional technique of constructing a chromatic impression by using triads almost exclusively. Though Lasso himself did not go back to chromaticism after *Prophetiae*, nonetheless it is beyond doubt that he accomplished a great deal in this audacious experiment.