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The *Susanas* of Manoel Rodrigues Coelho - Finely Woven Baroque Dresses for a Renaissance Chanson. A Case Study of Keyboard Intabulations as Ekphrasis of Narrative, Painting, and Song

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Abstract

Ut pictura musica captures the ekphrastic nature of musical creation long before the Romantic concept of programmatic music came into existence. Late Renaissance and Baroque composers often found inspiration in narratives and scenes, as demonstrated in this paper that traces the Susanna trope from biblical narrative, through visual art and song, arriving at instrumental intabulations in Portugal. The process of 'interart transfer' is thus examined within the ekphrasis theorems proposed by literary scholar Tamar Yacobi and musicologist Siglind Bruhns. This case study focuses on manifestations of the Susanna trope in three different media: Portuguese art of the time, the polyphonic setting of *Susanne un jour* by Orlando de Lassus, which became ubiquitously famous in the sixteenth century, and the four *Susanas* of Manoel Rodrigues Coelho, published in his *Flores de Música* (Lisbon, Craesbeeck: 1626) as keyboard intabulations that documented newly emerging composition-al traits in Iberian keyboard music.

Keywords: musical ekphrasis; interart transfer; intabulations; Susanna trope; Manoel Rodrigues Coelho.

Abstract

Las* Susanas *de Manoel Rodrigues Coelho - Vestidos barrocos finalmente tejidos para una chanson del Renacimiento. Un estudio de caso de intabulaciones para teclado como écfrasis de narrativa, pintura y canción

Ut pictura musica *captura la naturaleza ecfrástica de la creación musical mucho antes de que naciera el concepto romántico de música programática. Compositores del Renacimiento tardío y del barroco a menudo encontraron inspiración en escenas y narrativas, como se demuestra en este artículo que rastrea el tópico de Susanna desde la narrativa bíblica, pasando por el arte visual y el canto, llegando a intabulaciones instrumentales en Portugal. El proceso de "transferencia entre artes" se examina entonces dentro de los teoremas de la ekphrasis propuestos por la erudita en letras Tamar Yacobi y la musicóloga Siglind Bruhns. Este estudio de caso se centra en las manifestaciones del tropo de Susanna en tres diferentes medios: el arte portugués de la época, la versión polifónica de* Susanne un jour *de Orlando de Lassus, que se hizo famosa universalmente en el siglo XVI, y las cuatro* Susanas *de Manoel Rodrigues Coelho, publicadas en sus* Flores de Música *(Lisboa, Craesbeeck: 1626) como tablaturas de teclado que documentaron nuevos rasgos compositivos emergentes en la música de teclado ibérica.*

Palabras clave: écfrasis musica; transferencia entre artes; intabulaciones; el tópico de Susanna; Manoel Rodrigues Coelho.

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Discussions of the nature and strategies of literary ekphrasis often dwell on the contrast between narration and description, frequently assigning the ekphrastic process an ancillary function to the narrative, although not without some tension, since the ekphrasis might slow down the plot. A more organic appreciation of the concept may integrate ekphrasis and narrative, as explained by Fowler (1991) in *The Problem of Ekphrasis* (p. 27), who also argues that the integration of the description into the narrative carries some bias as a result of the author's favoring aspects of the visual description that best serve the needs of the plot. Departing from the original classical concept of ekphrasis as unidirectional, from visual artifact to text, modern criticism has expanded the possibilities to include subjects not originally of visual media, leading Clüver (1997) to define ekphrasis as "the verbal representation of a text created in another medium" (p. 26).

Confronting the realities of musical ekphrasis that represent texts, Bruhns (2020) expands the concept further, describing ekphrasis as encompassing "the representation in one medium of a text created in another medium" (p. 346). Her word choice for the action is "to transmedialize." Similarly, ekphrasis scholar Yacobi (2013) labels the action "interart transfer." (p. 2). With the extension of the concept to forms of representation beyond literature, ekphrasis becomes a multilayered theorem that may register not only personal bias and collective historical understanding, but also a vector that travels through different artistic media. While the artist may have great clarity regarding the source represented in a specific ekphrastic manifestation, the audience may conflate multiple sources in their appreciation of the artistic object, resulting in an exponential quantity of semantic associations, as discussed in Hans-Georg Gadamer's concept of 'seen-together-as" or *mitgesehen* (Gadamer,1997, p. 91).

Susanna and the Elders as a Trope in the Renaissance and the Baroque

Originally a biblical narrative, visual representations of the Susanna story eventually generated poems and songs in the Renaissance that ended up in the hands of keyboard and lute players as intabulations and, as such, closing a complex and convoluted cycle of ekphrastic interart transfer. What starts as a narrative ends up creating the largest body of Renaissance and Baroque paintings based on a theme from the Old Testament, reverts to literature now as a poem, becomes a song with the most significant number of polyphonic settings of the time, and eventually

abandons the verbal dimension by becoming instrumental renditions of those polyphonic settings, intabulations, and hence returning to the most abstracted form of the story. By the end, these instrumental pieces are only aesthetic suggestions that could awake in the listeners' memories of the songs, the poem, perhaps the paintings, and potentially the plot itself. This paper documents one specific path of such trajectories, arriving at Manuel Rodrigues Coelho's four intabulations of the chanson *Susanne un jour,* included in his *Flores de Música* published in 1620.

The story of Susanna and the Elders, found in the Apocrypha of the book of Daniel, depicts a pure and innocent woman accused of adultery as revenge by two elderly men who, tempted by the sight of the naked Susanna, tried to entice her but were rejected. Susanna chose the possibility of death over defilement. Her virtue, vindicated by the wisdom of a judge who exposed the lies of the elders, serves the cause of purity, and perfectly fits the biblical model of the wise judge. According to Kanonge (2014), the name *Susanna*, which means *Lily in Hebrew,* "represents beauty and love, righteousness, purity, and seems to be a metaphor for Israel" (p. 74). The sensual possibilities of the narrative led to its censorship in certain places: in the late seventeenth century, for instance, abbot Armand De Rancé, reformer of the Trappist order, forbade the reading of the Susanna story in the monastery refectory (Richter, 1810, p. 294).

This narrative generated a body of paintings that by far outnumbers all other Old Testament narratives used Renaissance and Baroque visual art, as documented in the catalogue of Baroque themes compiled by Andor Pigler. His list of paintings of the story, primarily focusing on bathing scene of Susanna, amounts to 290 entries, almost four times the average of other themes (Pigler, 1956, pp. 218-227). Without a doubt, the opportunity to depict the female nude even in religious spaces—since the absence of clothing is an essential argument of this biblical plot— must have influenced this recurrent choice of theme. This argument can be corroborated by the high frequency of paintings of Bathsheba in the bath, a narrative from the book of 2 Samuel, with 126 images listed in Pigler's catalog (Pigler, 1956, pp. 147-152). Flemish and Italian depictions of this scene have been the topic of robust scholarship that focuses on both the visual aspects and the social implications of the theme. Studies of the Susanna paintings have explored connections to the male gaze (and the gaze of males) in bathing scenes (Crocket, 2020, p. 4), rape culture and its representation (Bohn, 2001, p. 262), and as an emblem of good and wise judgement (Lentaglio, 1929, p. 5, and Bischoff, 1996, p. 24).

Susanna in Iberian Art

The presence of the Susanna trope in Portuguese art has not been thoroughly documented. For example, the magnificent tile composition from 1565 attributed to Francisco de Mattos (Rasteiro, 1895, p. 38) at the Quinta da Bacalhoa in the province of Azeitão does not appear in Pigler's catalogue. Of special importance here is the elders' garb, informed by the Moorish influence on the Iberian Peninsula. This Middle-Eastern attire of the elders, instead of typical Renaissance clothing, will appear only later in Baroque paintings, such as in the one by Ottavio Leoni (1578 -1630), now held at the Detroit Museum of Art, and the one by Gerrit van Honthorst (1992-1656), now in the Galleria Borghese in Rome.

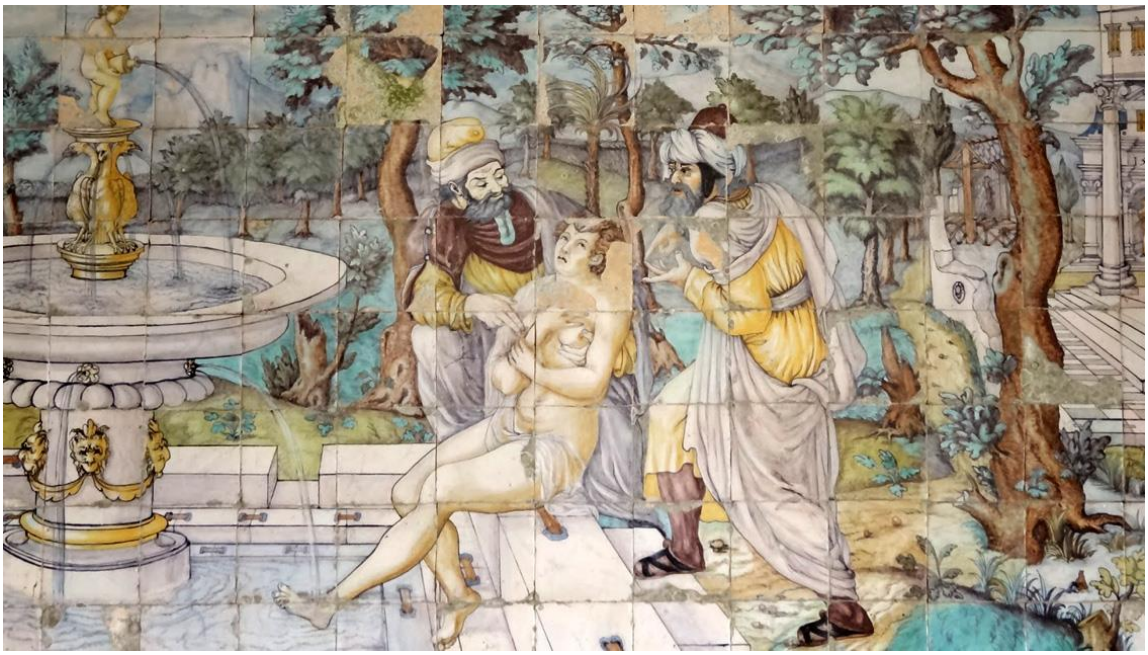


Figure 1: *Susanna Surprised by the Elders*, Francisco de Mattos, 1565, Quinta da Bacalhoa, Azeitão, Portugal (http://acasasenhorial.org/acs/index.php/en/home).

Another work of equal importance is an anonymous painting of Susanna and the Elders (Fig. 2), now held at the Palácio Nacional da Ajuda and attributed to the school of Francesco Trevisani (1656-1746). This attribution is probable since Trevisani spent time in Portugal, where around 1710 he painted the large canvas on the main altar of the Basilica in Mafra (DiFederico, 1971, p. 69). The painting of the transparent water over Susanna's foot reveals Trevisani's technical mas-

tery, echoing the foot in the water in the tile composition of Mattos, but here the spatial organization is truly Baroque in the sense that it attempts to create the illusion of a vast and infinite continuum (Zupnick, 1959, p. 217). Obviously, this painting is of a later date and style than the music described in this paper, but clearly demonstrates the longevity of the Susanna trope in Portugal:

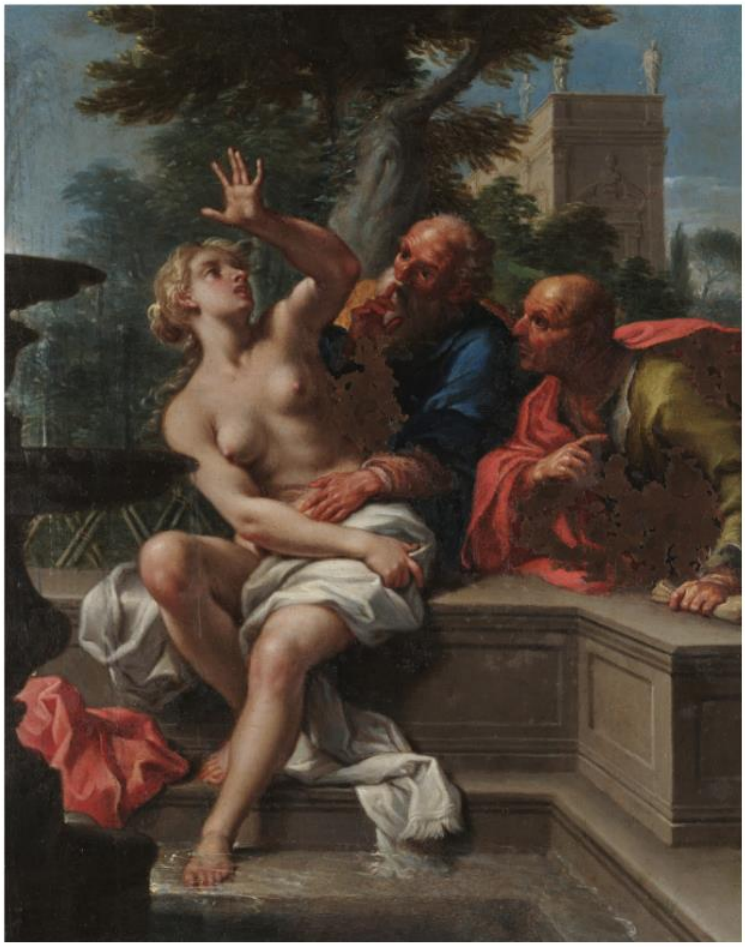


Figure 2: *Susanna and the Elders*, anonymous (Trevisani?), Palácio Nacional da Ajuda, Portugal. (https://g.co/arts/ttfPiKbeqwNstJm8A)

Another typical Susanna scene represented in coeval art depicts the judgment of Susanna instead of her bathing scene (Fig.3). An example is the oil painting by Francisco Henriques, originally part of a collection of panels in one of the side chapels of the church of São Francisco in Évora, dated 1509-1512 (Markl, 1997, p. 150):

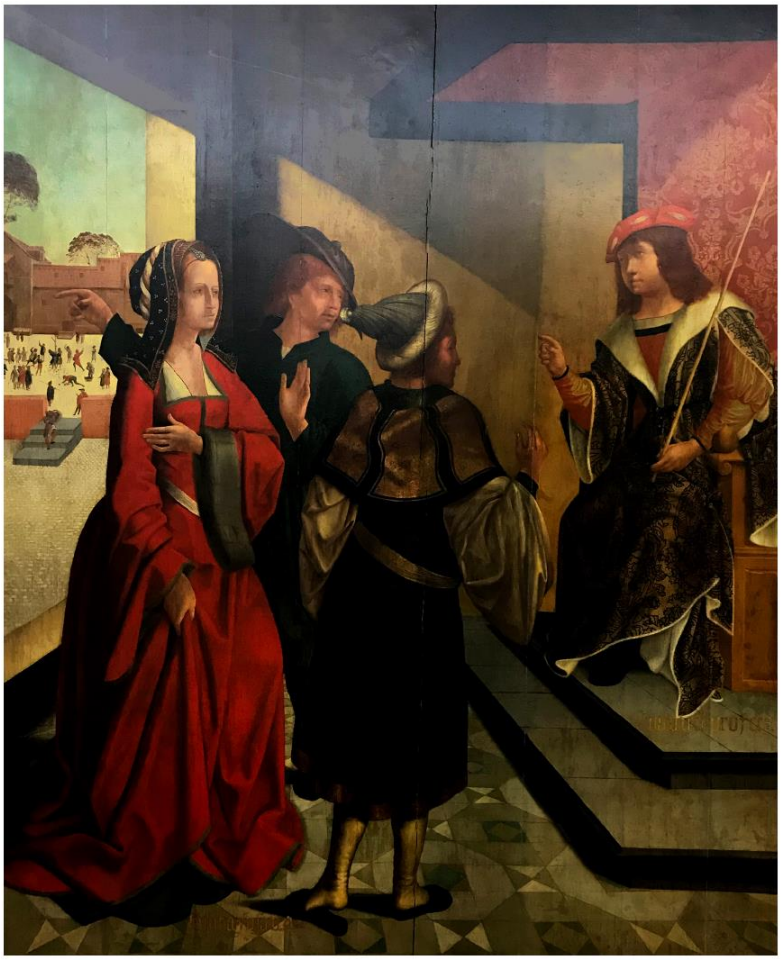


Figure 3: Francisco Henriques, *The Prophet Daniel and the Chaste Susanna*, (1509 -1512). Museu Nacional Frei Manuel do Cenáculo, Évora, Portugal (www.matriznet.dgpc.pt).

The sung story of Susanna

In music, Susanna's story generated a robust interest, just as it did in the visual arts. The Huguenot poet Guillaume Guéroult included two sets of lyrics on Susanna in his collection of *chansons spirituelles* issued in 1548 with music by the Lyon composers Didier Lupi (Jones, 2011, p. 29). Lupi's song went through a series of other polyphonic settings that used Lupi's tenor part as the primary melodic content. Throughout the sixteenth century, music printers issued over thirty-seven vocal settings of the poem, of which at least thirty-three used the tenor of Lupi's setting. By the end of the sixteenth century, according to Levy (1953), the poem had appeared in music "four to five times as often as any contemporary rival for public favor" (pp. 376-377). Of those pieces, Orlando de Lassus's setting in five-parts, published in 1560 in the *Livre des*

meslanges (sic) by le Roy & Ballard, became the best known of them all. While none of these polyphonic settings can be traced to one specific visual representation of Susanna, they have Guéroult's poem and Didier's tenor as common elements. Here, the musical ekphrasis process proves Kibédi Varga (1989) explanation of interart transfer: "What comes first is necessarily unique; what comes after can be multiplied." (p. 44).

The popularity of Lassus' piece is also demonstrated by the large number of instrumental intabulations generated by his composition. When Claudio Merulo published his book of intabulations in 1592, the song by Lassus already had appeared in more than thirty different intabulation prints (Cunningham and McDermott, 1992, p. ix). Most of these intabulations refer either explicitly or implicitly to the polyphonic setting by Lassus. In her study of lute intabulations of this song, Margaret Jones argues that the anonymity of Lassus' setting in some of those intabulations indicates that the Lassus setting had already become so widespread as to belong to the European imagination, without any real attribution to a composer or author (Jones, 2011, p. 38).

Intabulations and Iberian *Susanas*

The history of instrumental intabulations of polyphonic pieces over the two centuries when the genre flourished creates a continuum of the relationship between musical texts, i.e., the vocal polyphonic setting, and the intabulation. Instrumental versions start as literal renditions of vocal polyphony adapted to keyboard or plucked-string instruments and become increasingly more idiomatic with instrumental figurations, ending as instrumental pieces that refer to vocal models but with a texture that could never revert to vocal performance. The early strategy of regimented application of *glosas* had been codified around the same time of Lassus' *Susanne un jour* publication, namely in the seminal Iberian treatises by Diego Ortiz (1553) and Tomás de Santa Maria (1565). However, when Coelho's *Flores de Musica* appeared in print in 1620, the practice of intabulation had already gone through substantial transformations, yielding pieces best described as instrumental paraphrases or parodies, sometimes even featuring insertions of completely new music (Ward, 1952, p. 94). This new kind of intabulation, precariously connected to the original musical work, and even more indirectly to the text or visual expression of the same trope, functions in what Yacobi (2005) labeled the 'double-exposure' ekphrasis, i.e., "evoking at one and

the same time artworks that may have little in common: the commonality, if any, is rather produced through their joint evocation a posteriori" (p. 219).

Coelho did identify his intabulations with Lassus' chanson, though indirectly. He listed his pieces as "Four glossed *Susanas* on the one with five" (Coelho, 1620, *Taboada*). His identification of the polyphonic model as "the one with five" implies that the five-voice setting of Lassus had become popular enough that his readers could understand this reference. Portuguese musicians and audiences, at least the ones connected to the royal court, certainly knew this piece, as evidenced by the inclusion of Lassus' publication in the index of the music library of D. João IV as item n. 374 (Ribeiro, 1967, p. 107). Together with the two 1578 *Susanas glosadas* by Hernando Cabezón and the later one by Correa de Araujo (1626), Coelho's *Susanas* are the only known printed Iberian keyboard settings of the famous chanson. However, this song also appears in other Iberian intabulation manuscripts of the seventeenth century, such as the one found in the manuscript book compiled in the late seventeenth century by Frei Roque da Conceição (Biblioteca Municipal do Porto, Ms. 1607, COI G, 7) and transcribed by Speer (1956, p. 220).

Coelho was undoubtedly familiar with the works of Cabezón, his predecessor as the court organist of Lisbon in the late sixteenth century, a Spaniard imported as organist to the Portuguese court in 1580. In a letter that King Filipe II wrote to his daughters in Spain, he explained that he had to summon Cabezón to Lisbon because "there was no one who could adequately play the organs in the chapel" (Kastner, 1936, p. 51). One wonders if one of Coelho's reasons for the publication of four different *Susanas* was his urge to surpass his predecessor, in both quantity and style. Either way, in the same manner that visual depictions of Susanna changed with the incoming Baroque aesthetics, Coelho's and Cabezon's intabulations of the piece document a change in intabulation practices.

In the preface, Coelho explains that each of his *Susana* settings is rendered in a different manner, justifying his reduction to a four-part texture over the original five parts of Lassus' chanson because, translating here his words, "anything that has more than four parts in the instrument does not work," (Coelho, 1620, *Prólogo*). This approach differs from the one found in the pieces by Cabezón that retain the five-part texture of Lassus' chanson, resulting in some awkward voicing for the keyboard player, especially considering the absence of pedals in the coeval Iberian organ. For example, one hand must grasp large extensions, as in mm. 8 and 11 of the first *Susana* (Sala, 1974, p. 206), when either hand must play 10ths, and in mm. 49 and 57 of the second

Susana, (Sala, 1974, p. 211). Keeping in mind that the publication was meant for any keyboard instrument, even allowing for the possibility of short-octave keyboards, the most acceptable solution would be to shorten the value of some half notes to allow for the hand to reach far keys, a practice of the time that even Coelho acknowledges in the sixth piece of advice prefacing his compositions:

> Sixth warning: One will often find a quarter or eighth note, followed by a rest. That part must be silenced, and the hand must let go of the key. One will also find a whole note where the hand or fingers must release that note; the finger should let go of the key because the whole note is written to respect the counting of the measure.
> (Coelho, 1620, *Advertências*, transl. by the author)

Coelho was not the first composer to reduce the number of parts when transforming this chanson for instrumental use. In the Florentine manuscript the *Intavolatura di M. Alamanno Aiolli*, dating from the last quarter of the sixteenth century, there is also a four-part intabulation of Lassus' chanson (D'Accone, 1966, p. 171). However, Coelho was the first to explain why he thought the four-part texture worked best at the keyboard. Without a doubt, the confusion in voice-leading caused by the need to let go of specific notes to reach others played a large part in causing "everything to sound the same," unlike vocal compositions where the timbre of each voice also clarified the independence of each part. Coelho created a more idiomatic keyboard texture by reducing the number of voices, allowing for a more precise rhythmic reading of the counterpoint. While it is not possible to ascertain that Coelho's remarks were directed at Cabezón's settings, Coelho justified his compositional choices as a result of his thorough understanding of keyboard mechanics and musical possibilities. By implication, he asserted with this comment that he knew how best to make music with keyboard instruments, perhaps as a late response to King Phillip's complaint about Portuguese organists.

Coelho listed his pieces with a dual title as *Susanas* or *Tentos*, the Portuguese term for contrapuntal keyboard pieces in the manner of ricercars. In this manner, Coelho acknowledged that his *Susanas* are not the *glosados* of earlier times in which the original polyphonic structure is ornamented in a way that preserves the vocal composition, but are more unrestricted in imagination and content, using the original chanson as a framework for the virtuosic display of *glosas* and other ornamental gestures used as a kind of embroidery to clothe the bare Susanna. Thus, Coelho's approach fits the third type of intabulations according to the intabulation categories

first defined by Harald Vogel and later expanded by Johannes Ring. This third type encompasses intabulations that are built according to the peculiarities of secular keyboard instrumental style, with an abundance of virtuosic figurations (Ring, 2003, p. 62). The flowing figurations in Coelho's *Susanas* fall in line with what Longinus described as *eidolopoiein*, or image production, as a strategy to create *phantasia*, to revert here to basic ekphrastic concepts of the Greek-Roman world (Goldhill, 2007, p. 6).

Coelho's compositions are new elaborations of older forms, a proposition that renders his work as a mark of innovation within the Iberian intabulation tradition. Perhaps the most innovative technical aspect found in Coelho's pieces, but absent in Cabezón's intabulations, are the fast virtuosic gestures divided between the hands, most probably a result of the contemporary fashion of instrumental divisions in the *viola bastarda* style. This new fashion was codified as *intavolatura alla bastarda* by Francesco Rognoni in his division manual *Selva de varii passaggi secondo l'vso Moderno, per cantare, & suonare con ogni sorte de Sttromenti*, published in Milan in 1620, the same year as Coelho's book. The following excerpt from the third *Susana* demonstrates these fast motives that run throughout the keyboard range (Fig. 4):

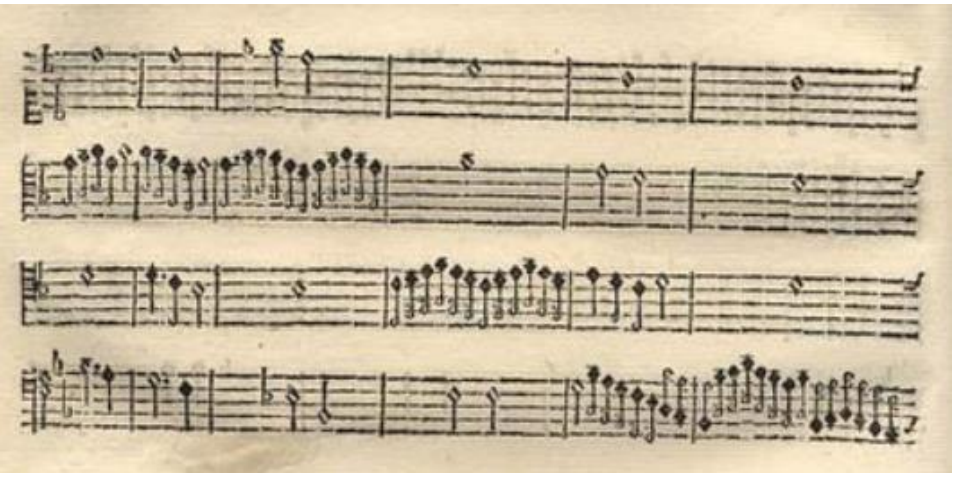


Figure 4: Coelho, Susana III, mm. 43-48 (Biblioteca Nacional Digital, Public Copy)

Perhaps Coelho chose to publish four *Susanas* also to demonstrate his ability to create variety within repetition, a quality that Kastner (1955) described as "the art of synonyms." (Preface, p. iii). Coelho intentionally employed many and varied keyboard figurations totaling more than sixty different *glosas* according to the extensive study done by Edite Rocha. This number is at

least twice the number of *glosas* used by Cabezón in his *Susanas* (Rocha, 2010, pp. 25-30). Notwithstanding the fact that all keyboard players were trained in the same vocabulary of *glosas*, the sheer quantity of varied ways to ornament the same melodic interval used by Coelho indicates a move towards an aesthetic of redundancy and abundance, hallmarks of the Baroque style.

Coelho's *glosas* supersede Cabezón's not only in number, but also in rhythmic complexity. Though Cabezón did use irregular rhythmic divisions, such as triplets and the Spanish-favorite quintuplet (*proporción sesquiquinta*), Coelho used the triplet rhythm in its more energetic dotted version, a rhythmic figure most often found in the music of the English virginalists and identified as the gigue rhythm, such as in this passage from the second *Susana* (Fig. 5):

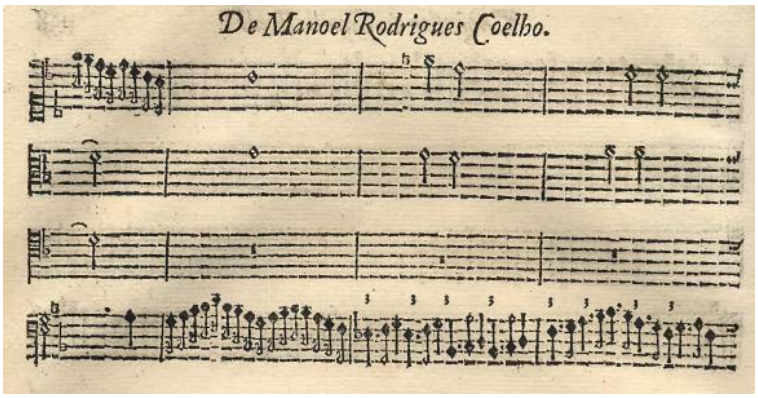


Figure 5: Coelho, *Susana II*, mm. 43-46 (Biblioteca Nacional Digital, Public Copy)

In addition to more peculiar rhythms, Coelho's settings consistently featured sixteenth- notes throughout, resulting in a faster and more motoric figurations, such as in this excerpt from the first *Susana* (Fig. 6):

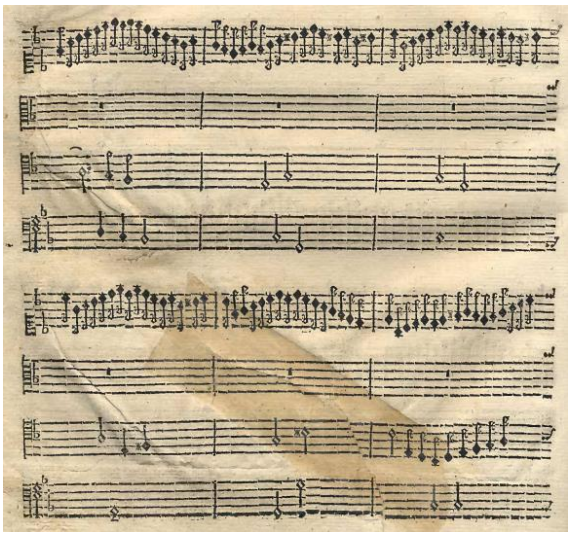
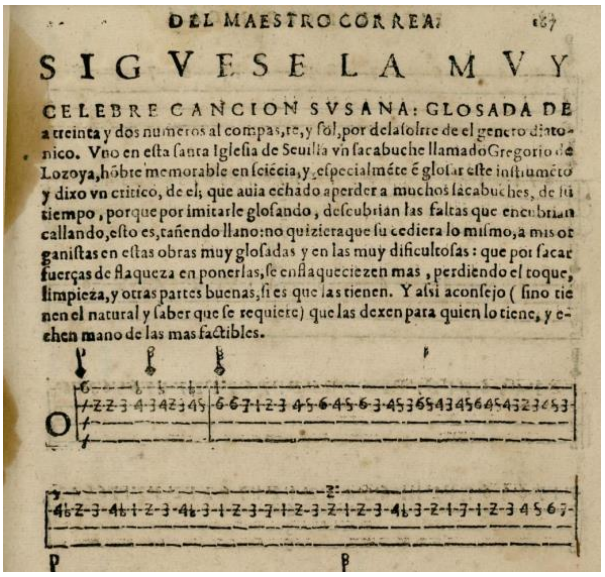


Figure 6: Coelho *Susana I*, mm. 85-90 (Biblioteca Nacional Digital, Public Copy)

One should note that later, in the fully Baroque *Susana* setting by Correa de Arauxo (*Facultad organica*, 1626, tiento LXI), thirty-second note passages are so prevalent that the composer makes a note of the fast virtuosic figurations in his work as a challenge for performers and recommends that only those who have the fingers for it should play the piece (Fig. 7):


DEL MAESTRO CORREA. 87

SIGVESE LA MVY CELEBRE CANCION SVSANA: GLOSADA DE a treinta y dos numeros al compas, re, y sol, por delasolre de el genero diatonico. Vno en esta santa Iglesia de Seuilla vn sacabuche llamado Gregorio de Lozoya, hóbre memorable en sciécia, y especialméte é glosar este instrumeto y dixo vn critico, de el, que auia echado a perder a muchos sacabuches, de su tiempo, porque por imitarle glosando, descubrian las faltas que encubrian callando, esto es, tañendo llano: no quizieraque su cediera lo mismo, a mas ot ganistas en estas obras muy glosadas y en las muy dificultosas: que por sacar fuerças de flaqueza en ponerlas, se enflaquecieren mas, perdiendo el toque, limpieza, y otras partes buenas, si es que las tienen. Y assi aconsejo (sino tie nen el natural y saber que se requiere) que las dexen para quien lo tiene, y e-chen mano de las mas factibles.

Figure 7: Arauxo, Tiento LXI, *Celebre cancion Svsana: Glosada de a treinta y dos numeros al compas* (Biblioteca de Andalucía, Public Copy)

Moreover, Coelho extensively uses compound *glosas* in contrast to the simple *glosas* used by

Cabezón. Even more stylistically determinant is the fact that Coelho builds sequences out of compound *glosas* (Rocha, 2010, p. 221). This sequential chaining of motives demonstrates a new way of constructing long phrases based on one motive, foreshadowing the *fortspinnung* compositional technique that will dominate the middle and late Baroque era, as shown in the top part of this passage from the first *Susana* (Fig. 7):

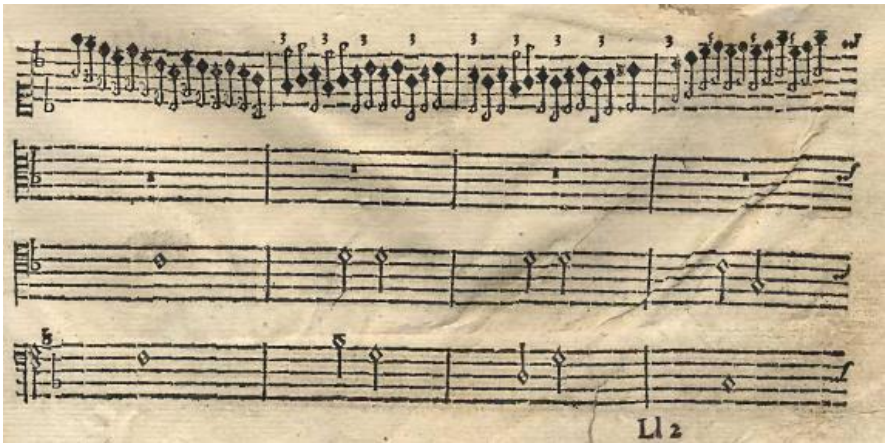


Figure 7: Coelho, *Susana I*, mm. 51-54 (Biblioteca Nacional Digital, Public Copy)

Granted, this manner of intabulation is connected to the divisions *alla bastarda* mentioned above. Coelho's work, however, demonstrates both the appropriation of the *bastarda* technique into Iberian keyboard literature and, more relevant yet, an emerging innovative way of constructing a line, i.e., the repetition of a single motive, thus propelling the phrase forward. Bearing in mind that these *Susanas* were the first published Iberian versions forty years after the versions by Cabezón, one must certainly question the derogatory comment by Richard Murphy (1962) who accuses Coelho's *Susana* intabulations of offering "nothing new: they conform to traditional methods and may be added to the extensive list of settings, instrumental and vocal, of *Susanne un jour*…" (p. 220).

Another hallmark of Coelho's innovations in these intabulations is the harmonic exploration of the final cadence. The length of Cabezón's *Susanas* (115 measures) is roughly twice the number of measures of the Lassus chanson (58 measures). This double ratio results from these intabulations being built with one whole note per measure (whereas the chanson had a cut-time signature with two whole notes per measure). The length of Coelho's settings varies between 118

and 122 measures, but the stylistic innovation here is that the variation of length is a direct consequence of the prolongation of the final cadence. The comparison of the final cadences in his four *Susanas*, though explained here with tonal harmonic labels anachronistic to Coelho's modal language, demonstrates an increasingly more adventurous chord progression in the final cadence. Thus, the simple V-I closing of Lassus' piece is put through a progressive lengthening and twisting. Thus, the final progression acquires up to eight altered and inverted triads to elongate the cadence (Fig. 8):

	Total Length	Length of final cadence	Harmonic progression – Prolongation of final cadence
Susana 1	119 mm.	4 mm.	V^7 - i^6 – iv - I^{4-3}
Susana 2	118 mm.	6 mm.	V^7 –i- iv- I –iv – I^{4-3}
Susana 3	118 mm.	6 mm.	V^7 – VI*b* – iv – I^6 – iv - iv^{6-5} - I
Susana 4	122 mm.	6 mm.	V- VI*b* –iv – I - iv- i - ii^7 -$V^6{}_4$- iv^6 - I

Figure 8: Comparison of length and final chord progression in Coelho's *Susanas*.

Coelho's *Susanas* as ekphrasis of "*Susanne un jour*" or of Susanna as a trope?

This brief analysis of Coelho's *Susanas* places them as emerging examples of the Iberian Baroque keyboard idiom. Coelho decided to weave Baroque dresses for the naked Susanna as a masterful way of bolstering the already passing art of intabulation. In this manner, Coelho did usher into Iberia a new way of thinking about *glosas* in intabulations, presenting us with a stylistic bridge between the Renaissance *Susanas* of Cabezón and the highly virtuosic and decidedly more Baroque *Susana* setting by Corrêa de Arauxo. Kastner (1979) described Coelho's *Susanas* as "an arsenal of highly Baroque figurations drenched in instrumental virtuosity" (p. 110). Viewed from the vantage point of Coelho's own identification of the piece, the chanson by Lassus seems his first source for the intabulations. However, it is impossible to determine all musical sources and non-musical works that populated the composer's imagination during his creative process. To frame the question of ekphrasis, Bruhns (2020) stipulates that

> one way of pondering the ability of music to transmediate works of poetry and painting is to arrange the devices the composer chooses in a single work of ekphrastic response on an imagined scale between the mimetic or concrete, and the referential or abstract. (p. 358)

Coelho's *Susana* intabulations feature concrete elements of Lassus' polyphonic piece, and the audience of the time, familiar with the work, would have heard those references more quickly than we do today, since we are much less familiar with Lassus' *Susanne un jour*. While I would like to think that Coelho saw both the tile composition by Mattos and the painting in the Évora church of São Francisco, not far from Elvas, his childhood town, we cannot make that claim with certainty. We are left with the ontological question as framed by Bruhns (2020), "whether a music device presents, in the given context or even in general, inherent or acquired signification," (p. 358). It remains hard, at any rate, to imagine that Coelho's audiences and those contemporaries who played his keyboard music did not connect the pieces with the depictions of Susanna, both visual and textual, thus going back to the original narrative and closing the loop of the ekphrastic gesture.

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