An Analysis of Style and Influence in Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s *Le Danze del Re David*

D.M.A. Document

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Abstract

This document focuses on the Italian-Jewish composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco and one of his most important compositions for the piano, *Le Danze del Re David* - Dances of King David (1925). The factors – musical and non-musical – that influenced the creation of this significant work will be examined as well as an analysis of the music.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s life, including his persecution as a Jew during World War II and flight to the United States, his music education, and his career development are explored. Italian Sephardic liturgy and new Italian music society which developed in 1900–1930 influenced this work. The origin of King David’s dance, as referenced in 1 Chronicles 13:8 of the Bible, as well as specific instrumentation listed is represented in this work. Six facets of music conception from large scope to small unit including formal structure, melodic structure, the harmonic language of *Le Danze del Re David*, tempo, rhythmical characters, and musical texture are examined so as to enable a detailed musical analysis and provide a more complete view of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s style. With a better understanding of this work, a performer’s perspective of this piece including suggestions on interpretation is provided in the final chapter.
Dedication

Dedicated to my family
Acknowledgments

I would like to express my appreciation especially to my advisor, Professor Steven Glaser. Without his inspiring teaching and consistent encouragement, I would not be able to improve so much on the piano and finish this document.

I also want to give my gratitude to my committee members including Dr. Kia-Hui Tan, Dr. Kenneth Williams, Dr. Charles Atkinson, Dr. David Clampitt, and Dr. Jan Radzynski; and to the professors with whom I studied, Dr. Maria Staeblein, especially, who generously offered her time coaching me on my collaborative repertoire. Moreover, I would like to give my thanks to the School of Music and its Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Patrick Woliver who approved a travel research grant to visit Dr. Assaf Shelleg, Efroymson Visiting Israeli Scholar at Washington University in Saint Louis, Missouri. I would like to acknowledge Dr. Shelleg, who generously shared the resources of his dissertation with me as well as many suggestions on my document.

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More importantly, I would like to show the most appreciation to my Lord, Jesus Christ who gives me the courage and strength every day of my life.
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Chapter 1. Abridged Biography of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco was born on April 3rd, 1895 in Florence, Italy. His father’s family was originally from Spain, the last name – Castelnuovo – meaning “New Castile.”¹ His father, Amedo Castelnuovo-Tedesco, was a banker, whose personality was conventional, strict and realistic. His mother, Noemi Castelnuovo-Tedesco, nee Senigaglia, in contrast to his father, was temperamentally very different. She was very cultured, spirited, tender, and passionate. She was from a well-educated and artistic family, which dabbled in art, music and literature. In Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s childhood, his father provided the main motivation for his education. Before the age of nine, his father did not allow him to learn to play the piano, because he thought that playing the piano was a more traditionally female activity.² It was his mother who inspired him to learn music. She always played music for him when he was very young. Before he started to learn music, he could sing very well with perfect intonation. *La Bohème* was one of the operas that he could sing through. His mother also took him to see many musical events such as opera and symphony concerts. This deeply influenced his musical learning.³ Due to his father’s resistance, his mother began to teach him piano in secret.

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² Ibid., 15.

³ 16.
When he was nine years old, he performed a mazurka and nocturne by Chopin and also played his own composition – *Piccolo Valser Op.1*. His father was impressed by his playing and agreed to support him in his musical pursuits, but only on the condition that he continue to achieve good grades in his academic studies. Edgard De Valle became his first formal piano teacher.

In 1907, he attended the Luigi Cherubini Conservatory of Music in Florence, Italy. He completed his general studies in 1913, receiving his high school certificate (licenza liceale). The following year, he completed his piano study. During the same year, he went to the University of Florence to study medicine at his father’s request.

As a result of the outbreak of World War I, he was called up to join the Italian army in 1915. Due to the fact that he was a medical student, he was assigned to a clinic. He had a frail constitution and a third attack of pleurisy left him very weak, so he was put into hospital. Finally, he received permission from the military to end his military service. His doctor advised him to discontinue his duel studies of music and medicine. Following his own will, he therefore chose to end his medical study. In 1918, he received a degree in composition from *Liceo Musicale of Bologna*, a Conservatory of Music in Bologna.

During his teenage years, he had the good fortune to meet Ildebrando Pizzetti, with whom he began to study composition, harmony and counterpoint in 1915. Under Pizzetti’s instruction, Castelnuovo-Tedesco could compose freely, but he also

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4 Otero, 16.
5 Ibid.
6 Otero, 25.
carefully followed the rules of composition techniques on harmony, counterpoint and fugue. Their relationship became so close that Pizzetti would show his own work to Mario and share and discuss musical opinions.8

Through Pizzetti, Castelnuovo-Tedesco met Alfredo Casella who was an important figure in Italian music society at that time. The Societa Italiana di Musica was formed by Alfred Casella, Ildebrando Pizzetti, Gian Francesco Malipiero, Ottorino Respighi, Vittorio Gui, Carlo Perinello and Vincenzo Tommasini in 1917. Castelnuovo-Tedesco maintained a strong relationship with this group.9 Ernest Lubin also pointed out that Castelnuovo-Tedesco was identified as one of the leading spirits of the Italian musical renaissance along with his teacher, Pizzetti and his friends, Casella and Respighi in Italy of the 1920s.10

In 1920, he composed his first opera, La Mandragola, based on the dramatist Niccolo Machiavelli’s work Mandragola. In this composition, he worked diligently to represent the atmosphere of his hometown, Florence.11 This opera also won first prize in the Concorso Lirico Nazionale in 1925.12

In 1925, Castelnuovo-Tedesco met the famous German pianist Walter Gieseking who came to Florence to give a concert, in which Gieseking performed

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8 Otero, 22.

9 Westby.


11 Otero, 30.

12 Nick Rossi, Catalogue of Works by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (New York: International Castelnuovo-Tedesco Society, 1977), V.
Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s well-known piano work *Alt Wein*. Gieseking later became the champion performer of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s piano works.\textsuperscript{13}

In the 1930s, the political situation for Jews in Italy deteriorated due to the proposed racial laws by the Fascist government under Mussolini. As a result of this, many of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s works were prohibited from public performance due to his Jewish identity. He and his family fled from Italy to the United States in 1939 because they had some friends in USA and they thought America was a safe country for them. They first came to Larchmont, New York and eventually settled in Beverley Hills, California.\textsuperscript{14}

When Castelnuovo-Tedesco moved to California, he began to work with film companies and compose music for films. From 1940–1956, he composed for Hollywood studios including MGM, Columbia, Universal, Warner Brothers, 20\textsuperscript{th} Century Fox and CBS.\textsuperscript{15} Furthermore, he taught film music and composition, becoming a significant influence on a younger generation of film composers including John Williams, Jerry Goldsmith, and Henry Mancini. Pianist Andre Previn also took harmony and composition lessons from Castelnuovo-Tedesco in the 1940s.\textsuperscript{16} Castelnuovo-Tedesco also taught composition at the Los Angeles Conservatory of Music.

In 1946, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco became a citizen of United States.\textsuperscript{17} In 1948, he went back to Italy to visit his friends and relatives for the first time following


\textsuperscript{14} Westby.

\textsuperscript{15} Westby.

\textsuperscript{16} Otero, 68.

\textsuperscript{17} Westby.
World War II. During the visit in his home country, he composed the *String Quartet in F major*.\(^{18}\) Andres Segovia, a famous guitarist, had a very close relationship with him, and from 1943, Andres Segovia encouraged Castelnuovo-Tedesco to compose music for guitar. Meanwhile, Segovia performed many of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s work in his concerts. The second concerto for guitar and orchestra was composed in 1953.\(^{19}\) In 1958, his opera *Il Mercante di Venezia* won *Concorso Campari della Scala di Milano* prize, and he was also awarded the Columbian Award of Distinguished Merit.\(^{20}\) These awards motivated him to work more intensely on his compositions, and he composed more guitar works during this period. The guitarists for whom he composed in the 1960’s were Olga Coelho, Andres Segovia, Oscar Ghigia, Ronald Purcell and Angelo Gilardino. Mario Castelnovo-Tedesco passed away in Beverly Hills, California, March 16\(^{th}\) 1968.\(^{21}\)

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\(^{18}\) Otero, 82.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 91.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., 102.

\(^{21}\) Westby.
Chapter 2. Background of Le Danze del Re David

From the title Le Danze del Re David, one can perceive that this work is related to the biblical story of the great King David dancing before the Lord. This work was inspired by Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s maternal grandfather – Bruto Senigaglia, and it is significantly interrelated to the Italian-Sephardic liturgy, and contemporary Italian music society.

2.1 Family Influence

The piano solo piece Le Danze del Re David was Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s first composition representing his Jewish heritage. The crucial stimulation to this work derived from his maternal grandfather, Bruto Senigaglia, who was an amateur cantor and opera singer. He was also a religious man who possessed the personality of joyousness. Bruto Senigaglia loved to sing, and in Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s memory, his grandfather especially loved Italian music. In Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s early childhood, Bruto Senigaglia encouraged his daughter Noemi Senigaglis to teach Castelnuovo-Tedesco music. Therefore, his grandfather was an important figure who motivated him to become a professional musician. He died in 1904 when Castelnuovo-Tedesco was about nine years old.

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22 Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Autobiographical document, 6.
23 Ibid.
24 Otero, 15.
In 1924, in his grandfather’s library, Castelnuovo-Tedesco discovered a notebook which amazed him. This notebook contained Hebrew prayers set in three-part harmony that had been written by his grandfather. These musical jottings aroused his Jewish identity which then inspired *Le Danze del Re David* in 1925, his first large-scale work depicting the biblical story. The notebook of prayers impacted Castelnuovo-Tedesco deeply because it was at this point that he started to connect to his family’s Jewish heritage mentioned in the forward of the organ work *Prayers My Grandfather Wrote* that, “…to me this discovery was one of the deepest impressions of my life, as I realized where I came from, both artistically and spiritually”. While Castelnuovo-Tedesco didn’t quote any melodies from the notebook, he recalled the liturgical melodies which his grandfather used to sing to him or the ones he heard in his synagogue. On the first page of this piece, Castelnuovo-Tedesco dedicated this piece to his grandfather: “alla cara memoria del mio nonno materno Bruto Senigaglia” which means: “to the beloved memory of my paternal grandfather Bruto Senigaglia.” Castelnuovo-Tedesco also quoted one verse from Psalm 37:25 “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” Castelnuovo-Tedesco used this verse to demonstrate his remembrance of his grandfather.

*Le Danze del Re David* was the starting point of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s Jewish and biblical compositions. After *Le Danze del Re David*, there were many other works such as *The Corali, Su Melodie Ebraiche (1925)*, the second violin


28 Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Autobiographical document, 4.
concerto, *I Profeti* (1931), *The Sacred Service for Sabbath Eve* (1943), *Songs and Processionals for a Jewish Wedding* (1950), *Memorial Service for the Departed* (1960), and *Prayers My Grandfather Wrote* (1962).\(^{29}\) These works reflected his Jewish life, the synagogue music, and the biblical influence. Although there is not much information showing Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s religious view, the *Bible* and Jewish traditions can nonetheless be perceived in his other works. Castelnuovo-Tedesco once stated that his primary sources of inspiration were from his hometown Florence and Tuscany, the *Bible*, and Shakespeare.\(^{30}\)

### 2.2 Influence of Sephardic-Italian liturgy

Castelnuovo-Tedesco was born to a Sephardic-Jewish family who were expelled from Spain and then immigrated to Tuscany, Italy in the late 15th century. In his autobiography, Castelnuovo-Tedesco described that his family belonged to the Sephardic ritual. They were from a lineage of Jews who were exiled from Spain in 1492 and later settled in the province of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.\(^{31}\) His father, following the occupation of many Italian Jews, was a banker. When he reached his thirteenth birthday, Castelnuovo-Tedesco was Bar Mitzvahed, reading in Hebrew from the Torah.\(^{32}\)

In his autobiography, Castelnuovo-Tedesco pointed out that the melodies of *Le Danze del Re David* were heard in his synagogue. Castelnuovo-Tedesco consulted

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\(^{29}\) Rossi, *Catalogue of Works by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco*, iii.


\(^{31}\) Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Autobiographical document, 4.

\(^{32}\) Otero, 17.
with Rabbi Umberto Cassuto regarding the melodies, who confirmed their Sephardic origins.  

The oldest Sephardic community in Italy was established in Venice during the 16th Century. The music style of Sephardic liturgy is less improvisatory and stricter, which presents the purity and simplicity of religious chant. During the liturgical service, singing is the most important activity. The singing forms the interaction between the cantor and the congregation, like responsorial singing. A Sephardic-liturgical service also includes the variety of musical genre including psalmody, cantillation, recitative and strophic melodies. The themes of Le Danze del Re David reflect the same features such as the singing-like character, a cantorial style and recitative singing.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco heard these Sephardic liturgies from his synagogue and also from his maternal grandfather. When he composed Le Danze del Re David, he recalled these melodies which were heard possibly more times in the special ceremonies or festivals like Yom Kippur or the ones which inspired him more. However, he did not intend for these melodies to fulfill a liturgical function in Le Danze del Re David but intended for them to fill a purely musical function. In 1892, Federico Consolo collected the Sephardic-Italian liturgy and published the book

33 Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Autobiographical document, 4.
36 Ibid.
“Sefer shire Yi’sra’el: Libro dei canti d’Israele: antichi canti liturgici del rito degli ebrei Spagnoli (Songbook of Israel: The Complete Sephardic-Italian Musical Liturgy of the Jewish Communities in Florence).” In Cosolo’s collection, one could find the fragments or the very similar melodies found in Le Danze del Re David, which also confirmed the Sephardic-liturgy influence on this work.

2.3 Italian Music Society during 1900–1930

The second title “Rapsodia Ebraica su Temi Tradizionali” of Le Danze del Re David literally means: “A Hebrew Rhapsody on Traditional Themes.”38 Before this piano piece was written, another Jewish composer, Ernest Bloch wrote a rhapsody for cello and orchestra “Shlomo” in 1916. This work was based on the biblical story of the great king Solomon. Castelnuovo-Tedesco heard the performance of Shlomo in 1918 and was very fascinated with this composition.39 Similar to the title “Shlomo”, Castelnuovo-Tedesco chose another great king, David, as his source of inspiration.

According to Dr. Assaf Shelleg’s PhD dissertation, he concluded that Castelnuovo-Tedesco articulated Jewish music through non-Jewish music and modern-Italian music.40 Therefore, the contemporary Italian music and musicians impacted his musical language and his compositions. It is important for us to comprehend the music development in Italy from late 19th century to the first three decades of 20th century.

38 Soltes, Off the Willows, 100.

39 Heskes, Passport to Jewish Music, 289.

40 Assaf Shelleg, “‘From the Children of Foreigners and Hebrews’; Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s ‘Jewish cycle’ Research during his Italian Period” (PhD Dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2008) [In Hebrew].
In the late 19th century in Italy, opera was regarded as the most important musical genre and activity. Giuseppe Verdi, whose works included *Aida*, *Otello* and *Falstaff*, was the most famous Italian composer at that time. Operatic music was more highly regarded than instrumental music during this period. During the first three decades of the 20th century, there were some significant revolutions in the Italian music society. Instrumental music was promoted and receiving more attention. Giuseppe Martucci played an important role in promoting the position of instrumental music in Italy. His works during this period included the First Piano Concerto (1878), Second Piano Concerto (1885), two symphonies in 1895 and 1904, and some chamber music. As Italians studying in Germany and France returned to their home country, they brought new music ideas and different musical styles, including the impressionistic style, neoclassicism, and other musical innovations which blossomed in this period.

In the beginning of the 20th century in Italy, the new musical trend was turned against the music style of nineteenth century and the Italian opera traditions. Ferruccio Busoni studied and built his career in Germany for several years, until in 1913 he became director of the Bologna Liceo Musicale in Italy. However, his revolution to change the tradition of Italian music did not progress smoothly. Alfred Casella studied in France and returned to Italy in 1915. Casella was open-minded to the modern forms of music in 1914–1920. The modern-music representative

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42 Ibid., 311.

43 Ibid., 313.

44 Ibid., 314.
composers at this time included Stravinsky, Bartok, and Schoenberg.\textsuperscript{45} The neoclassicism from Stravinsky and the dissonant, chromatic concept of Schoenberg influenced Casella and other musicians during this time. Casella also brought French music back to the Italians. Moreover, Casella focused on instrumental music rather than on operatic forms.\textsuperscript{46}

In 1917, Casella founded the Societa Italiana di Musica Moderna. Some members included, Pizzetti, Malipiero, Respighi, Gui, Carlo Perinello and Tommasini.\textsuperscript{47} This organization supported new music development in Italy during this period, which helped the new generation of musicians to advertise their music to the public through concerts and through the entertaining magazine \textit{Ars Nova}. Castelnuovo-Tedesco was strongly associated with this organization.

In 1915, Castelnuovo-Tedesco began his studies with Ildebrando Pizzetti.\textsuperscript{48} Pizzetti was known for his operatic compositions and his use of contrapuntal technique which had considerable impact on Castelnuovo-Tedesco, particularly in his early works.\textsuperscript{49} Furthermore, Castelnuovo-Tedesco was significantly influenced by Pizzetti’s philosophy of humanism, which emphasized the projection of human feelings and nature though the music. Through Pizzetti, Castelnuovo-Tedesco met Casella who gave him considerable encouragement and support. With his great talent in music, Castelnuovo-Tedesco was very fortunate to be sponsored by this music organization and he maintained a strong relationship with them.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 316.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{47} Westby.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.
French impressionism saturated Italian music during this period. For example, Pizzetti was influenced by Debussy’s lyricism in his operatic works. Puccini’s Madama Butterfly was influenced by Debussy’s harmonic and orchestral innovations, including the use of whole tone scales and the tritones from Debussy’s operatic work Pelléas. Castelnuovo-Tedesco was also influenced by Debussy’s impressionism. He was very attracted to Debussy’s music and his teacher, Pizzetti, also encouraged him to compose according to his interests and according to contemporary trend.

Many of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s early works described nature, for example the piano works Il raggio verde, op.9 (1916), Alghe, op.12 (1919), I Naviganti, op.13 (1919), Cypresses, op.17 (1920). Christopher Palmer described the harmonic character of the opening of Cypresses as “entirely impressionist in substance which included open fifth, secondary ninth, added sixth open fifth.”

On the other hand, the example of neo-classicism can be seen in the Concerto Italiano in G minor for violin and orchestra Op.31 in which he modeled the style of Antonio Vivaldi. Furthermore, Castelnuovo-Tedesco followed Mozart’s concerto style in his Guitar Concerto op.99 No.1 in D composed in 1939. There are three movements, and long cadenzas are included in each movement. The orchestration presented delicacy which includes a small group of strings, flute, oboe, bassoon, horn,


53 Reeves, 31.

54 Westby.
2 clarinets, and timpani. Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s intention was to recreate a light, Mozartean orchestra.\textsuperscript{55}

Therefore, when Castelnuovo-Tedesco composed \textit{Le Danze del Re David}, he was influenced by the music environment of many varieties of music culture and innovative musical ideas in Italy. He was inspired by different musicians and the contemporary music style. With these innovative developments in music, Castelnuovo-Tedesco composed this piano work to present his Jewish heritage.

\textsuperscript{55} Otero, 56.
Chapter 3. Biblical Inspirations and Influences

Nick Rossi pointed out that Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s early study of the English language on these two important masterworks – the complete works of Shakespeare and the King James Version of the Bible – provided him with many ideas and inspirations to his compositions.56 Le Danze del Re David mainly described two verses from the Bible in 2 Samuel, chapter 6, verses 14–15: “And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.”57

3.1 The Origin of Le Danze del Re David

The story of the ‘Dances of King David’ was recorded in 2 Samuel 6 and also in 1 Chronicles 13, 15, and 16 of the Bible. King David was a great figure who showed his bravery and intelligence at a young age, defeating the Philistine giant, Goliath with a stone from his sling. Later, King Saul who was the first king of the United Kingdom of Israel commanded him to take charge of the army. For David’s many victories, he was praised, admired and loved by the people of Israel. However, his appointment also put him in danger because of the jealousy that King Saul had of his achievements. To avoid Saul’s wrath, he fled to the wilderness. After King Saul died, David became the second king of the Kingdom of Israel. It can be seen clearly

56 Rossi, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, ii.

in the Old Testament that he was not only a warrior but a musician and poet. For example, he composed many psalms which were included in the book of *Psalms* in the *Bible*. Among all the ancient instruments, he excelled at playing the harp. In 1 Samuel 16:23, it is recorded that by playing beautiful harp music David helped to expel the evil spirit from King Saul through the power of the Lord.\(^{58}\)

The story of the ‘Dances of King David’ occurred when he brought the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem. The Ark of the Covenant contained tablets of stone. On these tablets, the Ten Commandments were inscribed. The Ark of the Covenant was in Kiriath Jearim when David followed God’s will to bring it to Jerusalem. In 2 Samuel 6:14–15, one could sense that the mood of David and the people of Israel was very excited and agitated; we also could perceive the lively atmosphere from the people.\(^{59}\) In *Le Danze del Re David*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco presented this liveliness faithfully and one can feel the mood very easily.

### 3.2 Ancient Instruments, Their functions and Usage in *Le Danze del Re David*

According to the account in the *Bible*, the ‘Dances of King David’ was accompanied by many ancient instruments. In 2 Samuel 6:5, David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.\(^{60}\) This verse states that five instruments were played on this occasion. Moreover, in 1 Chronicles 15:16, David spoke to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of music, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding,

\(^{58}\) *The Holy Bible*, King James Version.

\(^{59}\) Ibid.

\(^{60}\) Ibid.
by lifting up the voice with joy. In 1 Chronicles 15:28, the sonic description is given that “thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.” These two verses give us the idea of a music ensemble at that moment and the musical image was bustling, noisy, and cheerful.

1 Chronicles 15:19–24 show the setting of the ensemble in which three people - Heman, Asaph, and Ethan - played the cymbals of brass; Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah, played psalteries on Alamoth; Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obededom, Jeiel, and Azaziah – played the harps on the Sheminith to excel; Chenaniah, was for song; seven priests – Shebaniah, Jehoshaphat, Nethaneel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer - did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God. Based on this account from the Bible, one can conclude that there were at least twenty five people in the ensemble. If one were to include the choir, then this number could be even greater. One can almost imagine how it would have sounded and the atmosphere and joy of the celebration.

In Le Danze del Re David, Castelnuovo-Tedesco presented the sound effect of ancient instruments using the modern day piano. In 1 Chronicles 13:8, “and David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.” From these particular biblical references, one can infer that a ram’s horn, harps, psalteries (lyres), tambourines, cymbals and trumpets were popular contemporary instruments.

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61 *The Holy Bible: King James Version*

62 Ibid.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.
The ancient instruments used in the Temple of Jerusalem in this period could be categorized into three groups. These were string instruments, wind instruments, and percussion instruments. String instruments included harps and psalteries (also known as kinnors and nevels), wind instruments of which there were two kinds: non-musical (shofar and chatzotzera) and musical (uggav, halil-chalil, and alamoth) and finally percussion instruments including tambourines, sistroms, cymbals, tof, metziltayim, and paamonim.

In *Le Danze del Re David*, the shofar or ram’s horn was the most important and significant instrument. While not a melodic instrument, it could play certain intervals like a fourth, fifth, and octave. Due to its pitch restriction, the shofar usually plays in a specific rhythmic pattern. There are three ways to create a sound: Tekiah (blow), Teruah (blast) or Tekiah Gedolah (fanfare). There are four patterns of blast: Tekiah, Shevarim, Teruah, and Tekia Gedolah. Tekiah is a long blast, shevarim is a three-broken blast, teruah is an alarming sound when the enemy is approaching played with short notes in staccato or tremolo form, and Tekia Gedolah is one long sound blast with increments at the end. Functionally, the shofar is used to signal and announce important events such as fasts and festivals, and to frighten the evil spirits of the enemy. The shofar blasts vigorously remind Jews that the New Year holiday called Rosh Hashanah is a time for reflection and repentance for their sins. Moreover, the shofar player could only be someone who knew the meaning of the blast, such as the priest.


In *Le Danze del Re David*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco employs the shofar call as an important motif. There are seven places marked “quasi shofar” in *Le Danze del Re David*. They appear in the pattern of intensive repeating notes suggesting the pattern of Teruah. This call and its function may be to announce the big event of bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. Structurally, the shofar call also signifies the transition from section to section and it appears in the Teruah pattern seven times in this piece:


In *Le Danze del Re David*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco wrote many musical passages representing string instruments. String instruments include the Nevel and the Kinnor. The Nevel is a big harp, originally without a resonant body, and with 12 strings as opposed to the modern harp which has 47 strings. It is a traditional instrument used by the ancient Hebrews. Compared to the Kinnor, the Nevel is larger, therefore the tone is stronger. It is also played with the fingers. The Kinnor is like a small lyre or harp with 10 strings, and its tone is sweeter and gentler. The Kinnor is played with a plectrum and is plucked. These two string instruments have different

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68 All the examples on the *Le Danze del Re David* are taken from Castelnuovo-Tedesco: *Le Danze del Re David* (Firenze: A. Forlivesi, 1926).
numbers of strings, are different in size and tone, but they are both essential to the ceremony and service. The first harp-like sound is played with the shofar call at the very beginning of the introduction. The rapid descending arpeggio creates excitement similar to the effect that a fireworks display has on its viewers.


The second occurrence is in measure 45, where the harp pattern appears on the left hand arpeggio to resonate the changing harmonies.
In section II Ieratico (measure 79), the harp figuration sounds in an A-flat major arpeggio. The repeating harp figuration is used to accompany the lyrical main melody and also creates an atmosphere of purification and glory.

The luminous harp figuration marked as “chiaro e luminoso” also appears in measure 212 of section IV. It is used to accompany the left-hand thematic melody. The last time the harp figuration is shown is in measure 453. Similar to section II, the harp plays in A-flat major harmony, but with greater passion and power which signals the final shout for joy.
The other important type of instruments used very often in *Le Danze del Re David* is the percussion family. In the ancient orchestra, percussion was considered as an important group. As mentioned earlier, this group includes tambourines, sistrums, cymbals (metziltayim), tof, and paamonim. In this piece, Castelnuovo-Tedesco clearly marked a few places, such as “quasi tamburo” in measure 395 and measure 430, “quasi timpani” in measure 30 and “quasi gran cassa” in measure 62. All of these places are in a lively tempo, so the drum’s function is not only to set the tempo but to maintain the pulse of the dance.

However, there are many other places filled with the percussive figuration that are not specifically marked as percussive on the score. Castelnuovo-Tedesco usually marked “secco” or “sordo” to indicate the sound effect of the drum, as can be seen in example measure 244 (example 3.5):

![Example 3.5. Le Danze del Re David, Rude e ben ritmato, mm. 244–245.](image)

Moreover, these places happen to be in the music figuration of a rhythmic ostinato. The sound of the drum gave the dancer strong support of an inner pulse creating excitement at the same time. For example, in measure 373 (example 3.6), the
steady and consistent inner two voices are in an ostinato pattern. This demonstrates the imitation of the percussion.


The percussive instrument plays a very important role in this piece since the dancers relies on the steady beat of the percussion to perfect their timing, “The element of rhythm was conspicuously presented in song and dance, during procession and ceremonies when the accompanying rhythmic beat was associated with the drum either as solo or as part of an ensemble.” 69 The drum is mentioned seventeen times in the Bible, each time in connection with different ensembles including singing, dancing, and a variety of instruments. 70

69 Shiloah, Jewish Music Traditions, 40.

70 Ibid.
The last group commonly used in ancient Jewish times is the wind instrument group. This group includes Uggav, Halil (Chalil), and Alamoth. Uggav is like a small pipe or flute, but it was seldom used. Halil is a big pipe that was very popular in ancient Israel. Its name is not on the list of instruments served in the First Temple. In the Second Temple, it could only be used on twelve festival days during the year to spread joy. Halil represents an exciting instrument that was only used for weddings to signify joy and happiness. The sound of Halil is similar to the sound of an oboe. However, in *Le Danze del Re David*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco did not indicate the Halil or the Uggav (the woodwind group), but he suggested the sound imitate the modern western wind instruments such as “quasi corni” in measure 411 and “quasi tromboni” in measure 444. Otherwise, in the ending section, Alla Chiusa, Castelnuovo-Tedesco marked *come una fanfara regale*, which means, “as an royal fanfare.” This ending section reflected the *Bible* verse of 2 Sam 6:15, “So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.”

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71 Idelsohn, 11.
72 Ibid., 12.
73 *The Holy Bible*, King James Version.
Chapter 4. Music Analysis of Le Danze del Re David

4.1 Form

Castelnuovo-Tedesco gives a second title “rapsodia ebraica su temi tradizionali”, which means “A Hebrew Rhapsody on Traditional Themes” to this piano work Le Danze del Re David. In spirit, character and form, this work is clearly a rhapsody. In the Grove Music Dictionary, John Rink points out that the rhapsody is a free-form composition and the term is first applied to a piano composition in 1802.74

Firstly, the character of a rhapsody is epic, based on popular, national or folk music.75 For example, the Hungarian Rhapsody by Franz Liszt features Hungarian folk music elements while George Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue features American jazz music elements. Secondly, in terms of form, a rhapsody is very often a one-movement work integrated with several sections composed in a variation form. A rhapsody also reflects composers’ inspirations in an improvisational style, allowing the music to flow more freely. Moreover, the mood between the sections is contrasted, often with the use of harmony and tonality.

The characteristics mentioned above are also reflected in Le Danze del Re David. Firstly, Le Danze del Re David can be considered a large-scale movement work that includes seven main sections. Secondly, Castelnuovo-Tedesco utilizes the


sound image of a biblical, ancient instrument such as the shofar, which is used as a bridge or link between the various sections in this work. Thirdly, the thematic melody employed in each section originates from the Sephardic liturgy. Fourthly, *Le Danze del Re David* very often embodies a lively and energetic atmosphere with mood changes altering dramatically between sections. Moreover, *Le Danze del Re David* demonstrates Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s variation style and improvisatory character.

The overall structure of *Le Danze del Re David* is composed of an introduction, seven main sections, and an ending coda (see table 1). The detailed analysis of this structure will be discussed in the following paragraphs section by section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Le Danze del Re David</em></th>
<th>Measure number</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vivo e tumultuoso (shofar call)</td>
<td>m.1–6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Violento ed impetuoso</strong></td>
<td>m.7–70</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivo e tumultuoso (shofar call)</td>
<td>m.71–78</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Ieratico</strong></td>
<td>m.79–118</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivo e tumultuoso (shofar call)</td>
<td>m.119–23</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. Rapido e selvaggio</strong></td>
<td>m.124–191</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV. Lento ed estatico</strong></td>
<td>m.192–238</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivo e tumultuoso (shofar call)</td>
<td>m.239–243</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V. Rude e ben ritmato –</strong></td>
<td>m.244–284</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivo e tumultuoso (shofar call) – <strong>Tempo I</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VI. Malinconico e supplichevole</strong></td>
<td>m.285–372</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VII. Allegro guerriero</strong></td>
<td>m.373–461</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Largo e pomposo – Alla Chiusa</td>
<td>m.462–479</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1. Structure of *Le Danze del Re David*
**Vivo e tumultuoso (Lively and turbulent)**

As mentioned before, the shofar call of *Vivo e tumultuoso* appears five times as a link between sections except III to IV, and VI to VII. From III to IV, the shofar call is integrated with the ending chords. From VI to VII, the shofar call is reduced to only two measures and followed by a recitative melody. The shofar calls in these two places are not as in other sections. They are fragmented and short. One should notice the shofar call in the section V. *Rude e ben ritmato* – measure 251-254. Castelnuovo-Tedesco inserted an unexpected shofar call after this section began instead of at the end of this section.

**I. Violento ed impetuoso (Violent and impetuous)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure number</th>
<th>m.7-14</th>
<th>m.15-20</th>
<th>m.21-30</th>
<th>m.31-38</th>
<th>m.39-44</th>
<th>m.45-52</th>
<th>m.53-64</th>
<th>m.65-70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2. Structure of *Violento ed impetuoso*

Table 4.2 points out that *theme a* followed by *theme b* recurs two times in *Violento ed impetuoso*. According to this pattern, it can be concluded that *theme a* followed by *theme b*, becomes an A section. Thus, there are three complete A sections, A1, A2, A3 and an incomplete A4 at the end. Generally, *theme a* and *theme b* are contrasted in style. More specifically, *theme a* is wild and rhythmical while *theme b* is much more lyrical and gentle. Furthermore, among these four A sections, the thematic melodies are alike, but Castelnuovo-Tedesco continues to change the
voicing of theme a and theme b, and the accompaniment pattern and style in each A section. This quasi-variation style is an important feature in *Le Danze del Re David*.

**II. Ieratico (Sacred, solemn)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure number</th>
<th>m.79-88</th>
<th>m.88-95</th>
<th>m.95-104</th>
<th>m.104-111</th>
<th>m.111-118</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Melody(M) 1 to 4</td>
<td>M5-M5-M3-M4</td>
<td>M1-M5-M2-M5-M3-M4</td>
<td>M5-M5-M3-M4</td>
<td>M5-M1-M5-M2-M5-(M3+M5)-(M5+M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>9,5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitonality: Key of thematic melodies</td>
<td>E major (L.H)</td>
<td>Ab major (R.H)</td>
<td>Ab major (alternate between L.H and R.H)</td>
<td>C major (R.H)</td>
<td>C major (alternate between L.H and R.H)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3. Structure of *Ieratico*

The structure of *Ieratico* is based on five melodies. Sections A1 and A2 include melodies 1, 2, 3, and 4 (in order), and sections B1 and B2 are based on melodies 5, 3 and 4. The final C section combines melodies 1-5 in a polyphonic style. Castelnuovo-Tedesco also employs bitonality to enrich the harmonic color.
III. *Rapido e selvaggio* (*Quick, savage and wild*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure number</th>
<th>m.124-132</th>
<th>m.133-135</th>
<th>m.136-144</th>
<th>m.145-153</th>
<th>m.154-159</th>
<th>m.160-166</th>
<th>m.167-178</th>
<th>m.179-191</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme and motif (m)</td>
<td>m 1 and Theme a (m1,2,3,4)</td>
<td>m 5 and 1 (transition)</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Theme b</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Theme b</td>
<td>m 1 and Theme a</td>
<td>m 5 and shofar call – m 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>B (fourth as an intervallic motif)</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4. Structure of *Rapido e selvaggio*

Based on the analysis in table 4.4, one can conclude that this section is in ABA ternary form. There are five short motives and these motives are ingeniously used to unite the thematic ideas. Significantly, two themes – *theme a* and *b* – both are composed of short motives. The perfect fourths and augmented fourths are the most important music materials in the B section.

IV. *Lento ed estatico* (*Slowly and ecstatic*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure number</th>
<th>m.192-201</th>
<th>m.202-212</th>
<th>m.213-222</th>
<th>m.223-232</th>
<th>m.233-238</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Theme a (unison) – episode (Subito mosso)</td>
<td>Theme a (L.H-trill, R.H-theme) – episode (Subito mosso)</td>
<td>Theme a (R.H-arpeggio, L.H-theme)</td>
<td>Theme a (R.H-theme in thirds, L.H-ostinato) - episode (Subito mosso)</td>
<td>Coda (Theme a material) - Theme a in thirds and in unison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>Coda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5. Structure of *Lento ed estatico*
Similar to the form of the first section - *Violento ed impetuoso*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco composes this section in a quasi-variation style. Theme a is always followed by a contrasted episode, except in section A3. As the table shows, theme a is presented differently each time accompanied by various music figurations which displays an improvisatory style. Furthermore, one can see from table 4.5 that each A section is consistently 10-11 measures in length.

### V. *Rude e ben ritmato (Rude and with rhythm)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure number</th>
<th>m.244-250</th>
<th>m.251-254</th>
<th>m.255-263</th>
<th>m.264-275</th>
<th>m.276-284</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Shofar call</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(R.H - theme,</td>
<td>(unexpected)</td>
<td>(in a canon</td>
<td>(R.H - theme a</td>
<td>(R.H- theme a in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L.H – ostinato</td>
<td></td>
<td>style played by</td>
<td>played in a</td>
<td>chords, L.H –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and chromatic</td>
<td></td>
<td>both hands)</td>
<td>dominant key,</td>
<td>ostinato figurations in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>scale)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>L.H-ostinato)</td>
<td>chords)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Vivo e</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>A4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tumultuoso</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6. Structure of *Rude e ben ritmato*

According to table 4.6, the quasi-variation style returns in this section. The structure features the recurrence of theme a; however, each time theme a and its accompaniment is presented it is varied. In terms of the complexity of texture, the density gradually increases each time theme a appears. For example, in section A4, the original single voiced melody is now a series of heavy, strong doublings and chords.
VI. Malinconico e supplichevole (Melancholic and pleading)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure number</th>
<th>m.285-294</th>
<th>m.294-300</th>
<th>m.300-322</th>
<th>m.322-335</th>
<th>m.335-350</th>
<th>m.350-365</th>
<th>m.366-372</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Theme b + c</td>
<td>Theme d</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Theme b + c</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Shofar call + theme c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A2 (extended)</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>Coda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7. Structure of Malinconico e supplichevole

Castelnuovo-Tedesco adopted a greater variety of thematic materials in this section. There are four themes: a, b, c, and d. The theme a, b and c form the A section. B section includes theme d. This section, as well as section VII, are the two longest sections in this work. The structure of the recurring A2 section is extended.

VII. Allegro guerriero (Lively and warrior)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure number</th>
<th>m.373-375</th>
<th>m.376-393</th>
<th>m.394-409</th>
<th>m.410-427</th>
<th>m.428-443</th>
<th>m.444-461</th>
<th>m.462-463</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Percussion motif</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Theme b</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Theme b</td>
<td>Theme a</td>
<td>Harp motif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>Largo e pomposo (transition)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8. Structure of Allegro guerriero

Based on table 4.8, the three main sections are clearly presented with an initial short introduction and a transition at the end. The structure seems very carefully and neatly done by Castelnuovo-Tedesco. Sections A1 and A2 are the same length, but
have different registers and complexity of the melodies. The texture is heavier, and the register is higher in A2 section.

*Alla Chiusa: Chiaro e solenne – come una fanfare regale* *(To the end:)*

**Bright and solemn – like a regal fanfare**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure number</th>
<th>m.464-467</th>
<th>m.468-471</th>
<th>m.472-479</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>a-b</td>
<td>a-b</td>
<td>a-a-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>4(3+1)</td>
<td>4(3+1)</td>
<td>8(2+2+4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9. Structure of *Alla Chiusa*

The finale contains two musical ideas: doublings and accumulating dominant seventh chords. Both portray the sound of joy and glory of triumph. The structure is A1 A2 B. Sections A1 and A2 each include three measures of doublings and one measure of dominant seventh chords. Section B includes repeating doublings in several different chords. This final section presents the musical image of a trumpet fanfare. The structure of this ending section is tidy and regular.

4.2 *Melody*

Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s compositions are particularly characterized by lyrical melodies. His early solo works such as *Il raggio verde, op.9* (1916), *Alghe, op.12* (1919), *I Naviganti, op.13* (1919), and *Cipressi, op.17* (1920) are good examples. The melodies in this work are easily recognized and very distinct. This characteristic of
lyricism is derived from Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s Italian heritage, and these melodies are usually similar to folksongs.\textsuperscript{76}

4.2.1 Origin of the Melodies in \textit{Le Danze del Re David}

Similar to his early piano works, the melodies in \textit{Le Danze del Re David} are stylistically recognizable as his own. The melodies in \textit{Le Danze del Re David} originate from the Sephardic liturgy which Castelnuovo-Tedesco first heard from his grandfather, his synagogue, and later from his mother. As his grandfather was a cantor in the synagogue, Castelnuovo-Tedesco had many opportunities to listen to liturgical melodies.

In 1892, Italian musician Federico Consolo compiled the complete Sephardic-Italian musical liturgy of the Jewish communities from Florence and Livorno in the \textit{Sefer Shirei Israel (Songbook of Israel)}\textsuperscript{77}. The melodies in \textit{Le Danze del Re David} can be found in this significant resource. When Castelnuovo-Tedesco composed this piece, he was not familiar with Consolo’s \textit{Sefer Shirei Israel}. He reconstructed the melodies which he remembered hearing in his childhood from his grandfather and from the synagogue. From the comparison between the melodies in Consolo’s \textit{Songbook of Israel} and the melodies in \textit{Le Danze del Re David}, it is obvious that Castelnuovo-Tedesco intended the liturgical melodies to become the themes of his composition. Harriette Rosen pointed out that the exact origin of the melodies is

\textsuperscript{76} Reeves, \textit{The Piano Works of Castelnuovo-Tedesco}, 30.

\textsuperscript{77} Federico Consolo, \textit{Sefer shire Yisrael: Libro dei canti d’Israele : antichi canti liturgici del rito degli ebrei Spagnoli (Songbook of Israel: The Complete Sephardic-Italian Musical Liturgy of the Jewish Communities in Florence)} (Firenze: Edizioni Brattie, 1892).
unidentified. However, Zecharia Plavin found out that the melodies of *Le Daze del Re David* were included in Consolo’s *Sefer Shirei Israel*. In addition, Plavin illustrated the original melodies of the first three sections of *Le Danze del Re David*: *Violento ed impetuoso, Ieratico, and Rapido e selvaggio*. Following are the music examples illustrated by Plavin from the *Le Danze del Re David* and *Sefer Shirei Isarael*. The first music example is the liturgy in Consolo’s *Sefer Shirei Israel* followed by themes in Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s *Le Danze del Re David*.

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80 Ibid., 115-120.
I. Violento ed impetuoso

Example 4.1. *Sefer Shirei Israel*, *Eloenu*, p. 15.81


This liturgy is one of the Sabbath morning prayers and it is used at the close of the service. The translation of this prayer is: Our God and God of our fathers bless us with the threefold blessing in the Torah, which was written by the hand of Moshe Your servant and spoken through the mouth of Aharon and his sons, the priests, Your holy people, as it said: “May God bless you and keep you. May God light up His

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81 All the examples on *Sefer Shirei Israel* are taken from Federico Consolo, *Sefer shire Yisrael: Libro dei canti d'Israel: antichi canti liturgici del rito degli ebrei Spagnoli* (Firenze: Edizioni Brattie, 1892).
countenance for you and favor you. May God turn His countenance toward you and establish peace for you.”  

The dotted rhythm and the stepwise-descending thirds in the first two measures are the similarities between these two themes. Moreover, its thematic melody is also used in Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s early piano work *Il Raggio Verde*.

![Example 4.3. Il Raggio Verde, mm. 148–151.](image)

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II. Ieratico


Example 4.5. Le Danze del Re David, Ieratico, mm. 89–92.
These two melodies from the liturgy and *Le Danze del Re David* are very similar and can be immediately recognized. They are both in a major key and the rhythm of the melody is the same. One can state with confidence that the origin of the melodies of *Le Danze del Re David* is derived from liturgical music.

**III. Rapido e selvaggio**


Castelnuovo-Tedesco quotes the triplet rhythm and the descending-fourth interval from the liturgy and applies that fragment to new melodies in *Le Danze del Re David*. Therefore, this is one example in which Castelnuovo-Tedesco borrows a fragment of the liturgy and uses the elements of the theme. The three examples illustrated above are quoted from Plavin’s *Piano repertory of the 20th century; A local cultural perspective*.\(^8^4\)

More melodies in *Le Danze del Re David* can be found in Consolo’s “*Sefer Shirei Israel,*” such as the melodies found in section IV, VI, and VII (see the examples below).

**IV. Lento ed estatico**


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\(^{8^4}\) Plavin, 120.
As seen in the musical examples above, the second part of the liturgy is employed in the second part of the theme in *Le Danze del Re David, Lento ed estatico*. Both examples share the key area of F-sharp minor, however the rhythm is altered.

**VI. Malinconico e supplichevole**


The translation of the liturgy is: “God, God, Compassionate God, and Gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in kindness, Preserver of Kindness and Truth, for thousands of generations, Forgiver of iniquity, willful sin, and error, and who absolves.”

One can see in the examples that there are many similarities between the liturgy and themes. The first similar motif is the opening, stepwise-ascending and descending figuration. This melodic figuration after the fermata in the liturgy can be seen in measure 340–343 of the *Le Danze del Re David*. Moreover, the repetition in the liturgy is an important motif applied to the theme.
VII. Allegro guerrieo


Both the liturgy and the theme are in G major and 6/8 meter. Castelnuovo-Tedesco utilizes the liturgy and avoids the auxiliary tone (for example, B of the A-B-
A phrase, and the G of the F-sharp – G – F-sharp) to restructure the new melody. The similarities between these two melodies are obvious.

From the musical examples illustrated above, one can discover that most of the melodies of *Le Danze del Re David* are derived from the Sephardic liturgy. While the rhythmic and melodic lines are not identical, one can see strong similarities between them. Castelnuovo-Tedesco, through his memory and with his mother’s help, reconstructs the liturgical melodies and uses them as the themes of *Le Danze del Re David*. However, the theme of the fifth section *Rude e ben ritmato* cannot be found in *Sefer Shirei Israel*. It is worth mentioning that this theme is employed in two other works by Castelnuovo-Tedesco: second movement of *Tre Corali su melodie ebraiche per Pianoforte* (1926) and *Barukh Ha-ba for choir* (1950).  

Example 4.15. *Le Danze del Re David, Rude e ben ritmato*, mm. 244–250.

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In conclusion, the melodies in each section are recognizable. This supports Rossi’s point of view that melody is the essence of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s style of composition.\footnote{Nick Rossi, “Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco: Modern Master of Melody,” \textit{The American Music Teacher} (Feb/March 1976): 16.} The detailed analysis of these melodies will be examined in the following paragraphs.

4.2.2 Melody Analysis

\textit{Vivo e tumultuoso}

Example 4.16. \textit{Le Danze del Re David, Vivo e tumultuoso}, mm. 1–6.

This \textit{vivo e tumultuoso} part appears five times in this work, always in 6/8 time signature. This opening section is characterized by a repetition on D imitating the
teruah blast of a shofar. The bright and sharp sound of the shofar in a forte dynamic gradually increases tension to the end of this opening. The rapid descending-arpeggio figuration in seventh chords is another dominating motif in this section. These two motives are a unifying feature of the Vivo e tumultuoso section.

I. Violento ed impetuoso

Example 4.17. Le Danze del Re David, Violento ed impetuoso, mm. 7–14, theme a.

The opening theme a (measures 7-14) is a four-bar phrase (measures 7-10 and measures 11-14). The falling line E-flat – D – C in measure 7 is an important part of the melodic line which is later altered to G-flat – F – E-flat in measures 39-40. This theme is modal and similar to a C Hungarian-Gypsy scale (C – D – E-flat – F-sharp – G – A-flat – B-flat/B - C). Castelnuovo-Tedesco doubles the melodic line with octaves and thirds, and the melody mainly covers five notes. For example, the first four measures are based on C – D – E-flat – F – G-flat and the second four measures
are based on D – E-flat – F – G - A. The triton in measures 9-10, C – G-flat (F#), creates an exotic harmonic color. From this musical example, one can see that Castelnuovo-Tedesco marks accent on every beat that produces a strong pulse which creates a heavy sound effect in the opening measure. The tension of the opening section not only comes from the consistent accents but also results from chromatic harmony including augmented sixths, diminished seventh chords, augmented fourths (diminished fifths) in the left hand. The right-hand doublings and left-hand octaves cover a wide range of the piano register.

The mood in theme a and theme b is distinct. The significant character of themes in this piece is that each theme varies frequently and dramatically. The contrasting mood makes this work more interesting and full of surprises. Compared to the style of theme a, theme b (measures 14-20) is more horizontal and extended in movement against the chromatic scale in the left hand. The structure of theme b is basically derived from the second part of theme a (measures 11-14), which is step-wise ascending thirds (D-E-F), repetition, and stepwise-descending fifths (A-G-F-E-D). The chromatic passage in the bass clef creates a floating and unsteady mood. Moreover, through the descending chromatic figuration and the right-hand ascending melody (contrary motion), the range of the register is expanding.
Based on the formal analysis, Castelnuovo-Tedesco employs a quasi-variation style in this work. For example, *theme a* recurs many times in *Violento ed impetuoso*, but each time the voicing of *theme a* and the accompaniment of *theme a* are varied. In measures 21-28, the original right-hand *theme a* (in doublings) is moved to the left hand and is accompanied by an ostinato rhythmic pattern of shofar call. The mood in the recurring *theme a* (measure 21) suddenly shifts from a floating unsteadiness back to wildness and roughness (example 4.19).

Castelnuovo-Tedesco inserts multiple voices in the texture to create richness of harmony in the returning B section (measure 30–38). There are four voices in this part (see example 4.20): the theme is in the soprano, the chromatic scale is beneath the melody, the shofar call is in the tenor, and finally the sustaining pedal point is on A and later moves to A-flat.


The multi-voice idea is also illustrated in the following returning A section (measure 39–44). The melody is in the middle voice against a pedal point and ostinato on C. Castelnuovo-Tedesco employs the intervallic motif of a major ninth in the soprano voice to embellish the harmonic color.

II. Ieratico


Castelnuovo-Tedesco utilizes five hymn-like melodies inspired by and originating from the Sephardic-Italian musical liturgy expressing respect and fear for God and generating an atmosphere of solemnity and purity. These five melodies are very brief, only two to three measures. In melodies 1-4, Castelnuovo-Tedesco avoided using the leading tone, therefore, the structure of the melody is in E major without D-sharp: E – F-sharp – G-sharp – A – B – C-sharp – E. Moreover, the character of these melodies is more stable and settled since melodies 1, 2, and 4 all end on the tonic E, and melody 5 also ends on the tonic A-flat.

Example 4.24. Le Danze del Re David, Ieratico, mm. 81–82, homophonic style.

This section contains both homophony and polyphony. The melody is accompanied throughout by an A-flat major arpeggio. In actuality, the third (C) is omitted, so while one cannot say for certain that the arpeggio is in major, the key signature is A-flat major in this section and all melodies lines are in a major key. This homophonic style is clearly presented in example 4.24.
In the middle section of *Ieratico*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco designed a dialogue between the melodies in the high and low registers (see example 4.25). Melodies 1-4 (L.H) appear in the lower register. Between these melodies, the right-hand melody 5 presents a crystalline and bright sound in the high register. The contrasting tones of these two voices present a fascinating dialogue.
Toward the end of _Ieratico_, Castelnuovo-Tedesco arranges the melodies in a polyphonic style (example 4.26). There are three voices at first later becoming four voices. Melodies 1 and 2 are played in the bass register and melodies 3 and 4 later appear in the soprano. The overlapping melodies are orchestrated in a distinctly different manner. Melodies 1 and 2 are played as single voices while melody 3 is placed in the soprano voice in a progression of dominant seventh chords, creating richness in texture. Moreover, Castelnuovo-Tedesco marks an accent on every note of each melody which projects a profound sound and deep feelings.
III. *Rapido e selvaggio*

Castelnuovo-Tedesco is creative and efficient in the use of his motives. In this section, there are five main motives and these short motives construct *theme a* and *theme b*.


*Theme a* (measures 126–132) is composed of motif 1, 2, 3, and 4. Motif 5 is in the transition of measures 133–135. Motif 4 is used to construct *theme b* (measures 145–153). The motives are short, with motives 1, 2, 3, and 5 being one measure in length and motif 4 being two measures in length. The melodic scope of *theme a* covers a narrow range of keyboard registers. *Theme a* is comprised of a five-note
pattern based on the A minor: A-B-C-D-E. A transition (measures 133–135) followed by theme a is composed of motif 5. Motif 5 features a large intervallic leap and incorporates ascending seventh chords.

Among these five motives, motif 4 foreshadows theme b with its inclusion of the perfect fourth. The figuration of theme b is obviously derived from motif 4 - the fourth (B-E). Therefore, the perfect fourth and augmented fourth thus become the major intervallic motives in section B (example 4.28).

Furthermore, the continuous parallel fourth against the diminished-fifth and augmented-fourth accompaniment creates the auditory sensation of dissonance (example 4.29).
In order to present the atmosphere of a fast, wild and uncontrolled idiom while increasing tension in this section, Castelnuovo-Tedesco selects octave doublings and large leaps between chords at a fast tempo. For example (example 4.30 and 4.31), motif 1 plays an important role in this section that opens and closes the section giving a balanced symmetry. Motif 1 is composed of four notes in third and octave doublings which are presented in an abrupt and grinding manner that contributes to the atmosphere of unrest in this section.


In addition, motif 1 also serves as the climax of this section in measures 167–170 (example 4.32). This place is also the transition to recurring theme A. One can easily feel the excitement and tension from the continuous motif 1 in octave doublings.


Motif 5, constructed of large, intervallic leaps, first appeared in measure 133 and is composed of a seventh chord followed by single note A (later in an octave figuration). This large leap between chords and bass note at a lively tempo generates excitement and exuberance (example 4.33).

IV. *Lento ed estatico*

Castelnuovo-Tedesco mainly utilizes two musical ideas that he elaborates throughout this section. The first idea is displayed in measures 192–194:


This musical idea is particularly characterized by its register and rhythm. The structure of this octave-doubling melody is within a narrow register covering five notes F-sharp – C-sharp. This theme appears several times in this section, however, each time it is presented in different styles and with changing accompanying arrangements. Rhythmically, it presents two rhythmic motives - a dotted rhythm and syncopation. Syncopation is also employed as the motif in the episodic section – *Subito mosso* (example. 4.35) and as the motif of left hand ostinato in section A4 (example. 4.36).
Furthermore, this theme a is presented in two moods. One is dolce and dream-like (measure 192) and the other is more intense (measure 213). The melodic structure of theme a in section A1 (measures 192–199) is a 3+3+2 bar phrase with an episode (measures 199–201). Although the texture of theme a seems complex with four voices, the melody is presented in unison with parallel octaves, giving it an openness and purity of sound. Castelnuovo-Tedesco attempts to project the image of dreaming by marking sognante in the score. Theme a appears four times in Lento ed estatico, moreover, Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s instructions are precise and each time quite different - dolcissimo e sognante – flebile – intenso – dolcissimo.

In contrast to the title Lento e estatico, in measure 202, Castelnuovo-Tedesco changes the mood from dolce and dream-like to a feeble and plaintive mood. The
descending figuration of the melody in measure 208 conveys a melancholy mood. However, the third appearance of theme a (measure 213) played in the tenor register is the strongest statement among of the four theme a (example 4.37). It is marked as intenso (intensive) in measure 213 and piu intenso (more intense) in measure 216. Similar to the style of Il Ieratico, this bold theme (measure 213–218) in the tenor register is accompanied by the arpeggio figuration.

Example 4.37. Le Danze del Re David, Lento ed estatico, mm. 213.

The last theme a in measure 223 is stretched and varied in texture. The original single melody is now heard as parallel major thirds. The mood becomes calmer, like the calm before the storm. The following second phrase of theme a is expanded in length and marked Appassionato, projecting much greater emotion (see example 4.38).
The second important musical idea is in the episode sections *Subito mosso* (measure 199, 210, 231, see example 4.35). These episodes appear immediately after *theme a*. The episode section imitates the shofar call motif which includes the repeating notes and the perfect fifth. The mood is very different from *theme a*. Rhythmically, syncopation is the important rhythmic motif. The transition from *theme a* to the episode is immediate, and the mood change is dramatic. This dramatic shifting is appealing and interesting.

**V. Rude e ben ritmato**

The thematic melody in this section carries a song character. The melody is recognizable and memorable. There is only one theme (*theme a*) and the structure of the thematic melody is 2+2+3 (three phrases) (example 4.39). *Theme a* appears four times in this section, however, similar to the character of section I and IV, Castelnuovo-Tedesco varies the texture of the theme or the accompaniment pattern. The thematic melody remains very clear.
In these four presentations of theme a, Castelnuovo-Tedesco gradually thickens the textures of the thematic melodies. At first, theme a is clearly played in the right hand with the single melody, accompanied by the left hand ostinato (measures 244–246) and then the ascending chromatic scale (measures 247–250). The texture is simple and in two voices. At the second appearance, theme a is written in canonically (measure 255, see example 4.40). Then, Castelnuovo-Tedesco begins to thicken the harmonic textures and expand the range of the register with many doublings. This is displayed clearly in the fourth presentation of theme a in measure 276 (example 4.41), in which Castelnuovo-Tedesco frequently uses doublings to fortify the thematic line. Not only is the thematic melody in doublings, the left hand ostinato pattern and chromatic scale are played in doublings and octaves. This heavy texture presents a majestic and exciting mood. The eighth note is the underlying rhythmic value of this section.
VI. Malinconico e supplichevole

In this section, Castelnuovo-Tedesco employs a variety of thematic material which composes four primary themes: theme a – d. These four themes embody different characters, but they have one feature in common – lyricism. They all have a strong singing quality.

In texture, theme a (measure 286) is similar to the theme in IV, Lento ed estatico (measure 192). The register of theme a covers three octaves played in octave doubling. This type of texture creates an impression of purity (see example 4.42 and 4.43).
The melodic structure of theme a is a 5+5 bar phrase and theme a mimics a waltz-like style in rhythm (in 3/8). The waltz rhythm produces a swing in body motion. Moreover, Castelnuovo-Tedesco marked “melancholy and pleading” in this section, from which one could infer that Castelnuovo-Tedesco is projecting the slight swing of body movement while praying known, in Hebrew, as “davening.”

Theme b’s character is very different from theme a. Theme b possesses the gradual accumulation of tension and anxiety (measures 294–300), which includes a repeating octave with a descending chromatic scale. The harmony is darker and heavier and the progression seems to project the tension of human conflict, and a
thirst for answers from God. The most striking chord is in the second beat of measure 296: the appoggiatura (G) on the inverted B-flat seventh chord.

Example 4.44. Le Danze del Re David, Malinconico e supplichevole, mm. 295–297.

The following theme c (measures 346–350, see example 4.45) presents a strong, singing quality which is in a recitative style. Based on this lyrical and expressive melody, one could imagine a cantor singing from the liturgy.

Example 4.45. Le Danze del Re David, Malinconico e supplichevole, mm. 346–350.

Theme d projects a very beautiful harmonic progression in measures 300–309, moving from B-flat seventh – A minor seventh – G minor seventh, then to G minor seventh – E minor seventh – D Major and then to E minor seventh. Based on this
harmonic progression, the thematic melody still possesses a singing character but it is important to be sensitive to the different colors of these seventh chords.

Example 4.46. *Le Danze del Re David, Malinconico e supplichevole*, mm. 299–308.

VII. Allegro guerriero

Similar to the character of *Rude e ben ritmato*, the melody of this final section is rhythmical, recognizable, singable and easy to remember. Moreover, the melody projects a joyful and lively mood. The introduction is a three-bar phrase, and the rhythm consists of the steady beat featuring a percussive instrument. The thematic melody (*theme a*) is a 4-bar phrase in a tarantella style. Tarantella is a kind of fast Italian folk dance in 6/8 meter. Due to the dance character, Castelnuovo-Tedesco employs the ostinato figuration on the left hand to stress the steady pulse (example 4.47).
The ostinato continues into the theme b section (measure 395, see example 4.48), and theme b features sequence in the melodic line. The primary rhythmic material of theme b is a series of sequential eighth notes creating a flowing and lively atmosphere.

Example 4.48. Le Danze del Re David, Allegro guerriero, mm. 393–400.
In this final section, Castelnuovo-Tedesco gradually increased the density of themes. For the first time in measure 376 (example 4.47), theme a is played with a single voice, however, the second time in measure 410 (example 4.49), theme a is in doublings in the right hand. The third time it appears in measure 444 (example 4.50), the right hand melody is played in full chords and the left hand also supports the right-hand melody with triads, parallel thirds, and a wide leap between chords and octave, which imitates the drum beat. The range is widening and the increasing layers of texture produce a richness of sound and a majestic mood.

Example 4.49. Le Danze del Re David, Allegro guerriero, mm. 409–412.

Example 4.50. Le Danze del Re David, Allegro guerriero, mm. 441–444.
4.2.3 Chant Style

Influenced by the Italian-Sephardic liturgy, Castelnuovo-Tedesco presents lyricism and chant style in this piano work. As it was mentioned earlier, Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s grandfather was a cantor casting a great impact on this work. During the worship service in synagogue, the cantor (precentor) leads the prayers and songs. The cantor’s style of singing in leading the prayer is called cantillation – from the Italian word cantillare or cantilenare, which means to murmur, hum or speak in a tense voice, like a melodic speech. The character of cantillation is that the rhythm is regular, uniform, flowing smoothly without definite meter, and it is a single voice without musical accompaniment. In Le Danze del Re David, many melodies reflect the chant and cantillation style.

The main theme of Ieratico (measure 80) presents the lyricism and ritual of the chant style. The thematic melody (for the left hand) is easy to follow, and it conveys a solemn atmosphere. The other similar example can be illustrated in Lento ed estatico in measure 213.

Example 4.51. Le Danze del Re David, Ieratico, mm. 81–82.

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87 Shiloah, Jewish Music Traditions, 89.
From the dynamic markings in the left hand on the score (example 4.52), Castelnuovo-Tedesco also tried to imitate the feature of continuous crescendo or decrescendo of the human voice by the percussive instrument of the piano. Furthermore, in Malinconico e Supplichevole, the repeating notes in the melody create the recitative-like style (measure 295, measure 346). Castelnuovo-Tedesco even marked ‘recitativo’ in measure 346 which directly indicated the singing character (example 4.54).

Example 4.53. Le Danze del Re David, Malinconico e supplichevole, mm. 295–298.
4.3 Harmonic Language of *Le Danze del Re David*

The manner in which Castelnuovo-Tedesco harmonizes this work is unique. As mentioned in the former section, the melodies are derived from the memories of his grandfather’s singing. Castelnuovo-Tedesco harmonizes them with numerous seventh chords. These seventh chords weaken the tonality and these seventh chords function as the device of coloring the harmony. Therefore, very often in this piece, seventh chords remain unresolved.

While the score indicates the key signature as two flats, the harmony doesn’t show a clear tonality of $B^b$ major or $G$ minor in this piece. Instead, this work traverses many key areas and the harmony is saturated with many seventh chords.88 This style predominates in section I and VI. The tonality is much clearer in section II and V. The harmonic features in each section are illustrated in the following paragraphs.

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88 Dr. Assaf Shelleg, interview by author, 16 November 2010, Missouri, journal, Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.
The two main components of the opening introduction are tone center – D and seventh chords in the arpeggio figuration. The repeating tone center, ‘D’ or the solfegge tone ‘Re,’ which is also the Italian word for ‘king,’ a reference to the title of the piece. The tone center D imitates the teruah pattern of the shofar call.
Castelnuovo-Tedesco inserts many seventh chords around this tone center. The seventh chords, such as dominant sevenths, minor sevenths, half diminished sevenths and diminished sevenths, are very often displayed in sequence in *Le Danze del Re David*. In this opening introduction, these seventh chords are based on the ascending Phrygian scale from D: D – E-flat seventh – F seventh – G – (A is missing) – B-flat seventh – C seventh – D seventh. These ascending seventh chords appear from once per measure to three times per measure increasing the tension. Furthermore, the sequential seventh chords also lead to the appearance of the first note of the theme in the following section I, where the last D seventh chord resolves a half step up to the E-flat of an A-flat German sixth chord. If the tonal center is as clear and strong as g minor, the D seventh chord would function as a proper dominant seventh chord \((V_7)\) and resolve to the G minor tonic. Castelnuovo-Tedesco however surprises the listener by exploring another German sixth chord functioning deceptively (measure 7). The result of non-resolution in the introduction creates a feeling of uncertainty in tonality.
In Vivo e tumultuoso, there are several harmonic features displayed in theme a (measures 7-14). In the beginning, the first four measures are built around an A-flat German augmented sixth chord (A-flat, C, E-flat, F-sharp), and the later four measures are in a B-flat seventh chord (B-flat, D, F, A-flat). The progression of these two chords is distributed in a chromatic interval, with E-flat – D in the soprano and F-sharp – F is in the bass (see example 4.56).

Secondly, the tritone is one of the significant intervallic elements in this piece. Based on the A-flat German sixth (A-flat, C, E-flat, F-sharp), Castelnuovo-Tedesco picks the tritone C – F-sharp as a motif and uses it in the left hand ostinato passage (F-sharp – C, F – C-flat) and the right hand melody (C – D – E-flat – F – G-flat).
Moreover, the right hand melody also presents an octatonic scale: C – D – E-flat – F – G-flat. This tritone in the melody creates exotic harmony.

Thirdly, following these two melodic phrases, the harmony returns to the tone center D at measure 14. One could say that Castelnuovo-Tedesco makes use of and resolves tritones in an unconventional manner for the purpose of surprise and for harmonic color.

4.3.2 Chromatic Movement

Chromatic scale is another musical element used by Castelnuovo-Tedesco for increasing the harmonic color. A chromatic scale in different dynamics and articulations produces different moods and different levels of tension. Harmonically, it creates an uncertain, unclear and hazy effect.

*Violento ed impetuoso*

In *theme b* (measures 14-20), the chromatic scale creates a floating atmosphere. This section is composed of thematic melody in the soprano and the floating chromatic scale in the bass. The phrase starts with the tone center on D and returns to D at the end of this section.

Another example of chromaticism is in the intermediate voice of measures 30–37. This descending legato chromatic scale over an A pedal point creates a mood of unsteadiness.


**Lento ed estatico**

The thematic melody of this section is clearly in F-sharp minor, but the melodic structure includes only five notes: F sharp – G sharp – A – B – C sharp. Castelnuovo-Tedesco harmonized the humming-like melody with a chromatic descending scale. The harmony arrives finally on the A diminished triad (A-C-E flat) in measure 199 (example 4.59).

The subito mosso part maked as *squillante* and forte (measures 199-201) features the perfect fifth interval which imitates the piercing shofar call. In *Tempo I* (measure 202), the thematic melodies are accompanied by several minor seventh chords with the pedal point on the A. Moreover, the minor seventh chords are moving chromatically, for example: E minor 7 – D-sharp minor 7 – D minor 7 – C-sharp minor 7 (measures 204-205). This half-step relationship between these seventh chords makes the harmony very unsteady. The harmony finally arrives on B diminished 7 at measure 208. The similar chromatic passage could be also seen in the bass voice of measure 223.

*Rude e ben ritmato*


Castelnuovo-Tedesco employs chromatic scales in *Rude e ben ritmato*. For example, the chromatic scale in the left hand in measures 247–250 supports the main theme on the right hand. The ascending staccato chromatic scale also increases the tension toward the downbeat of the seventh chord in measure 251. An identical example can be seen in measures 280–282.
In *Malinconico e supplichevole*, the chromatic scale becomes the melody. The chromatic passage in measures 329–332 is the first time it has been used as the melodic line. This melody is in the figuration of double thirds. The chromatic scales in thirds upon the G seventh chord and E-flat seventh chord produce a mystical effect and exoticism.
In this section, there are two places illustrating the example of chromaticism: measures 418–428 and measures 452–461. The function of the chromatic passage in these two places is to expand the register, increase the tension of the musical phrase and provide the tarantella theme with driving energy. Both of these two chromatic passages are displayed in the left hand and marked “marcati i bassi.” In measure 418, the chromatic passage is played in a descending direction and it expands the range at the same time (example 4.63). On the other hand, the chromatic passage in measure 452 is ascending, and the distance between the chromatic scale and bass note is gradually wider causing excitement in sound and visual (example 4.64).
4.3.3 Intervallic Motifs: Major Second and Fourths

Castelnuovo-Tedesco very often employs the major second to evoke the harmony of seventh chords. For example, in measure 21, the major second G-flat – A-flat was treated as an intervallic motif which constructed the seventh chord – A-flat seventh. This A-flat seventh chord sustains four measures until measure 24. At that point, the major second G-flat – A-flat shifts a whole step up to A-flat – B-flat which constructs another seventh chord – B-flat seventh (measure 25).


The similar example appears in measures 167-170 of *Rapido e selvaggio*. These two major seconds (A-B and A-flat – B-flat) construct the B-flat seventh and B half diminished seventh chords. Moreover, the chromatic interval between these two chords creates a feeling of uncertainty. These seventh chords finally return to the thematic melody but in octave figuration, with a thicker texture.


Another example of a major-second motif is presented in *Malinconico e supplichevole*. In the beginning of this section (measure 286, example 4.68), Castelnuovo-Tedesco employs a major second as the motif to construct the seventh chords harmony. The pleading and ritual *theme a* starts with B minor and the melody covers mainly four notes: B – C-sharp – D – E. Under the melodic line, the major seconds are harmonized to create the harmony of G seventh and G half-diminished seventh chords. Moreover, these major seconds ascend chromatically which produces an unsteady and floating sound effect.
The other important intervalline motif: perfect fourth and augmented fourth employed in this piece by Castelnuovo-Tedesco is in *Rapido e selvaggio* (measure 124). Here, Castelnuovo-Tedesco stressed the tetrachord A-D. He also used this short passage A-B-C-D (measures 133–135) as a transition leading to the new key. Castelnuovo-Tedesco harmonizes these four notes with dominant seventh chords: F7 – B7 – F7 – D7 (measures 133–135, example 4.69). However, the D seventh chord does not resolve to G minor. Castelnuovo-Tedesco took the D of the D seventh chord as the new tonic note in the following theme. Therefore, the theme of section III starts with A minor, but later on the key transposes to D minor at measure 138. The last note D is the focus of the tension and also the tonic key of the following theme.
Furthermore, the perfect and augmented fourth (diminished fifth) are the main musical materials in the left-hand accompaniment in the middle section of Rapido e selvaggio (measures 145–166). This dissonant augmented fourth creates an exotic harmony (see example 4.70).

Example 4.70. Le Danze del Re David, Rapido e selvaggio, mm. 149–152.

### 4.3.4 Harmony Used for Delay

When listening to this piano work, one can be aware that Castelnuovo-Tedesco very often allows the harmony to remain unresolved or to delay resolution. The effect is an accumulation of tension similar to the way Wagner withholds tonic confirmation in Tristan and Isode. Following are several examples derived from this work.

*Violento ed impetuoso*

In this expansion of thematic material at measures 27–30 (original length of this theme is only one measure – measure 13), four seventh chords are used to harmonize the descending melody A-G-F-E: A7 – G7 – F7 – E7. This descending harmonic progression according to measure 13-14 is expected to resolve to D but Castelnuovo-Tedesco surprises the listener by not returning to the tone center. The crucial note B-flat in the left hand (E – D – C – B-flat) leads the melody a half step down to A. This modulation of the theme b (measure 30) is now played at a fifth higher than in measure 14.


In measures 38–39, the function of the seventh chord is to color the theme, hidden in the inner voice (G-flat – F – E-flat). The last chord of measure 38 is a C half diminished seventh chord, which is expected to resolve to D minor. However, Castelnuovo-Tedesco remains on the same C half diminished seventh chord distributing the chord tones to a wider range covering five octaves. The thematic melody was embellished by a major ninth, the transformation of the major second used frequently as the intervallic motif, and the major ninth shifts chromatically (C –
C-flat and B-flat – B-double flat in measure 39). This also creates a special, mystical type of harmonic color.

**Rude e ben ritmato**


In this section, the tonality (C major) is clearer but the harmony is often left unresolved. For example, in measures 250–251, the left-hand chromatic scale and the right-hand melody are expected to resolve to the tonic C minor chord. However, the harmony is deceptively resolved to an A-flat seventh chord in third inversion.

Another example is illustrated in measures 262–264 (example 4.74). One would expect this progression to resolve, possibly to C minor in measure 264, however, Castelnuovo-Tedesco chooses the weakest resolution, a G minor seventh with the seventh in the bass – hardly a resolution but a surprise indeed. Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s intention is to expand and explore the theme rather than bring it to a close.
Moreover, the manner in which Castelnuovo-Tedesco concludes this section is quite interesting. The last octave and fifth doubling on D at measure 282 does not resolve to the C minor chord but arrives at the major second: G-flat – A-flat. This major second is out of an A-flat seventh chord. Castelnuovo-Tedesco is basically harmonizing the soprano line in measures 283–284 with a falling base line and the right-hand chords are not changing. The harmony finally resolves to the tone center D through augmented sixth (A-flat – C – D – F-sharp) in measure 285.
There is a harmonic surprise at the end of Allegro guerriero. In measure 461, the right-hand melody A-B-C-D-E-F# does not resolve to tonic G but moves a whole step up to Ab (enharmonic to G#), and the left-hand melody D-C-A descends half step to Ab, causing the deceptive cadence on A-flat major. The A-flat – E-flat – A-flat arpeggio appeared in the second section reoccurred here as a Coda section. The tonic G appears later in Alla Chiusa (measure 462).
4.3.5 Harmonic Color

Violento ed impetuoso

Example 4.77. Le Danze del Re David, Violento ed impetuoso, mm. 45–53.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco very often emphasized the harmonic colors of the seventh chords. For example in measures 45–52, the melodic structure is a two-bar phrase with each phrase built on one seventh chord. The harmony progression designed in a sequence of thirds is $F_7 - D_7 - E_7 - C#_7$ over a pedal point on $C$. This harmony progression is gorgeous and its harmonic color is luminous and sparkling. Moreover, the right-hand major ninth interval combined with the four-note theme
creates two perfect fifths which generates a calm but glorious color, and a spiritual atmosphere.

*Malinconico e supplichevole*

Example 4.78. *Le Danze del Re David, Malinconico e supplichevole*, mm. 299–308.

In this section, Castelnuovo-Tedesco is creatively harmonizing the descending melodic line F-E-D and then ascending line D-E-F# by using seventh chords, and the effect of color-wise is stunning. The harmonic progression from measure 301 is B-flat seventh – A minor seventh – G minor seventh, G minor seventh – E minor seventh – D major. From this progression, one can postulate that in regards to color, the seventh chord is a vital and important compositional tool to Castelnuovo-Tedesco. The most surprising and beautiful chord among this progression would be the D major resolution at measure 307. This chord sounds bright and warm after the uncertainty and instability of seventh chords preceding it.
4.3.6 Bitonality

Bitonality is one of the most important characteristics of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s style. This style is displayed in *Ieratico*. The concept of bitonality influenced early twentieth century musicians. A relevant example of bitonality could be seen in the opening of Ravel’s *Piano Concerto in G major*. Moreover, the manner in which Castelnuovo-Tedesco employed bitonality is unique. Castelnuovo-Tedesco planned these three keys: A-flat major – E major – C major by using their common tones.

A-flat major: (Ab) - Bb - C - (Db) - (Eb) - F - G - Ab

E major: E - F# - (G#) - A - B - (C#) - (D#) - E

Therefore, the common notes between A-flat major and E major are A-flat (G#), D-flat (C#), and E-flat (D#). These three notes are the tonic, subdominant, and dominant tone (pillar tone) of A-flat major. Castelnuovo-Tedesco used these common tones to set the melody in E major. This theory also applies to A-flat major and C major.

At first, the lyrical E major theme is accompanied by an A-flat major arpeggio. In measure 83, the melody in the bass shows the E major scale: C-sharp – (C) – B – A – G-sharp – F-sharp - E. The keys of melody and accompaniment both arrive at A-flat major in measure 88. The melody moves to C major in measure 104 and then finally dwells on C major together in measure 111. The following diagram can explain this progression:

A-flat major (arpeggio) --- A-flat major (theme) ---- C major (theme)

E major (theme) ----------- A-flat major (arpeggio) --------- C major (arpeggio)
Example 4.79. *Le Danze del Re David, Ieratico*, mm. 79–80 (A\textsubscript{b}-E).

Example 4.80. *Le Danze del Re David, Ieratico*, mm. 87–88 (A\textsubscript{b}-A\textsubscript{b}).

Example 4.81. *Le Danze del Re David, Ieratico*, mm. 104–105 (C-A\textsubscript{b}).
Close to the end of this section in measure 111, right-hand melodies are harmonized by parallel seventh chords in the left hand creating multi-layers of melodies set in polyphonic style with a rich color of sound.

4.3.7 Doublings

One should notice that Castelnuovo-Tedesco very often doubles the melody with octaves and fifths, for example C-G-C. This hollow sounding of the doublings that causes an ambiguity of tonality is one of the most important characteristics in this work.

One of the examples is illustrated in Ieratico. The arpeggio figuration based on A-flat – E-flat – A-flat in this section creates a luminous background serving as a contrast to the bi-tonal theme. Although the harmony of the arpeggio (A-flat – E-flat – A-flat) on the right hand (measure 79) is ambiguous since the third of A-flat major, C, is missing, the tonality becomes more definite until measures 88-89 where the thematic melody descends followed by the scale of A-flat major (E-flat – (C) – D-flat – C – B-flat – A-flat, see example 4.83). Moreover, three measures before Ieratico,
the arpeggio figuration (A-flat – E-flat) of measure 76 already foreshadows the key of A-flat major (example 4.84).

Example 4.83. Le Danze del Re David, Ieratico, mm. 87–88.

Example 4.84. Le Danze del Re David, Vivo e tumultuoso, mm. 74–76.
In Alla Chiusa section, the harmony is mainly composed of doublings and seventh chords. These doublings contain perfect fourths or perfect fifths. Seventh chords here are used to generate the tension. The seventh chords begin with a single note (or voice), and the voices are gradually layered to construct the harmony of seventh chords in measure 467 and measure 471. In addition to this, Castelnuovo-Tedesco uses heavy doublings in both hands followed by seventh chords to announce the mood of glory and majesty. This coda section begins: G major – E diminished seventh – E minor seventh – C major chord – C major with a sixth – A dominant seventh – and finally settles down in the tonic G major, which is in the major third and minor third interval relationship. This rich and resonant harmonic progression, interrupted by a brass fanfare, reverberates magnificently to bring the piece to a conclusion.

In conclusion, Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s harmonic style is unique in this piece. It does not have a clear and consistent tonality; instead, it utilizes a variety of seventh
chords to explore greater possibilities of harmonic color, contains doublings to
confuse the tonal center, and employs chromatic movement (intervals and scales) to
create an uncertain and unstable atmosphere.

4. 4  Tempo and Meter

_Le Danze del Re David_ characterizes not only the rhythmical dance style but
also the improvisational rhapsody, which incorporates with steady pulse and
improvisational texture. By observing the structure this work, Castelnuovo-Tedesco
arranged these seven sections by tempo: fast-slow-fast-slow-fast-slow-fast. Lyrical
and expressive sections are followed by passionate and vivid ones. Therefore, the
pace from section to section changes dramatically presenting a challenge for the
performer. A detailed description of the tempo in each part is summarized as follow.

I  _Violento ed impetuoso_

The meter is in 2/4 and 3/4. This movement portrays the scene of a procession,
its mood exciting and energetic. It is in an exuberant tempo.

II  _Ieratico_

The meter is 6/4 throughout the piece. Compared to the first passionate
section - _Violento ed impetuoso_, the style of _Ieratico_ is calmer and more peaceful.
Moreover, the solemn melody portrays glory and reverence to God.

III  _Rapido e selvaggio_

The title initially suggests that this section is in a fast and wild tempo. The
meter is changed frequently from 2/4 (6/8) to 3/4 (9/8). It presents an intense but
lively spirit with a sense of aboriginal drum beating.
IV. Lento ed estatico

This section presents the improvisational style of rhapsody, which is also reflected in the tempo. Viewing the tempo makings of this part, it shows frequent changes: Lento – Subito mosso – Lento – Subito moss – Lento – Subito mosso – Subito calmo. The meter is varied recurrently from 3/2 to 2/2 and 9/8.

V. Rude e ben ritmato

This is a magnificent and mighty dance in a fast tempo. The meter is in 4/4 and 3/2; it always changes to 3/2 at the end of the phrases. According to the metronome marking indicated on the score, the pianist should be thinking and playing in ‘2’ instead of ‘4’. As a result, this produces a strong sense of swing and pulse in this dance.

VI. Malinconico e supplichevole

The meter changes very frequently from 3/8, 2/4, 5/8, and 6/8. This section is in a waltz-like style. The meter changes induce changes in the tempo. The tempo marking changes from Un poco ansioso - Piu Lento - tempo I - Subito mosso. Finally it settles down in the tempo of molto lento.

VII. Allegro guerriero

The last dance is in the most consistent tempo. The meter remains in 6/8 for the whole section until the Largo e pomposo (measure 453). Compared to the former sections, the final section possesses a constant tempo with a lively spirit.
4. 5  Rhythm

4.5.1  Dance style

The title of this piano work, _Le Danze del Re David_, raises curiosity as to the type of dance at that time. Unfortunately, there is no clear account in the _Bible_ describing how King David danced, with the exception 2 Samuel 6:16, “…King David leaping and dancing before the Lord.” In 2 Samuel 6:14 “David danced before the Lord with all his might,” one can imagine how excited and enthusiastic he was. Castelnuovo-Tedesco, however, adopted the style of the Italian folk dance, tarantella’s wild and rapid whirling motion, to suggest King David’s dance.

Tarantella is a folkdance in southern Italy. It is usually in 3/8 or 6/8 and it alternates the keys from major to minor or vice versa. The speed of the tarantella gradually increases and it is usually accompanied by tambourines. A tarantella-like movement also appears in the final movement of a suite. Furthermore, one of the important features is the continuous moving notes in the melody. The features mentioned above are reflected in this seventh section. The right hand part of the following musical example demonstrates the rhythm of the tarantella (example 4.86).

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89 _The Holy Bible_, King James Version.

90 Ibid.

4.5.2 Repetitions and Ostinato

The title Le Danze del Re David is immediately associated with the following aspect: strong and steady rhythm. Overall, there are two important rhythmic motives in the piece: repetition and ostinato. Moreover, the repetition is actually related to the ancient instrument, the shofar. Castelnuovo-Tedesco indicated many times “quasi shofar” on the repeating-note passage throughout this work. As was mentioned in chapter 2, there are four different patterns of blowing. The one that appears frequently in this piece is Teruah, which is in the figuration of short repeating notes. Throughout the piece, the shofar call functions as a connection or transition between each section and sometimes, appears as a motif.

The other rhythmic motif is ostinato – a motif or phrase that repeats persistently in the same musical voice. Ostinato has the function of supporting the steady pulse. In Le Danze del Re David, ostinato appears generally in the bass voice. Above the ostinato is usually a single-voice melody. It should be noted that the
ostinato in some places symbolizes percussive instruments. For example, in the last
dance (VII), it is quite obvious that the left hand ostinato serves as the drum beat.
Overall, the ostinato appears more frequently in sections 1, 5 and 7.

4.6 Texture

The texture of *Le Danze del Re David* is mostly in a homophonic style, which
generally includes melodies and accompaniment. The range of the register changes
frequently and the density of the voices differs in varying sections. Between one and
four voices are displayed. Although the range of the register is fairly wide, the texture
is not too complex.

It should be noted that the melody is usually played in octave figurations.
This character is reflected in the following examples: the grand opening of section 1
(measure 7), the right hand melody of section 2 (measure 88), the unison melody in
section 4 (measure 192), the powerful right hand melody in section 5 (measure 276),
the unison melody in section 6 (measure 286), the right hand melody in section 7
(measure 411) and also the ending coda. Castelnuovo-Tedesco often doubled the
melody in order to increase the satiety of the harmony.

4.6.1 Orchestral Writing

According to the biblical account, many ancient instruments are used in this
celebration. It might be helpful for the performer to think orchestrally when studying
the score. Castelnuovo-Tedesco indicated several instruments like shofar, timpani,
tamburo, and quasi corni in this work. Some places in *Le Danze del Re David* clearly
depict orchestral writing. They are illustrated in the following examples.
The first example is in the opening introduction in which it is like a duet for the shofar and harp. These two melodies appear alternately, so the texture is quite transparent. However, the shofar’s blare produces the intensive mood in the opening.

**I Violento ed impetuoso**

In the first section, the texture becomes thicker and later includes four voices. The opening melody played in doublings creates the grand and magnificent atmosphere of procession, which sounds like a brass ensemble. The form of the double octave theme is presented very often in the first section such as in measure 21 and measure 65. These themes project a wild and mighty character.

The texture of the middle section which includes four voices (measure 31) becomes more interwoven. Above the pedal point, the chromatic scale descends underneath the melody, with the shofar motif heard in the tenor. Later in measure 39, the melody moves to the alto part. Although it includes multiple voices, the structure of each voice is simple. Furthermore, measures 45-52 features a harp figuration in the bass and a bell motif in the top voice. In measure 53, the left hand ostinato produces a drum beat effect.

**II. Ieratico**

In this section, the texture is simple which mostly includes two main voices: vocal with harp or chime with harp. In the beginning, the thematic melody, marked *dolce e grave, ben cantata*, suggests a bass voice. When the melody switches to the treble clef, the melodic doublings in the high register produces a crystalline and sparkling sound. This homophonic style is changed to a polyphonic style in measure 111 in which the voices increase to three. The current appearance of the thematic melodies creates the brilliant and gorgeous harmony.

**III. Rapido e salvaggio**

Overall, the texture includes two voices. However, Castelnuovo-Tedesco used octaves, fourths, and doublings to enrich the harmony. It should be noticed that in measure 128, Castelnuovo-Tedesco emphasized every beat in the left hand in order to strengthen the steady pulse of the dance (example 4.89).

![Example 4.89. Le Danze del Re David, Rapido e salvaggio, mm. 128–131.](image)

Moreover, the range of the register is wide, which is also presented in many leaps between octaves and chords, for example measure 133 and measure 179.

![Example 4.90. Le Danze del Re David, Rapido e salvaggio, mm. 132–135.](image)


*IV. Lento ed estatico*

The texture is quite simple in this section. The melody is played in unison covering three octaves and in the high register. Therefore, it produces a dream-like atmosphere. Moreover, Castelnuovo-Tedesco indicates a recitative style at measure 209 and measure 220. This recitative style reflects on the vocal quality of the melodies emphasized by Castelnuovo-Tedesco. There are many significant, lyrical melodies shown in this section. These melodies are accompanied by the harp (measure 213) and by the ostinato pattern. Finally, Castelnuovo-Tedesco also doubled the melody in the climax section in measure 228, in which the tension is stretched emotionally and musically.

Example 4.91. *Le Danze del Re David, Lento ed estatico*, mm. 213.

**V. Rude e ben ritmato**

This texture clearly includes two voices; however, the density is thin in the beginning and later gradually becoming thicker. From the beginning, the thin texture includes a single melody played by the left hand ostinato. The second theme appears in a canon style. In the last statement of the theme, the right hand melody increases to the heavy chords and the same occurs with the left hand. The heavy doublings project the full sound of the brass instruments. Doubling the single melody to an octave figuration is one of Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s composition techniques.

**VI. Malinconico e supplichevole**

In texture, there is a similarity between this section and section 4, in which the opening theme consists of the unison melody covering three octaves. This arrangement of theme conveys the purity of the harmony. In the beginning, the theme embodies a singing quality and the interval of a major second underneath is like the bell. Therefore, one could imagine the opening like a duet between people’s voices and bells. There are many places showing the bell motive such as the octave staccato in measure 306.

This section is similar to section 4 in that it also includes three places (measure 297, measure 347, and measure 369) of recitative style, which features the single melody with the bells in accompaniment. The most intensive texture in this section is in measures 337-346 where there are several heavy, dissonant clusters.

**VII. Allegro guerriero**

The final section features four voices in texture; each of the voices is very clearly presented. The top voice is the primary melody and the bass is the sustaining pedal point. The drum-like ostinato is in the middle two voices. Castelnuovo-Tedesco marked *come di lontano-sordo e ben ritmato* (like faraway-muffled but rhythmical) in the beginning of this section (measure 374). Therefore, the middle two voices have to be treated as the drum beat, which will start like a percussion group from far away but sustain the steady pulse. Moreover, in *theme b* (measure 395), Castelnuovo-Tedesco stressed the left hand ostinato as *sordo-quasi tamburo* where he specifically indicates the imitation of a drum. In measure 410, Castelnuovo-Tedesco once again doubled the melody in octaves and fifths. Under the strong octave thematic melody, Castelnuovo-Tedesco used the ostinato pattern to imitate the brass instruments (quasi corni) to give a foundational support in sound.

**Largo e pomposo – Alla Chiusa**

The harp once again appears in the *Largo* section, which plays the role of the transition leading to the coda. This ending coda features the trumpet or brass ensemble. The notation texture appears heavy but it is based on the octave and fifth doublings. The range of the register is spread out. Furthermore, in measure 458, the texture gives us the idea that the trumpets or brass instruments enter one after another
to accumulate the volume of the harmony as well as the tension. The astonishing and dramatic arpeggio ending in measure 469 could be orchestrated using the harp with a powerful plucking and with a solid drum beat in the end.
Chapter 5. Pianist Perspective

The difficulty of *Le Danze del Re David* for the pianist can be reduced to three categories: technical, rhythmical, and emotional.

Technically, it features challenges including repeating notes, doublings, clusters, large, intervallic leaps between chords, chromatic scales, parallel chromatic thirds, parallel fourths, various tone colors, harmony changes, contrasting dynamic changes, accurate timing and sudden pacing changes. Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s piano works are filled with orchestral writing which results in heavy texture and varieties of tone colors. In *Le Danze del Re David*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco doubled the theme by using parallel octaves or chords. This style was employed throughout the piece, frequently causing hyper-extension in the hands. For the pianists whose hands are not large, careful practice is required so she/he will not acquire a soft-tissue injury in the hand or forearm. The range of the register in *Le Danze del Re David* is fairly wide. Very often, it requires good balance of the body in order to move the arms horizontally. An example of this is illustrated in the consecutive seventh chords of section 3 (measure 179–181, see example 5.1).
When playing *Le Danze del Re David*, the pianist needs to imagine the timbres of different instruments. Castelnuovo-Tedesco clearly marked the instruction ‘quasi shofar’ and ‘quasi timpani’ on the score. The repeating notes of a shofar call should be played clear and sharp. In some arpeggio figurations as in measure 45, Castelnuovo-Tedesco marked ‘armonioso’ which depicted the harmonious sound of the harp. The drum motif in measure 374 should be projected in a focused and solid way.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s harmonic style is very unique. He created many pretty, mystical, exotic, or angel-like harmonic progressions. The pianist should pay close attention to the harmonic changes, listen carefully to these different chords, and bring out their unique characteristics. Castelnuovo-Tedesco employs many unique harmonic progressions, and each of them should be treated differently and interpreted carefully.
Another challenging issue is the coordination between hands. Based on the music score of this piece, Castelnuovo-Tedesco indicated crescendo and decrescendo markings carefully. For example, in measures 12–13, one can see how he carefully marked the dynamics in both hands. The right hand gradually reaches the high point of the theme and then decrescendos to the end of the phrase while at the same time, the left hand decrescendos first and then crescendos to the end of the phrase. The pianist needs to observe the dynamics of both hands very carefully in order to follow Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s intentions (see example 5.2).


Rhythmically, the significant dance style in the 3rd, 5th, and 7th sections needs a strong pulse and steadiness. The dance character needs a strong sense of rhythm. It is an exciting dance, and the pianist must not lose the rhythm’s vitality. Castelnuovo-Tedesco presented a fast and wild atmosphere in which the performer is apt to get excited and push the tempo. Therefore, throughout these sections the left hand is required to stabilize the tempo. In the 5th section (measures 244–284), the left-hand ostinato figuration with frequent accents keeps the tempo steady and supports the
heavy (‘pesante’) dance. Moreover, the 7th section features a tarantella in which tempo steadiness is most crucial. Even though the last theme a slightly accelerates similar to the style of a tarantella, Castelnuovo-Tedesco held back the tempo until the ending of the coda section, which instead generates the dramatic and exciting ending. It is necessary for the pianist to pay attention to all detailed tempo instructions.

Emotionally, Castelnuovo-Tedesco was always specific and clearly marked his intention on the score. *Le Danze del Re David* contains varieties of emotion and this music projects scenes from the biblical story. Castelnuovo-Tedesco tries to present the ecstasy of the moment of bringing the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem. He also shows reverence to God, as well as the pain and sadness resulting from Uzzah’s death.

In 2 Samuel 6, one reads about the changes of David’s mood.92 When he and thirty thousand Israelis went to the house of Abinadab, the mood of the crowd was extremely happy and they celebrated with all their might before the Lord with all kinds of instruments and singing. However, the mood of the crowd changed when they arrived at the threshing floor in Nacon where Uzzah was struck down due to the irreverent act of touching the ark with his hands. At that moment, David was angry because of God’s wrath on Uzzah while at the same time he was afraid of the Lord. He then refused to bring the Ark back to Jerusalem. After three months, David decided to bring the Ark back to Jerusalem. He heard that the people where the Ark was placed were blessed, therefore, this time he was full of rejoicing and happiness. Even so, he was much more careful and respectful toward God this time. When those who were carrying the Ark of Covenant had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. He danced with all his might before God which showed his ecstasy.

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92 *The Holy Bible*, King James Version.
In conclusion, *Le Danze del Re David* presents David’s moods from happy, angry, fear, rejoicing, cautious, reverent, respect, to the concluding emotion of sublime ecstasy. If one could relate this transition of David’s moods into *Le Danze del Re David*, one could find many places in the piano work which reflected these mood changes. Knowing the details of the story will enable the performer to convey the emotions more accurately. The most significant interpretations appear in the fourth and sixth sections. The instructional words for mood change include estatico (ecstatic), flebile (feeble), con malinconia (melancholy), appassionato (passionate), espressivo e doloroso (expressive and painful) of section 4 and maliconico e supplichevole (melancholy and pleading), ansioso (anxious), espressivo con fervore (expressive and passionately), malinconico, appassionato of section 6. They are all powerful words to guide the performer’s mood demonstrating the sensitivity Castelnuovo-Tedesco. It is hard to say and there is no evidence clearly showing that Castelnuovo-Tedesco actually followed the mood changes of King David during the procession, but these words give the pianist some creative ideas to interpret this piece.

*Le Danze del Re David* should promote happiness and ecstasy, as most of this work conveys majestic, grandiose, and celebratory moods. For example, the first section following the shofar call announced the rejoicing moment of this occasion, and the first section shows the excitement of the kingly procession.

Moreover, the pianist should control timing between sections to unify this piece. In some places, it is very important to observe the rest, allowing the silence to work its drama. Silence is a most powerful voice and it can create a very dramatic moment. For example, in measures 124–126 (example 5.3), after the ascending doublings, an entire measure rest is found and should be carefully observed. The
heavy and grinding third and octave doublings creates sonic shock and the full measure rest increases the tension creating a sense of anticipation.


Another example appears in measure 133–134. The eighth rest on the downbeat of count one creates energy for the off beat and generates forward motion.

In summary, this document provides a clear analysis of *Le Danze del Re David* on several aspects. Firstly, Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s Sephardic Jewish identity was aroused by the discovery of his grandfather’s notebook. With his interest in the *Bible*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco chose the great King David as the subject around which he composed his work. By his memories of family time, worship in his in his synagogue and his childhood years with his grandfather, he employed several Sephardic-Italian musical liturgies and reconstructed them as the themes of *Le Danze del Re David*, which is clearly illustrated in section 4.2.1.

Secondly, influenced by early 20\(^{th}\) century innovative Italian music society, his teacher Ildebrando Pizzetti, as well as the influence of the French impressionistic style, Castelnuovo-Tedesco harmonized these themes in a very unique way. The harmonic analysis demonstrates that the seventh chord is the most important musical element in this work, facilitating the many changing harmonic colors. Many surprising harmonic progressions are pointed out in section 4.3 which gives readers insight into Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s harmonic language. The analysis of form and melody also shows the quasi-variation composition style and his creativity in elaborating the musical materials. The same theme appears several times while each time the voicing and accompaniment change. The detailed tables of structure illustrated in section 4.1 will help the reader become acquainted with this piece more quickly and also aid in memorization.

In addition, chapter 3 provides the biblical account and detailed explanation of the title *Le Danze del Re David* to those readers who are not familiar with the biblical account of dances of King David. One will discover that Castelnuovo-Tedesco projected through piano music this account found in the Old Testament book of II Samuel chapter 6. His composition vividly transcribes these verses. Using the piano,
he imitated the teruah blast of the shofar call and used it as an important motif and link in this piece. Fond of playing musical word games, Castelnuovo-Tedesco started the shofar call on the repeating tone center, ‘D’ or the solfège tone ‘Re,’ which is also the Italian word for ‘king,’ a reference to the title of the piece. After reading an overview of the ancient instruments found in the passage of scripture from II Samuel chapter 6, one will discover Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s orchestral writing style in this piece. The pianist will obtain a clear idea of the instrumental representation to which the score alludes and will be more readily able to employ imaginative playing to call attention to those creative parts of the composition.

This document concludes with practical and useful thoughts from a pianist’s point of view on interpretation including pianistic difficulties, ideas of planning mood changes, and the importance of the rhythm. This can result in more efficient and knowledgeable preparation of this work.
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Appendix: Score of *Le Danze del Re David*¹


Vivo e tumultuoso (d. = 80)
II. Ieratico (d. = 50)

pp sempre - aereo e luminoso

mp dolce e grazioso cantato

P' non un poco sentiti i bassi

P' dolce e cristallino
Vivo e tumultuoso (\textit{d=80})
III. Rapido e selvaggio (\( \text{}\mathbf{\text{\textit{\textbf{j}}=120 a 126}}\))
(4) Subito mosso

Molto Lento – quasi recitativo

VII. Allegro guerriero (→126)
**Largo e pomposo**

**Alla Chiusa**

Chiaro e solenne – come una fanfara regale (t. 160)

**Più mosso**

a piovere  

a tempo  

più f  

$\#_{bass}$.  

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