

PIETRO DI GOTTARDO GONZAGA'S SYNESTHESIA EXPERIENCE: THE MUSIC OF THE EYES

PIETRO DI GOTTARDO GONZAGA 'NIN SİNESTEZİ DENEYİMİ: GÖZLERİN MÜZİĞİ

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ABSTRACT

Pietro di Gottardo Gonzaga (Longarone, 1751-1831, St.Petersburg) was an authentic set designer often recognized as 'the creator of scenes' at Teatro alla Scala, born at the commune on the banks of the Piave in the province of Belluno in mid-18th century when both enlightenment and romanticism were key players in reform and literature was characterized by romantic features such as enthusiasm, passion and imagination. In 1789, the artist was invited to Russia as the chief decorator of the Imperial Theaters by the famous diplomat and collector Prince Nikolai B.Yusupov (1750 –1831). During the first years of 19th century Gonzaga penned his synesthesia experience in a booklet titled: "La Musique des Yeux" (The Music of the Eyes) written in French and stamped twice in 1800-1807 in St.Petersburg. This study has shown that the music-space analogy mentioned in "The Music of the Eyes" was related to the synesthesia phenomenon experienced by the author-Gonzaga himself- who suggested that all decorative forms are in the same modalities to be decorated with an ocular harpsichord. The research's prominent outcome is that Pietro Gonzaga described or associated all visible ornaments in general as music for the eyes. While the use of word music applied in the book's title has been linked to the sight, the transposition of the term in the context of the visual arts can logically mean that all visible forms can be subject to the same modalities that sound undergo to produce music. An implication of this is the possibility that everything we see is a piece of music for the eyes. The original perspective of this study aimed at achieving to bring together the synthesis of artistic-literary creativity of the 18th -19th century vision with a scientific experience to the contemporary world of literature and art.

Keywords: ocular harpsichord, decoration, audio-visual

ÖZET

Pietro di Gottardo Gonzaga (Longarone,1751–1831,St.Petersburg) hem aydınlanmanın hem de romantizmin reformda kilit oyuncular olduğu, edebiyatın, gerçekçilik ve coşku, tutku ve hayal gücü gibi romantik özelliklerle karakterize edildiği 18. yüzyılın ortalarında Belluno eyaletinin Piave kıyısındaki bir komünde dünyaya gelmiş, çoğunlukla La Scala'da 'sahnelerin yaratıcısı' olarak tanınan özgün bir sahne tasarımcısıydı.

Bu çalışmada, dekoratif formların oküler klavsen ile süslenebileceğini öne süren Pietro Gonzaga'nın izlenimlerini kaleme aldığı 'Gözlerin Müziği' eserinin tahlili yapılmış ve eserde bahsi geçen müzik-mekan analogisinin yazarın 18. ve 19. yüzyıllar arasında deneyimlediği Sinestezi olgusunun bir dışavurumu olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. 1789 yılında ünlü diplomat ve sanat koleksiyoneri Nikolai B. Yusupov (1750 –1831) tarafından Çarlık Tiyatroları'nın şef sahne dekoratörü olarak Rusya'ya davet edilen Gonzaga, 1800-1807 yıllarında Fransızca kaleme almış olduğu, basımı iki defa gerçekleştirilen 'Gözlerin Müziği' eserinin başlığındaki müzik kelimesi görme duyusu ile ilişkili iken, terimin görsel sanatlar bağlamında aktarımı tüm görünür formların, sesin müzik üretmek için geçirdiği aynı yöntemlere tabi olabileceği anlamını taşımaktadır. Bu yaklaşımın sonucunda gördüğümüz her şeyin gözler için bir müzik parçası olma olasılığıdır. Bu çalışmanın özgün bakış açısı, 18.-19. yüzyıl vizyonunun sanatsal-edebi yaratıcılığının sentezini bilimsel bir deneyimle çağdaş edebiyat ve sanat dünyasıyla buluşturmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: oküler klavsen, dekorasyon, görsel-işitsel

1. INTRODUCTION

The imitative power of arts especially in music and the expression beside its meaning took place as a manifestation of musical characteristics from the beginning of civilization. This analogy has manifested in purely symbolic correspondences.

Sir Isaac Newton (1642 –1726) derived his famous law of universal gravitation from the celestial mechanics of Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) (Kepler, 1969). Around 1649, Athanasius Kircher(1602-1680) developed a system of correspondences between musical intervals and colors (Jewanski.1999: 200-205). Kircher also developed a set of correspondences between voice types and colors. (Jewanski 1999: 215-216) Having experienced the charm of this musical cosmology, Newton divided the color spectrum into seven steps in his Optics, giving impetus to the birth of speculative ideas of "music of color" based on the assumed natural correlation scale (octave) and color range (spectrum). (Newton, 1931).Even though Newton himself later rejected this analogy as false even in a physical sense, musical moods made the French Jesuit monk Louis Bertrand Castel (1688–1757) set forth his ideas to build an ocular harpsichord on its basis. (Castel,1740: 480) Castel's idea shook enlightened Europe. While some composers as Rameau supported¹, most scholars criticized the naive idea. Traces of these stormy discussions have survived not only in philosophical, natural- scientific but also in literary works of that and later times. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 –1778) was personally acquainted with Castel and visited his workshop to get acquainted with the work on the color harpsichord. Rousseau, Jean-Jacques Rousseau criticized two errors which seemed to him parallel: in the field of music, Rameau endeavored to construct mathematics of chords, by treating sounds in their physical, measured, and calculated materiality; Castel's harpsichord was an invitation to seek out the principles of painting in the decomposition of the prism, in the play of relationships and proportions between colors. Castel's project played on colors while forgetting the drawing, and Rameau forgot the melody to cultivate the chords of harmony. Now, "the melody does precisely in music what design does in painting; it is she who marks the lines and figures whose chords and sounds are only colors". Rousseau was unwaveringly attached to these ideas which he tirelessly returns, in the Essay on the Origin of Languages and in all of his writings on music. (Touchefeu,2009:183-192) Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 –1832) was not alien to scientific and philosophical interests, criticized Castel's color harpsichord in his treatise on colors along with Newton's Optics which he did not like much:

¹ «Traité de l'harmonie reduite à ses principes naturels ; divisé en quatre livres . Livre I. Du rapport des raisons & proportions harmoniques. Livre II. De la nature & de la propriété des accords ; et de tout ce qui peut servir à rendre une musique parfaite. Livre III. Principes de composition. Livre IV. Principes d'accompagnement. »

“But I was astonished, as I looked at a white wall through the prism, how it stayed white! That only there where it came upon some darkened area, it showed more or less some color, then at last, around the window bars, all the colors shone, whereas in the light grey sky outside there was no color to be seen. It didn't take long before I knew that a border was required for color to be brought forth, and I spoke as through an instinct out loud, that the Newtonian teachings were false.”(Goethe: 295–296)

Goethe's critique of Newton was not an attack on reason or science, though it has often been portrayed that way. The critique maintained that Newton had mistaken mathematical imagining as the pure evidence of the senses. Goethe tried to define the scientific function of imagination: to interrelate phenomena once they have been meticulously produced, described, and organized...Newton had introduced dogma.. into color science by claiming that color could be reduced to a function of rays." (Dennis L. Sepper, 2009)

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770 – 1831) is even inclined to justify and understand Kepler for his high belief that reason is present in the universe but considers Newton's color-sound analogy to be completely inappropriate. What Hegel proposes to give is no novel or special doctrine, but the universal philosophy which has passed on from age to age, here narrowed and there widened, but still essentially the same. It is conscious of its continuity and proud of its identity with the teachings of Plato and Aristotle. The earliest attempts of the Greek philosophers to present philosophy in a complete and articulated order— attempts generally attributed to the Stoics, the schoolmen of antiquity—made it a tripartite whole. These three parts were Logic, Physics, and Ethics. In their entirety they were meant to form a cycle of unified knowledge, satisfying the needs of theory as well as practice. As time went on, however, the situation changed: and if the old names remained, their scope and value suffered many changes. New interests and curiosities, due to altered circumstances, brought other departments of reality under the focus of investigation besides those which had been primarily discussed under the old names. Inquiries became more specialized, and each tended to segregate itself from the rest as an independent field of science. (Hegel,1894:Xlii)

But if Art embodies for us the unseen and the eternal, it embodies it in the stone, the color, the tone, and the word: and these are by themselves only dead matter. To the untutored eye and taste, the finest picture gallery is only a weariness: when the national life has drifted away, the sacred book and the image are but idols and enigmas. The statues are now corpses from which the vivifying soul has fled, and the hymns are words whence faith has departed: the tables of the Gods are without spiritual meat and drink, and games and feasts no longer afford the mind its joyful union with the being of being. (Hegel,1894:Xlii)

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In the middle of this circle, the Italian scenographer Pietro Gonzaga analyzed this idea of visible music. In his treatise “Music of the Eyes and Theater Optics” (1807), Gonzaga recalls Castel's failure and suggests that all visible forms that are ornaments should be considered a piece of music for the eyes. “The primitive and more general definition of music is an art that embellishes what we hear. Why can't we say that the art of embellishing what you see is the music of the eyes?” (Gonzaga,1807)

Pietro di Gottardo son of Francesco and of the Bellunese noblewoman Anna Grini, was born on 25 March 1751 in Longarone,Belluno. His father, son of Gottardo, was a decorator of private houses and public buildings - among these the Palazzo della Magnifica Comunità del Cadore - as well as set designer for provincial theaters in Cadore and Treviso, and with him Gonzaga made his first apprenticeship.(Steidl,2001),(Sartori,490)

2.1. SYNESTHESIA

The phenomenon of synesthesia along with its temporary synonym color hearing entered scientific use about a hundred years ago. But, although it became extremely popular in the theory of art and psychology, there is no uniformity in defining the boundaries of this concept and its definitions. Synesthesia is related to intersensory connections in the psyche. Besides, it represents the results of sense manifestations in specific areas of the arts. Synesthesia, even more so than association and metaphor, was inadequately assessed by many as a certain anomaly of the psyche, language (and even a physiological anomaly). This is explained by the fact that it is a concentrated form that shows an external likeness to the early mythical consciousness which is an inevitable means, or rather an essential form of the embodiment of artistic thought. For a hundred years, the term "synesthesia" has been in scientific use, but not only discussions about its essence and meaning but the very understanding of the subject, the boundaries of this concept has not yet been settled. Therefore, we have to specifically stipulate here: rare cases of extreme, anomalous "feelings", about which even literary scholars unjustifiably often recall, of course, are not included in the scope of our analysis, because they correlate with the intersensory comparisons of interest to us, analogies in the same way as, suppose, hallucinations with products of the imagination. Unfortunately, these different types of intermodal relationships are still called the same: "synesthesia", which is usually translated as "co-sensation", although the root "aesthesia" also means "feeling" (really, no one understands "aesthetics" as "the science of sensations!") "And the reasons for this confusion are not only trivial terminological inconsistencies, they are much more complex. Let's make one more point - this word "synesthesia" usually denotes the very process of inter-sensory relationships (associations), and its results. And, besides, - their specific manifestations in different areas of human life (in language, in different arts, in culture in general). Let us single out here as the object of research verbal, more precisely, literary synesthesia, and the subject will be synesthesia itself as a human ability of intersensory association. The peculiarity of the situation lies in the fact that such intermodal connections, being a systemic manifestation of non-verbal, sensory thinking, are most often formed at the subconscious level, and they make themselves felt only when they come out into the light of consciousness and are fixed in the world, including the poetic one (and, what is less obvious for reflexive knowledge - in the non-verbal language of all other arts, the awareness of which, however, is also associated with the presentation in the same verbal musicological, art history texts). (Galeyev:2003,33-38)

Synesthesia has often been used as a plot device or as a way of developing a particular character's internal states. Interest in synesthesia, in intersensory correspondences, specifically in color hearing, was openly declared at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The subject of the analysis was intersensory transferences in poetry ("flute sound of dawn-blue", etc.) (Galeyev,1995: 48-49)

In the twentieth century, attempts to create based on synesthesia and, specifically, "color hearing" such new forms of art as abstract painting and light music are popular, these prejudices are stable, alas, for both the Soviet and modern Russian science, and the West. The point is - we emphasize once again - that in almost all dictionaries, encyclopedias, and textbooks the content, the essence of the term "synesthesia" is defined and understood exactly as "co-sensation", concerning its etymological decoding (syn-aesthesia). At the same time, a serious researcher could not help being alerted by the fact that the ancient Greek word "aesthesia" lies at the root of the word "aesthetics", but no one would take seriously the explanation of aesthetics as "the science of sensations" (Galeyev,1999:19-23) so, the literary synesthesia includes expressions such as "The sound of dawn-blue flutes" (K. Balmont), paintings by M.-K. Curlionis and V. Kandinsky, to the musical - the works of Debussy and N. Rimsky-Korsakov, implying the existence of special "synesthetic" genres (program music, musical painting) and even types of art (light music, abstract film).

Moreover, it should be assumed that all these understandings of the word “synesthesia” may be conditioned by a basic, psychological phenomenon (intersensory connection in the psyche) (Galeyev,1999:19-23) All this is more or less obvious - in methodological and purely logical terms. The situation was complicated by the fact that the initial understanding of the nature of the intersensory connections themselves turned out to be a tough nut to crack. And any mistake when projecting it into higher levels, into art (especially in its synthetic forms), led to conclusions that contradicted not only strict science but also common sense. No one will now take seriously attempts to explain the laws of beauty precisely and only through numerical proportions or elementary psychophysiological laws of the positivist sense. No one will agree with naive interpretations of artistic creativity as genius insanity or a wholesome way of channeling the notorious libido. The essence of synesthesia was necessarily sought for why -that only on an extra-, above-, pre-conscious level, but not within the limits of the norm of the human psyche, language, and art. (Galeyev,1999:19-23) The analysis of literary synesthesia facilitates the transition to other arts, obviously related to non-verbal forms of artistic thinking. Moreover, as we can see, it can serve to study the nuances of synesthesia itself as a mental phenomenon. Literary synesthesia also fixes plastic relations, such as "melody - drawing" (noted by Rousseau), sensitively reacting to the nature of the structure being compared. (Galeyev, 2003: 33-38)

2.2. ORNAMENTATION

The view of art as a system of communicating vessels has long been firmly established in domestic and foreign art history. The study of the problems associated with the intersecting and parallel "paths of development of the arts, has opened up a rich prospect for the study of their genesis, the study of their most important, meaningful side. It is no coincidence that the issues of interaction of arts continue to determine the direction of many modern promising scientific research. Among such problems is the question of the relationship between music and ornament. Unlike other components of the systems of traditional types of arts (music - painting, music - dance,] music - the art of words), repeatedly noted and relatively analyzed by researchers, music - ornament has not been subjected to detailed analysis so far. Meanwhile, this direction is very productive, first of all from the point of view of identifying certain common plastic archetypes that take place both in the structure of the ornament and in the graphics of the melody of a piece of music. The data obtained could probably indicate some stable parameters of the spatial perception of the world, which are reflected in the plasticity of the ornament drawings and the musical melodic drawing.

The possibility of a comparative analysis of music and ornamentation lies in the syncretism of ancient art, as well as in the constant and strong relationship between music and visual arts, which can be traced throughout its evolution. The memory of this primordial syncretism still lives on in synesthetic symbolism, which serves as a link uniting the various arts. An excellent confirmation of this is, for example, music, the expressive means of which, according to the observations of researchers, initially bear the response of a long-lasting close interdependence of music, word, and gesture, based on an unconscious primitive connection of feelings and communication with nature. The art of music is doomed to constantly return to its syncretic origins - to various kinds of sentiments that make both composers and listeners see in music a whole spectrum of various colors, endowing it with various tactile, spatial, and other representations. The most ancient kinetic symbolism, which originates from the closest unity of sound and movement in primitive art, occupies a special place in music. It is the kinetic symbolism that turns out to be the basis on which the intersection of music and ornament becomes possible. (Chudnovskaya,1996: 115-117)

Intuitively, this connection has been noted by researchers for a long time. So, even E. Hanslik in his book *Musically Beautiful* (1854) comes to a comparison of music with a live, continuously growing Arabesque.

There is an undeniable analogy between movement in space and movement in time, the author concludes. In his opinion, the main element of music is the image of the dynamic side of feelings, imitation of the movement of the mental process, and therefore moving sound forms that develop as a kaleidoscope of ever-changing lines, colors and figures become its content.

Despite the metaphorical nature of many statements, their very presence in the works of specialists of a very different profile shows that between music and ornament there is a kind of deep, blood, not yet properly reasoned connection. (Chudnovskaya,1996: 115-117)

Without a doubt, music and ornament, functioning within the same historical period, express the general characteristics of the mentality of a given era. A natural consequence of this is the commonality of expressive techniques, compositional, structural principles used in these arts. So, for example, the objectivity and utilitarianism of primitive man's thinking are manifested equally in ancient music (special attention to the depiction of the sounds of the external world - animal cries, bird voices, etc.), and an ornament (signs as an image of specific objects - a rhombic net that reproduces the pattern of a net for catching birds and animals, a square with dots as a sign of a sown field, etc.). Similarly, the openness of the structure of the primitive ornament (the impossibility of identifying the boundaries of the image, its center, top, bottom, the direction of action, the almost complete absence of hierarchy between the depicted objects) is also embodied in the most ancient tunes, which are characterized by chaotic disorder of sound material. Synesthetic fixed associations turn out to be here an indispensable condition for the functioning of both arts. Close related tendencies are also revealed when comparing the music and ornament of other eras - the Middle Ages, classicism, romanticism, etc. (Chudnovskaya,1996: 115-117)

Constant points of similarity relating to both arts can be found by comparing the manifestations of symmetry in music and ornament. Despite all the differences, music and ornament are expressive arts, in which there is a very large amount of abstraction. It is this ability to abstractly represent a certain content, based on synesthetic symbolism, that turns out to be the connecting link that makes it possible for the interpenetration of these arts. (Chudnovskaya,1996: 115-117)

A comparative analysis of various samples shows that the musical organization has obvious points of contact with the structural properties of the ornament: the action of the laws of symmetry, the golden section, orientation to certain proportions, the existence of synesthetic graphic images, etc. It is these principles that serve as the most important guideline for shaping and reflect the peculiarities of human perception temporal proportions, acting as a link between the various arts. (Chudnovskaya,1996: 115-117)

« Rien n'est plus incontestable que l'existence de nos sensations » “Nothing is more incontestable than the existence of our sensations”. In his Concerning the Spiritual in Art chapter «The language of shapes and colors» Kandinsky analyzes in detail the interaction of various shapes and colors and their symbolic meaning. « Form alone, even though abstract and geometrical, has a power of inner suggestion. A triangle (without the accessory consideration of its being acute or obtuse-angled or equilateral) has a spiritual value of its own. In connection with other forms, this value may be somewhat modified but remains in quality the same. The case is similar to a circle, a square, or any conceivable geometrical figure. Since colors and forms are well-nigh innumerable, their combination and their influences are likewise unending. The material is inexhaustible. Form, in the narrow sense, is nothing but the separating line between surfaces of color. That is its outer meaning. But it has also an inner meaning, of varying intensity, and, properly speaking, Form is the outward expression of this inner meaning. To use once more the metaphor of the piano—the artist is the hand which, by playing on this or that key (i.e., form), affects the human soul in this or that way. So it is evident that form- harmony must rest only on a corresponding vibration of the human soul, and this is a second guiding principle of the inner need. The two aspects of form just mentioned defining its two aims.

The task of limiting surfaces (the outer aspect) is well performed if the inner meaning is fully expressed. (Kandinsky,1977: 20) It is clear, therefore, that the choice of object (i.e. Of one of the elements in the harmony of the form must be decided only by a corresponding vibration in the human soul, and this is a third guiding principle of the inner need. Hence, the form is an expression of the internal content. This is its internal feature. Here we should remember the example given recently with the piano, an example in which instead of "color" we put "form"; an artist is a hand that properly brings the human soul into a state of vibration. The harmony of forms is based only on one principle: effective contact with the soul. We have defined this principle: the principle of inner necessity. (Kandinsky,1977: 20-21)

2.3. MUSIC OF THE EYES

The word “synesthesia” or “synaesthesia,” has its origin in the Greek roots, syn, meaning union, and aesthesis, meaning sensation: a union of the senses:

Of our five senses, that of hearing is the least favored by natural pleasures. The voluptuous man, in the state of simple nature, will have no other entertainment for the pleasure of the ears than the singing of birds, which is not a great thing, and the human voice, which is not always pleasant. All the rest will be nothing but silence or noise to the ears. The instruments, the singing, the language itself are nothing but the ingenious work of man, and, for the feeling of hearing, there is only the art of sounds and their pleasant combinations. Finally, the art of music is almost everything we have that is beautiful for the ears. Sight, on the other hand, is the richest in natural pleasures and also in wonders, a fact that creates a great difference between art that must please the eyes and art that must satisfy the ears. So it is natural to feel the obligation and have a great attachment to art that corrects a defect in nature and that gives us pleasures that we would not dare to hope for from the simple natural order of things; and if you loved music so much and still love music passionately today, that's what had to happen and it's not surprising at all. But, something is surprising in considering that despite so much beauty and so many wonderful variations that nature continuously gives to the eyes, there is still some artificial beauty that can affect the sight and that man can derive pleasure from visions of art, among so many natural riches and beauties. This thing makes good the praise of human industry since it is not uncommon to see that the visible productions of art surpass the visible productions of nature and capture our attention of preference. The art of sounds has yet another great advantage over the art of vision, and that is: that the beautiful sound does not last and passes quickly, it always leaves desire. This makes satiety more difficult in the visible beauty that is ordinarily permanent, always exposed to our passive sensitivity and cold reflection. It is also not always the way to understand beauty, just as, on the contrary, one is not always obliged to fix one's gaze on the wonders. Finally, it is only rarely and almost always by force that one enjoys a few moments of auditory beauty, while one would like to avoid the presence of the visible beauty that is encountered everywhere. The art of visible beauty is therefore the most difficult to achieve, due to the abundant natural beauty that can be copied; moreover, it makes one indifferent and more easily bored because of its permanence which always keeps it at the mercy of the reflection.

The first poets were truly the first orators and the first lovers embellished themselves with ornaments. Here is the common principle of these two kinds of music; that is to say: to embellish one's speeches and adorn one's person for pleasure, or to impose oneself. The first sound of the shepherdess of ancient times was certainly to attract her lover, with her 'parure'. But why does fashion have such a pressing empire over delicate spirits? It is always a refined union of shapes and colors put in harmony, according to the relationship of optics and sentiment. That is to say, it is the music of the eyes that takes its name from fashion, good taste, and art, depending on whether it is guided by whim, spirit, or wisdom. (Gonzaga,1807)

At the beginning of *La Musique des Yeux*, Gonzaga has got into the habit of calling the ocular harpsichord, the 'toilet' and tried to set to music an object taken from its natural state that has not received any alteration from art by putting to the harpsichord.:

Like sounds, colors have their tones, their characteristic modes that indicate the convenience of the subjects and support them. The most frequent and sharpest divisions give liveliness and strength to the sounds and colors, one and the other simply continued over time are sweet, sad, grave, etc. The tone of colors is raised and lowered like that of sounds, their relationships are combined and contrasted, or confused, faded or exploded, extended and narrowed, developed and concluded, formed a unity of subjects such that it would be impossible to change anything without modifying the concert. (Gonzaga,1807)

The use of word music applied in the book's title has been linked to the sight, the transposition of the term then in the context of the visual arts can logically mean that all visible forms can be subject to the same modalities that sound undergo to produce music. In music, division (also called diminution or coloration) refers to a type of ornamentation or variation common in 16th- and 17th-century music in which each note of a melodic line is "divided" into several shorter, faster-moving notes, often by a rhythmic repetition. To undertake a small justifying clarification on this denomination and to account for its convenience, P.Gonzaga had tried to analyze to see if there is a musical character in the visions of art, or if it is Gonzaga who is a visionary like Father Castel. This wise mathematician Castel had observed that colors and sounds appeal equally to each other; that they are both susceptible to the same gradations, to the same nuances, and that they have very similar harmonic ratios to combine. Castel concluded that colors and sounds could produce the same effects; but this reverend father did not consider that the field of colors is space and that of sounds is time; that the ears love to hear sounds successively one after the other and that the eyes, on the contrary, love to see colors spread at the same time, close to each other. Even though Father Castel's harpsichord failed, it is very natural that the observed conveniences, space, and color can be for the eyes what time and sound are for the ears. for the construction of this music of sight, a rhythm of space and modulations of colors is required.:

Colors are indeed susceptible to the same ranges or gradations as sounds. We have a color scale with many shades, with the same proportions as the sound scale and we have divided and subdivided space as time divides and subdivides. By artistically varying the intervals of the sounds and varying their duration, we obtain a song or, as the artists say, a melody. Thus, by correctly varying the shades and dimensions in the colors, you will obtain shapes or, images. Therefore, we will not be dealing here with images of painting, but with what results from the mixture of space and colors divided and shaded with discernment.(Gonzaga,1807)

Painting is an art of imitation rather than embellishment. It represents the combinations of visible objects as they are found by choosing only the existing combined beauty. The art that Gonzaga compares to music is what creates the visible beauty that does not exist in the natural state of things; or if you like, it is the art of adding what is missing to visible objects with combinations provided by inventions:

Each decorated building is a concert that has a melodious rhythm of contours, shapes, and a harmonious chord of relationships in its composition. It could well be said, therefore, that a palace and every decorated building are pieces of music, and that a city is neither a collection; or if you like, it is like a work which, being composed of several different arias and pieces, nevertheless has a general character in its entirety that distinguishes it in serious, comic, half character, etc .; and the clairvoyant stranger, who enters a city for the first time, first realizes the dominant tone that reigns there and the character of its music.(Gonzaga,1807)

In the meantime, Gonzaga lets Father Castel and some wise men of our day settle the calculations and carry out the experiments to guess if colors have the same properties as sounds and if they can produce similar effects. We are now wise enough or ingenious enough to satisfy and please our eyes with visible musical embellishments and eyesight can delight in its music.

CONCLUSION

It has been revealed that the music-space analogy mentioned in “The Music of the Eyes” was related to the synesthesia phenomenon experienced by the author- Gonzaga himself- who suggested that all decorative forms are in the same modalities to be decorated with an ocular harpsichord. The original perspective of this study aimed at achieving to bring together the synthesis of artistic-literary creativity of the 18 th -19 th century vision with a scientific experience to the contemporary world of literature and art.

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