



Acoustemologies in Contact

Sounding Subjects and Modes of
Listening in Early Modernity

EDITED BY EMILY WILBOURNE AND SUZANNE G. CUSICK

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Introduction

Emily Wilbourne and Suzanne G. Cusick

Acoustemologies in Contact attends to embodied, sensory experience in historical and cultural flux, and to the transcultural relations that flourished in the period that we — for expediency’s sake — call ‘early modernity’ (roughly 1500–1800).¹ In order to think the history of early modernity differently, the authors in this collection have centered sound: auscultating the archive in search of the means by which sounds signified, and to whom they signified, these authors corral a wide range of sonic traces. Importantly, these essays presume no access to objective, unmediated sonic events, but rather understand sound as heard and actively listened to by auditors in historically and culturally specific formations. They share the conviction that sound — as vibrational force — necessitates bodies in

1 The term ‘early modern’ became prominent in Marxist histories of the mid-twentieth century and found wide usage in North-American-based scholarship after it was popularized by scholars such as Peter Burke (see *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978) and Natalie Zemon Davis (see *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975)). Intended by proponents as a substitute for overtly elitist and Eurocentric periodizations of human history, such as ‘Renaissance’ and ‘Baroque’, ‘early modern’ incorporates the long transition from communal, religious, feudal, and agrarian societies, such as those that characterized the European ‘Middle Ages’ and pre-colonial Americas, to an individualist, secularist, capitalist, democratic, and technologically innovative society such as characterized European settlements after the French and Industrial Revolutions; it remains the most widely used alternative to traditional periodizations. The term, however, has been contested by many scholars and remains problematic, not least because it perpetuates a Eurocentric notion of human history. Walter D. Mignolo, in *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonialization*, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), theorizes the ‘coexistence of clusters’, linking ‘early modern’ to the ‘early colonial’ (see, in particular, pp. vii–xiii); for a particularly cogent and usefully reparative critique of ‘early modern’, see Jack Goldstone, ‘The Problem of the “Early Modern World”’, *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 41.3 (1998), 249–284, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1568520981436246>

sonic contact; as Olivia Bloechl reminds us in her chapter: the body itself is the most intimate of contact zones.² Sounds convey vast amounts of information — information that situates bodies in space, in relationship to others, and in relationship to power. The essays share the assumption that the culturally contingent systems by which sounds make sense may be foreign to each other and to our present moment.

In early modernity, an unprecedented number of people, objects, and ideas moved around the globe, often in involuntary and uninvited ways. Yet traditional histories, including those of sound, music, and performance, have largely focused on regional repertoires bounded by linguistic or political borders. Until recently, the study of historical sound amounted to the study of historical music-making. Too many histories have prioritized the notated repertoires that were prized by elite Europeans in courts and churches, as if these venues, their music-makers, and their listeners were not confronted on a daily basis with people, objects, and ideas in migration.³ Whether these repertoires were performed in Europe or in a colonial setting, their written histories have valued the kinds of musical aesthetics that best flourish in notated genres (such as precise repetition, composerly gestures, developmental complexity, and self-referential musicality). These same histories have all but ignored the relationship of those repertoires to other intentional sound-making that some listeners might have deemed

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- 2 The term comes from Marie Louise Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone', *Profession*, 1 (1991), 33-40. See also, Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, eds., *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), pp. 405-423, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822386452>. It was Olivia Bloechl who first introduced the term in the conversations that led to this book.
- 3 Several important exceptions include Richard Cullen Rath, *How Early America Sounded* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2003); Olivia Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008); and Gary Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009). We would also like to acknowledge a number of recently completed or forthcoming publications and conferences that — like this book — move towards thinking the history of sound differently, including the 'Race and Empire in Global Music History (1500-1800)' conference, 30-31 March 2018, University of Pittsburgh, organized by Olivia Bloechl and Molly Warsh; the special issue 'Music, Indigeneity, and Colonialism in the Americas', ed. by Jessica Bissett Perea and Gabriel Solis, *Journal of the Society for American Music*, 13.4 (2019); *Seachanges: Music in the Mediterranean and Colonial Worlds, 1550-1880*, ed. by Kate van Orden (Florence: I Tatti Studies, forthcoming); and Kate van Orden, *Songs in Unexpected Places* (forthcoming).

meaningful — even musical — and have neglected the importance of sound for the recognition of the familiar and the foreign. To privilege European and European-descended acoustical practices is to contribute to the colonial fantasy that European notions of sound, music, and listening are universal, and thus to also contribute passively to ongoing notions of European — white — cultural supremacy.

Since the turn of this century, the study of historical sound has expanded beyond the study of what Europeans called ‘music’. Classic texts of historical sound studies, such as Bruce R. Smith’s *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England* (1999), Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti’s *Sound and Space in Renaissance Venice* (2009) and Niall Atkinson’s *The Noisy Renaissance* (2016), have added enormously to understanding the ways that material technologies of sound and listening shaped theatrical, religious, and sociopolitical experience in the early modern era.⁴ Yet neither these nor Veit Erlmann’s provocative genealogy of ‘modern’ listening practice, *Reason and Resonance* (2014), attend to the ways that sound (including but not limited to music) was understood and directed to sociopolitical ends in cultures beyond Europe.⁵ Nor did they attend much to the ways that material technologies of sound and listening were implicated in this era of unprecedented transcultural contact. The essays in *Acoustemologies in Contact* share a desire for the sometimes elusive practice of what Peter Szendy has called ‘listening to listening’, excavating sound from various forms of writing, including musical notation, descriptive texts, poetry, and visual imagery.⁶ Here scholars listen for the impact that sounds make on individual bodies, and for the extent to which such responses were naturalized by cultural formations that gave the relationship between sounds and their meanings a seemingly monolithic veneer of truth.

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- 4 Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti, *Sound and Space in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); and Niall Atkinson, *The Noisy Renaissance: Sound, Architecture and Florentine Urban Life* (State College, PA: Penn State Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.5325/j.ctv14gp0cj>
- 5 Veit Erlmann, *Reason and Resonance: A History of Modern Aurality* (Cambridge: Zone Books, 2014). A recent exception is Francesca Orsini and Katherine Butler Schofield, eds., *Tellings and Texts: Music, Literature and Performance in North India* (Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.11647/obp.0062>
- 6 Peter Szendy, *Listen: A History of Our Ears* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008).

The power of sound to move the body extends from the pleasurable labors of dance, through learned responses to commands or to one's name, to the involuntary (sometimes only momentary) terror of the startle, caused by an unexpected bang or frightening noise. Acousmatic sound, sight unseen, insistently presses its way into the body — vibrating through the ears and through our flesh — fraying our attention and demanding a narrative explanation:⁷ 'What was that? Where is that noise coming from? Is there anybody there?' If Descartes's famous dictum, *cogito ergo sum* (I think therefore I am) locates subjectivity within the internal (metaphorical) space of the mind, then the faculty of hearing locates the subject quite literally within space and in relation to an other: 'I hear something (or someone) therefore I am not alone.'⁸

Through exposure and experience, reassuring and disturbing noises teach the listener how to parse sound, identifying others who move around, past, and into and out of proximity to the listener. In response, the auditor develops what J. Martin Daughtry has called 'virtuosic listening', or the capacity to discern threatening sounds amongst the mundane noises of everyday life.⁹ In this listening that sorts and storifies we can come to understand our place in the world and our position (of subjection) in relationship to power.

Not coincidentally, the import of sound is central to many accounts of subjectivity. In Louis Althusser's famous account of interpellation, for example, the subject recognizes themselves as caught up in and intelligible according to the law, only in the moment in which they are hailed by another and the hail is heard.¹⁰ A related sonicity is at work in Julia Kristeva's semiotic, in which the infant babbles to and with her

7 On acousmatic sound, see Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) and Brian Kane, *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Listening in Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199347841.001.0001>

8 Deaf studies have mounted a spirited critique of intellectual traditions that stigmatize the Deaf and hard of hearing, a tradition that can be traced back at least as far as Aristotle. Though this collection foregrounds sound, we do not mean to imply any loss of subjectivity or agency for Deaf individuals.

9 J. Martin Daughtry, *Listening to War: Sound, Music, Trauma, and Survival in Wartime Iraq* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199361496.001.0001>

10 Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)', in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Verso, 1971), pp. 85–126.

(or his) mother, absorbing the prosody and intonation of language as a life-sustaining and explicitly audible element of the maternal bond, which, in the absence of semantic meaning, defers the separation of mother and child into distinct subjectivities.¹¹ Jörg Jochen Berns, too, marks subjectivity as auditory in his formulation of the ‘acoustic cocoon’ of early modern sovereignty.¹² Berns argues that to control what one heard was the ultimate display of princely power. In early modernity, to control sound was to fill up even the immaterial spaces between the objects under one’s dominion, demonstrating power over a faculty (that of listening) largely understood as involuntary. Berns traces the presence of controlled sounds of various types, including the fake bird calls and obediently gurgling waters of the princely estate and the ceremonial sonic aura of the trumpet and the drum. If Berns’s sovereign is immune, in his ‘acoustic cocoon,’ to the interpellating hail, then the non-sovereign listener is rendered subject precisely in the moment of overhearing sovereign sounds.

In each of these examples, the subject hears the other and recognizes their own vulnerability in a powerful moment of self-awareness and simultaneous political subjection. Yet the essays in this collection are equally, or, indeed, more concerned with the ways in which subjectivity is ascribed to an other who is heard or overheard: not only the recognition of one’s own subjectivity in response to sound, but the ways in which the sounds of others — principally but not exclusively vocal and musical sounds — are understood to police the borders of subjectivity.

The intelligibility of sound has oversized consequences for the identification of friend and foe, and for the correct interpretation of meaning (aptly demonstrated in more recent times by the use of emojis in text messages and new punctuation norms that attempt to compensate for the absence of sound in short-form written communications). We regularly listen for indices of physicality (such as age, gender, and good health), for the historical residue of lived experience (such as regional

11 Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980).

12 Jörg Jochen Berns, ‘Instrumental Sound and Ruling Spaces of Resonance in the Early Modern Period: On the Acoustic Setting of the Princely *potestas* Claims within a Ceremonial Frame’, trans. by Benjamin Carter, in *Instruments in Art and Science: On the Architectonics of Cultural Boundaries in the 17th Century*, ed. by Helman Schramm, Ludger Schwarte, and Jan Lazardzig (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), pp. 479–503 (p. 493).

accent, linguistic fluency, social class, or education), and for emotional cues (such as sorrow, joy, guilt, or sincerity). The coherence of this system relies on an acoustemology that naturalizes the association of certain sounds and certain types of bodies. Who gets to be understood as eloquent? Who instead is brutish? Who subtle and poised, versus faltering, incoherent, or hysterical? Who correctly processes sonic signals and survives or thrives? Who dies?

The various modes of interpreting and living in sound that are articulated in these essays can be described with the term *acoustemologies*, coined by the anthropologist Steven Feld in 1992.¹³ ‘Acoustemology’, Feld writes, fuses ‘acoustics’ and ‘epistemology’: ‘it inquires into what is knowable, and how it becomes known, through sounding and listening’. Taking the physical energy of sound as evidence of its capacity to be ‘instantly and forcefully present to experience and experiencers, to interpreters and interpretations’, Feld posits that sound and listening are ‘a knowing-in-action: a knowing-with and knowing-through the audible’. In the end, ‘acoustemology figures in stories of sounding as heterogeneous contingent relating: stories of sounding as cohabiting; stories where sound figures as the ground of difference — radical or otherwise — and what it means to attend and attune; to live with listening to *that* [emphasis in original]’.¹⁴

To live with listening to *that* is the experience of listening that characterizes what Mary Louise Pratt famously called a ‘contact zone’.¹⁵ Pratt defined contact zones as ‘social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their

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- 13 Steven Feld, ‘Voices of the Rainforest: Politics of Music’, *Arena*, 99.100 (1992), 164–177, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/545aad98e4b0f1f9150ad5c3/t/54670be2e4b0a915edff0627/1416039394252/1992+Voices+of+the+Rainforest.pdf>. Paul Jasen prefers the word ‘acousteme’; see his ‘Acousteme: How Does Sound Shape Knowledge?’, in Paul Jasen, ed., *Surrounding Sound — An Electric Fields Symposium* (Ottawa: Art Engine, 2013), <http://www.surroundingsound.ca/essay-three.htm>. See also Paul C. Jasen, *Low-End Theory: Bass, Bodies and the Materiality of Sonic Experience* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781501309960>
- 14 Steven Feld, ‘Acoustemology’, in *Keywords in Sound*, ed. by David Novak and Matt Sakakeeny (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), pp. 12–21, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822375494-002>
- 15 Pratt, ‘Arts of the Contact Zone’, 33. See also Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203932933>

aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today'.¹⁶ *Acoustemologies in Contact* recognizes the world of early modernity as a set of contact zones. Listening through archival evidence from New France, New England and New Spain, the slave ships of the Middle Passage, England, Italy, France, and China, these authors hear cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other by listening to each other through distinctive acoustemologies. These acoustemological meetings, clashings, and grapplings can, in turn, be heard to produce rage, sympathy, pain, wonder, resistance, self-satisfied fantasies, and mutual misunderstandings that threaten deadly consequences, to colonize bodies as well as territories, and to lead to sonic practices of transculturation.¹⁷ Concerned with the sonic consequences of contact, these essays explore how the structural configurations of sound within cultures in contact impacted communication, comprehension, and the categorization (of people, animals, gods, and other-than-human kin) in the past and during its long (and still unfolding) aftermaths.

It is acoustemology that assigns culturally, geographically, and historically situated meanings to the bodily sensations of contact and difference produced by acoustical energy. Acoustemologies can produce ways of categorizing audible acoustical energy into such categories as speech, song, music, voice, noise, and prophecy, and ways of categorizing human acoustical behaviors in such terms as sound-makers or listeners. Each of these categorizations maps easily onto categories of both social difference and power, as they did, for instance, in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Essai sur l'origine des langues*.¹⁸ As Lester Hu's chapter indirectly reminds us, Rousseau asserted that human song, with its capacity to express emotion, preceded human speech,

16 Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone', 34.

17 Pratt, defines transculturation as 'the process whereby subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted by a dominant or metropolitan culture' (ibid., 36). For an exemplary application of acoustemological thinking to contact zones and nation building, see Ana Maria Ochoa, *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).

18 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Essay on the Origin of Languages and Writings Related to Music*, trans. and ed. by John T. Scott (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998). See also Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chravarty Spivak (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976); see also Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World*.

which developed later as a way to add the precision on which rational discourse depended. For Rousseau, song was the more natural medium of human pleasure and self-expression, and cultures rich in song — such as those, in his view, of ‘the South’, were to be envied for the natural expressivity they retained. Speech, by contrast, was a medium from which pleasure and emotion had been drained for the sake of the clarity and reason that he believed to characterize those from colder, ‘northern’ places. It takes little imagination to understand how this one distinction between song and speech, when mapped onto places warm and cold and affective stances of self-expressive pleasure and clear reasoning, would eventually resonate with the attitudes that justified ‘northern’ (European) domination and the racialization of the vast areas of our planet now called ‘the Global South’ in the era now called ‘modernity’.

The authors in this collection probe the seams of received meanings, they listen for moments of misunderstanding, and they think through the consequences of sonic incoherence. When the sounds of others are heard as testimony to their civility or intelligence and interpreted according to an epistemology that is foreign to their personhood, it is terrifyingly simple for listeners to mishear or misunderstand, while simultaneously mistaking the terrain of their listening practice as neutral or objective.

These essays offer examples of very different situations in which sound produced and articulated relationships of human contact that required everyone present to manage shared corporeal feelings of tension, vulnerability, misunderstanding, exchange, complementarity, self-flattery, instrumentalization, resistance, appropriation, mockery, contempt. Each essay recounts ways in which real and imagined differences among human beings — differences of language, belief system, ritual practice, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, status, skin tone, and ability — intersect and collide with each other in the medium of sound. Each strives to distribute complex subjectivity equally among the real or represented human actors who figure in their narratives. And each treats sound as a contact zone already created by the property of acoustical energy to literally invade, move, and change the bodies within the range of its expansion through the air. For these authors, acoustical energy (sound) becomes a medium in which the social differences of experienced contact play out in the sensing bodies of the social actors involved — sometimes as pollution, sometimes as resistance, sometimes as violation, sometimes as love, sometimes as war. These essays show readers (and other writers)

how we might hear beyond either 'hungry' or 'inquisitorial' listening, eager in the first instance to consume sonic experience, or in the second to identify sound objects (this song, or that rhythm) and assign to them fixed meanings.¹⁹ Instead, these essays collectively show how we might begin to listen consultatively, through one another's acoustemologies, and thus attribute meaning to the necessarily elusive relationships of contact that are produced in moments of sounding. As Bloechl argues, to listen thus is to make listening a contact zone, too — a contact zone in which we can know, through thinking about sound, relationships of difference that are more complicated than we can know from texts to which we have not listened so well.

This project originated at a meeting between Suzanne and Emily over beers at the Cubbyhole, and developed over a long series of text messages; in those first conversations we imagined contributing to the literatures that historicize listening, sound, and the sonic construction of subjectivity (mainly historical sound studies and musicology); we believe we have. Just as crucially, we envisioned our work as an intervention into the patterns of mature academia, seeking to unsettle a model of polished academic products and a process of antagonistic critique. We wanted the contributions in this volume to speak to each other, yes, but just as importantly, we wanted the contributors themselves to speak to each other: to exchange ideas, to learn from and teach each other, to read each other carefully — both for what we might 'scavenge',²⁰ to (re)use in our own work, and for what we might give, by spotting each other's blind spots, and pointing out the various ways in which we have failed. Such reading and such conversations require vulnerability and generosity. They require time, presence, and careful — even virtuosic — listening. They require a mutual recognition of the subjectivity of the other. In Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's terms, this would be a reparative listening, eschewing the paranoid.²¹

19 Dylan Robinson coined the phrase 'hungry listening'; see *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020). Olivia Bloechl uses the term 'inquisitorial listening' on p. 17 below.

20 'Scavenge', in the sense used by Greg Denning in *Readings/Writings* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1998), p.20.

21 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, 'Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, or, You're So Paranoid, You Probably Think this Essay is About You', in *Touching, Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 123–152, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822384786-005>

To produce a volume that would itself model collaborative, mutually resonant difference — of perspective, positionality, methodology, and subject matter — we conceived a two week long encounter in Florence, Italy, in late May 2018. We invited participants who (we hoped) could articulate a variety of approaches, a variety of geographical and linguistic competencies, from various disciplines and various career stages. The resulting contributions are shaped by who we asked but also by who turned us down (scholars who knew us were much more likely to agree to what was, in the early stages, an experimental and vaguely defined ask). Some authors knew each other personally or by reputation, and some arrived knowing no one else present; some knew Florence a bit, and spoke Italian, some not at all. Each author was invited to circulate in advance a first draft of their proposed essay, to be workshopped by the group, and each was further invited to propose a theoretical reading they would like to discuss with the assembled group of strangers, colleagues and friends. Over ten long workdays of workshopping and discussion, the authors shared perspectives, ideas, relevant bibliography, and candid questions about the premises of each other's disciplinary approaches to sound. Some authors went on to collaborate privately after the workshop ended, others not; but the experience of grappling together with the germs of our own and others' draft essays, our own and others' theoretical concerns, produced an uncommonly rich, collaboratively constructed theoretical foundation — and changed the proposed essays dramatically. We believe that readers who choose to listen to the whole collection will find the authors straining to have listened to each other well, and to write for and to each other in a textual contact zone dominated by no one disciplinary, methodological, or theoretical perspective.

Opportunities for such collaboration and reflection have become rare and precious in our world. All of us who participated in this volume are grateful to New York University's Villa La Pietra campus, whose director Ellyn Toscano and staff supported the project generously, particularly Elisabetta Clementi and Lucia Ferroni, as did Paul Boghossian and the staff of the New York University Global Institute for Advanced Study and Maja Jex and staff at the NYU Global Research Initiative. We would also like to thank Ana Beatriz Mujica Lafuente, Samuel Teeple, and

Evangelina Athanasiou in the graduate program at the CUNY Graduate Center, for their willing and able assistance with various editorial tasks.

The precarity of contemporary academic life leaves few of us with the resources (mental, physical, or financial) to take our time with our own work, let alone to regularly devote time to the work of others in any sustained fashion. The project as we imagined it was deliberately utopian: a collective effort in which the goal was as much the process as the product. We hoped to generate scholarship as praxis. Rather than a theoretical manifesto urging specific types of future scholarship, this volume offers a set of examples of what it might look like to do this kind of work and a range of different answers, provocations, and queries that might (and can) emerge when the listening ear of the scholar strains to catch the echoes of past acoustemologies. As praxis, none of these essays makes a claim to complete knowledge; even taken collectively they make no claim to totality — politically, stylistically, or geographically. We hope the variety herein will reverberate among an ever wider variety of scholars, encouraging them to work alongside, with and against us, multiplying the work we can read and cite, and generating richer histories of early modern sounds, the people who made them, listened for them, were moved by them to attribute meaning, and the various ways in which sound was understood to narrate.

1. Listening as an Innu-French Contact Zone in the Jesuit *Relations*

Olivia Bloechl

In his field report of 1636, the French missionary Paul Le Jeune described an Innu (Montagnais) shaking tent ceremony that went differently than expected. According to Le Jeune, an unnamed female *kakushapatak* (ritual specialist, or shaman) led the ceremony after a male shaman failed to call the powerful beings who were supposed to enter the tent. Her singing worked, but the being she consulted — a powerful *manitou*, according to Le Jeune — ended up saying more than the priest wanted to hear.¹ After predicting the death of a sick man and revealing an imminent Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) raid, the Manitou warned that the cannibal giant Atshen would devour the band if they went through with a plan to relocate to a mission settlement near the new French fort at ‘Trois-Rivières’.² Nor would they find shelter from the Haudenosaunee there, as the Manitou boasted he would ‘cut the throats of the French themselves’.³

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- 1 ‘She began to shake her habitation so well and sing and cry so loudly that she made the devil come, who said more than was wanted’. Paul Le Jeune, *Relation de ce qui s’est passé en la Nouvelle France en l’année 1636...* (Paris: Sebastian Cremoisy, 1637), pp. 130–131, <https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.94031/3?r=0&s=1>. All translations from French to English are my own unless otherwise indicated.
 - 2 On Atshen/Achan legends, see Georg Henriksen, ed., *I Dreamed the Animals: Kaniuekutat: The Life of an Innu Hunter* (New York: Bergahn Books, 2009); and John Peastitute, *Achan: Naskapi Giant Stories*, rev. ed. (Quebec: Naskapi Development Corporation, 2016).
 - 3 Le Jeune, *Relation de...1636*, p. 130.

Le Jeune's account illustrates the high stakes of the sonic interactions that the Jesuits chronicled in Nitassinan ('the land', in Innu-Aimun).⁴ Shaking tents were ceremonial zones of contact between Innu bands and powerful other-than-human persons⁵ (animal elders, *Mishtapeuat*, or mythical beings), with the kakushapatak acting as a go-between whose singing and drumming could draw them into human experience.⁶ In this shaking tent, the tent itself was also a site of multiple conflicts: pitting Atshen against the band, Innu traditionalists against those favoring settlement, and the shaman against the priests.⁷ These struggles were political, to be sure, as the band's members weighed protection from Haudenosaunee raids against French efforts to sedentarize them and control their lands.⁸ But they registered most immediately as a clash between Innu and French participants' sensorial experience and understanding of the shaking tent, a clash between two very different modes of 'world-hearing'.⁹

In their 2005 edited volume *Bodies in Contact*, Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton claim that 'the body is in many ways the most intimate colony, as well as the most unruly'. Their argument for approaching

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- 4 See 'Territory: Nitassian', *Nametau Innu*, 2010, <http://www.nametauinnu.ca/en/culture/territory>
 - 5 Kenneth M. Morrison, 'The Cosmos as Intersubjective: Native American Other-than-Human Persons', in *Indigenous Religions: A Companion*, ed. Graham Harvey (New York: Bloomsbury, 2000), pp. 23–36.
 - 6 The anthropological literature on shaking tent ceremonies is large, but see especially Regina Flannery, 'The Shaking-Tent Rite among the Montagnais of James Bay', *Primitive Man*, 12.1 (1939), 11–16; Sylvie Vincent, 'Structure du rituel: La Tente tremblante et le concept de *mistapew*', *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec*, 3.1–2 (1973), 69–83; and Adrian Tanner, *Bringing Home Animals: Religious Ideology and Mode of Production of the Mistassini Cree Hunters* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979). Lynn Whidden discusses shaking tent ceremonial song and sound as remembered in neighboring Cree communities, in *Essential Song: Three Decades of Northern Cree Music* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2007), pp. 25–30.
 - 7 Indeed, the kakushapatak herself fiercely opposed the priests and their settlement plans. As Le Jeune noted, 'O wicked woman! as she was used to running here and there, she was afraid of being kept in a town, and as a result she wanted to terrify and, in effect, did terrify her Nation, who no longer thought of anything but war'. He continued, 'When Father Buteux reprimanded her for her malice, she took a knife and threatened to kill him'. Le Jeune, *Relation de...1636*, p. 131.
 - 8 Alain Beaulieu, "'L'on n'a point d'ennemis plus grands que ces sauvages": L'alliance franco-innue revisitée (1603–1653)', *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 61.3–4 (2008), 365–395.
 - 9 Beverley Diamond, M. Sam Cronk, and Franziska von Rosen, *Visions of Sound: Musical Instruments of First Nations Communities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 74.

'bodies as contact zones' is helpful for understanding missionary interactions with First Nations like this one, as it acknowledges the centrality of somatic life to past colonial projects and to the people they targeted. 'The body', they write, 'has, arguably, been crucial to the experience' of colonial cultural interactions, and holds a distinctive 'capacity as an archive for the pleasures of human experience and the violences of history'. Approaching past embodied experience relationally, as a zone of colonial 'engagement', also holds promise, they argue, as a way of making women and gender more visible in global history, because of 'the extent to which women's bodies (and, to a lesser degree, men's) have been a subject of concern, scrutiny, anxiety, and surveillance in a variety of times and places across the world'.¹⁰ As their own case studies demonstrate, body praxes and their poetics have often furnished a basis for refusing coloniality, including colonial racism and misogyny.¹¹

Focusing on singing, instrument-playing, or listening 'bodies in contact' in Nitassinan directs our attention to the larger stakes of the sonic micro-interactions chronicled in the Jesuit *Relations* (1632–1673)

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- 10 Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, 'Postscript: Bodies, Genders, Empires: Reimagining World Histories', in *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History*, ed. by Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), pp. 405–423 (at 406, 407), <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822386452-023>; Ballantyne and Burton, 'Introduction: Bodies, Empires, and World Histories', in *Bodies in Contact*, pp. 1–15 (at 4), <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822386452-001>
- 11 On 'refusal' as decolonial practice, see Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822376781>; and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.5749/j.ctt1pw77c>. For 'coloniality' as a racialized and gendered formation, see Anibal Quijano, 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America', *Nepantla: Views from South*, 1.3 (2000), 533–581; Walter D. Mignolo, 'Introduction. On Gnosis and the Imaginary of the Modern/Colonial World System', in *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 1–46, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400845064-003>; Sylvia Wynter, 'Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation — An Argument', *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3.3 (2003), 257–337, <https://doi.org/10.1353/ncr.2004.0015>; and Breny Mendoza, 'Coloniality of Gender and Power: From Postcoloniality to Decoloniality', in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory*, ed. by Lisa Disch and Mary Hawkesworth (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2016), pp. 100–121, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199328581.013.6>

and related archives. Although these sources have been important for Canadian and mission historians, the sonic interactions they detail have infrequently counted as part of the larger processes of colonial integration that reshaped northeastern Indigenous societies and landscapes in the seventeenth century. As importantly, these sources transmit histories of Innu, Algonkin, Abenaki, Wendat, Anishnaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples 'in contact' with each other and with local other-than-human kin (like animal elders), including through song, dance, and listening. These trans-Indigenous and even trans-species layers of sonic interaction are less fully treated in the missionaries' reports, because of the priests' own limitations; yet they are crucial to understanding events as they unfolded on the ground, in ways that center Indigenous bodies of knowledge and practice.

The specific case I consider is the sonic interaction among sub-Arctic Innu and other Algonkin bands and French Jesuit missionaries in the 1630s and 1640s — decades of real upheaval for Aboriginal people in Nitassinan. In the *Relations* that were issued during these years, singing and listening emerge as matters of concern for all sides in mission interactions, so much so that 'listening to listening' (reporting on others' listening) is a recurring trope of the scenes that the missionaries described for readers.¹² Sometimes their 'listening to listening' narratives focus on people using music writing technologies, in Aboriginal, European, and hybrid forms. As the annual *Relations* chronicled the missions across decades, we also get a sense of how listening practices changed over time, as Algonkian groups and French missionaries and settlers interacted more intensively and became more socially interconnected.

My discussion will center on Innu-Jesuit interactions and the acoustemologies that shaped them. The Jesuits' documentation of song, sound, and its auralities offers a perspective on the close, improvisatory engagement of Innu and French people in the Nitassinan missions. Focusing on this early moment of missionization is also useful for a global music historiography with decolonial aims, as the mission reports from these years show sovereign Aboriginal communities confronting the aspirations and consequences of French and English colonial projects that were still in their nascence. In hindsight, this was a transitional

12 This refers to Peter Szendy's discussion of 'listening to listening', in *Listen: A History of Our Ears* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), pp. 99–128.

moment in the relationship between Innu and French communities, when Innu bands were deliberating how to respond to the changes they witnessed, while French missionaries and officials were trying, with mixed success, to exert control over them, their animal relations, and their lands.¹³

This is why I approach the Innu hearing-based knowledge described in the *Relations* as a *sovereign acoustemology*. Labeling Innu bands' acoustemologies 'sovereign' acknowledges the unconquered, place-specific sensoriums and intelligences that Innu people brought to their interactions with foreign missionaries. In addition, 'sovereignty' is a way of naming how Innu actors in the *Relations* legitimized certain ways of listening and relating sonically while refusing others, as well as refusing colonial ways of knowing that were tied to dispossession.

This sense of an Innu 'refusal' of colonial body logics is indebted to the theorizing of Indigenous/First Nations/Métis scholars David Garneau (Métis), Audra Simpson (Mohawk), Leanne Simpson (Anishinaabeg) and, in music studies, Dylan Robinson (Stó:lō).¹⁴ As a settler musicologist specializing in France and the Francophone Atlantic, I am most familiar with missionary acoustemologies and have relied on ethnohistorical and ethnomusicological research for contextualizing the Innu sonic practices and philosophies that the *Relations* describe. Beyond this empirical research, contemporary Indigenous critical thought has been essential for the more culturally attuned, non-colonial perspective it offers on Indigenous/European sonic interactions: in particular, the acoustemological sovereignty, grounded in Innu norms and protocols, with which Innu actors seem to have countered French missionaries' 'hungry' listening.¹⁵ I will say more about the concept of refusal in the

13 Kenneth M. Morrison, *The Solidarity of Kin: Ethnohistory, Religious Studies, and the Algonkian-French Religious Encounter* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002), p. 145.

14 Audra Simpson, 'On Ethnographic Refusal: Indigeneity, "Voice" and Colonial Citizenship', *Junctures*, 9 (2007), 67–80; Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, pp. 102–105; Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*; and Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.5749/j.ctvzpv6bb>. I am grateful to Robinson for the opportunity to participate in a research workshop he co-organized (with Patrick Nickleson and Jeremy Strachen) at Queen's University ('Intersectional Approaches to Settler Colonialism and Music', 3–6 May 2018) that introduced me to this current of Indigenous theory.

15 This refers to the discussion of 'epistemological sovereignty' in Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, p. 21.

conclusion, but for now will turn to what can be recovered of Innu and French Jesuit sonic knowledges from scenes of listening in the early mission reports.



Fig. 1.1 Pierre-Michel Laure, *Carte du domaine du Roy en Canada / dressée par le P. Laure, missionnaire jésuite, 1731, augmentée... et corrigée... en attendant un exemplaire complet l'automne 1732 (1732)*. Courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Public Domain, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84467273/f1.item>

Innu Acoustemologies

By the 1630s, European projects of missionization, trade, and settlement had begun to transform the traditional Innu lands between Piyêkwâkami (Lac St-Jean) and the great river that the French called the Saint-Laurent, in present-day Québec (see Fig. 1.1).¹⁶ With the return of the French to the outpost of 'Kébec' in 1633 (after the brief English takeover in 1629), Innu communities began to experience disruptive changes in trade patterns, food resources, relations with the Haudenosaunee, and in the local microbiome, as epidemics of European diseases devastated their communities. The 1630s and 1640s also saw the establishment of mission settlements at Kâ Mihkwâwahkâsic (Sillery, from 1637) and near Trois-Rivières ('La Conception', from 1641).¹⁷ These *réductions*, as

16 My use of historical Innu toponyms follows the ethnolinguistic research of John E. Bishop and Kevin Brousseau, in 'The End of the Jesuit Lexicographic Tradition in Nêhirawêwin: Jean-Baptiste de la Brosse and His Compilation of the *Radicum Montanarum Silva* (1766–1772)', *Historiographia Linguistica*, 38.3 (2011), 293–324, <https://doi.org/10.1075/hl.38.3.02bis>

17 Jean-François Lozier, *Flesh Reborn: The Saint Lawrence Valley Mission Settlements through the Seventeenth Century* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018),

Le Jeune came to call them, were in many respects modeled on native Christian settlements that the Jesuits had established in Japan and Paraguay.¹⁸ Le Jeune, then the superior of the Canadian mission, meant for these settlements to serve the Jesuits' efforts to convert migratory groups by inducing them to adopt a sedentary lifestyle and abandon their traditional ceremonies and performance. However, Innu people exercised considerable agency in deciding whether and how they would live there, and the winter season saw most able 'residents' return to a hunting-based lifestyle in the backcountry.¹⁹

We do not have direct, seventeenth-century Innu accounts of their own ways of listening and knowing, although mission documents do transmit conversations, speeches, and songs by historical Innu people. In lieu of that, one possibility is to consult Innu oral historical accounts of analogous practices in the twentieth century (with the understanding that these reflect modern experiences). As an example, take Mary Madeline Nuna's reflection on listening to shaking tents of the 1930s, outside the Innu reserve of Sheshatshu:

It's like the way someone speaks to you. That's the way it sounded from the shaking tent. It was very good fun. It is a great time and, when stories are being told, it's like listening to a radio. When spirits speak from inside the tent, they might guide us where to hunt for the animals. [...] You could talk to the spirits, the ones who you heard from inside there. Like, for example, the one who is called Mishtapeu — the One Who Owns the Animals. This spirit is heard through the shaking tent. And when the Mishtapeut (more than one spirit) sing, it is really good to listen to them, to the songs of the shaman. The Mishtapeut are really loud singers.²⁰

<https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv7r40fx>

- 18 Le Jeune mentioned the Paraguayan *reducciones* as a model in the *Relation* of 1637, and he clearly knew of the Japanese mission villages, thanks to the widespread print dissemination of Iberian Jesuits' correspondence on Japan. See Takao Abé, *The Jesuit Mission to New France: A New Interpretation in the Light of the Earlier Jesuit Experience in Japan* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 2–6, 130–146.
- 19 Morrison, *Solidarity of Kin*, pp. 131–172. Muriel Clair also points to the development of an apostolate among the settlements' part-time residents, who adapted elements of mission teachings into their existing spiritual knowledges and kinship networks, both of which were closely tied to the landscape. Muriel Clair, "'Seeing These Good Souls Adore God in the Midst of the Woods': The Christianization of Algonquian Nomads in the Jesuit Relations of the 1640s", *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, 1.2 (2014), 281–300, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22141332-00102008>
- 20 Mary Madeline Nuna, 'Shaking Tents and Anik-napeu, The Toadman', in *It's Like the Legend: Innu Women's Voices*, ed. by Nympha Byrne and Camille Fouillard (Toronto:

Nuna compared the shaking tent with another technology for transmitting sound, a 'radio', and pointed out what 'a great time' it was, hearing the spirits' stories. The analogy of listening to a radio clearly stems from a modern Innu experience of transmitted sound, but it also recalls much earlier characterizations of the shaking tent as a means of long-distance communication, information transfer, and entertainment. I also appreciate Nuna's observation that 'the Mishtapeut are really loud singers' for its humor and physical immediacy, which centers her enjoyment in listening.

Le Jeune's description of a shaking tent he attended in November, 1633, recalled that the shaman, 'having entered [...] shook this tabernacle gently at first, then, rousing himself little by little, he started to whistle dully and as if from a distance, then to speak as if in a bottle[...]'.²¹ He also recorded various band members' opinions on how the shaking tent transmitted voices. Some thought that the shaman was far away, while others thought his body was on the ground inside the tent while his soul was up above, where it called the animal elders. During this part of the ceremony, the shaman started

to cry like a screech owl of this region, which seems to me to have a louder voice than those of France, then to howl, sing, varying the tone at every stroke, finishing with these syllables, *ho ho, hi hi gui gui nioué*, and other similar ones, counterfeiting his voice, so that it seemed to me like hearing these marionettes that some showmen display in France. He spoke sometimes Montagnais, sometimes Algonkian, but always preserving the Algonkian accent, which is lively like Provençal.

The kin-group led by the hunter Mestigoit, who hosted Le Jeune, was traveling in their hunting grounds south of the St. Lawrence River, and the shaman seems to have called the regional owl master, along with other animal elders. The priest also noted how loud the owl master's voice was, as Nuna remarked of the Sheshatshu Mishtapeut. Unlike Nuna's analogy of radio transmission, though, Le Jeune thought the shaman ventriloquized the animal elders' voices, rejecting his hosts' explanations and attributing the voices to a willed, human source.

Gynergy Books, 2000), pp. 37–40 (at 38).

21 The following quotations are cited from Paul Le Jeune, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle France, en l'année 1634* (Paris: Sebastien Cramoisy, 1635), pp. 48–54, <https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.18834/3?r=0&s=1>

Witnessing each animal elder's arrival was important for the ceremony's success, and a ceremonial listening protocol guided participants' interactions with them. Each time the voice from within the tent changed, participants ritually urged each other, 'moa, moa', which Le Jeune translated as 'écoute, écoute' [listen, listen]; then they collectively called on the animal master to enter. Once the first one had arrived, the assembly responded excitedly and asked the master to call his companions:

Now to return to our consultation, the Savages, having heard certain voices counterfeited by the charlatan, gave a cry of joy, saying that one of these Genies had entered: then, addressing themselves to him, cried, *Tepouachi, tepouachi*, call, call; which is to say, [call] your companions; at this, the jongleur called them, pretending to be a Genie [and] changing his tone and voice: meanwhile our sorcerer, who was present, took his drum, and the others responded, singing with the jongleur who was in the tabernacle.

Members of Mestigoït's band knew to listen to the voices in the tent with discernment, to welcome the first animal elder when he arrived, to respond supportively with singing and dancing, and to listen attentively to the news that they brought.

Beyond the specific protocol recorded in this account, careful reading of other reports suggests more general characteristics of Innu acoustemologies. One of these is the cultivation of mediated listening practices, using materials like sticks, bark, or prepared skins that had long been used for record-keeping across the northeast. Some of these mediated listening practices, like the shaking tent protocol, clearly predated the missionaries' arrival, while others developed in the middle decades of the seventeenth century as adaptations of existing Innu media to Catholic usage.

An example of traditional mediated listening is the use of song record sticks, a form of graphic notation that helped 'guide singers during the performance of long, complex ceremonies'.²² Le Jeune

22 Victoria Lindsay Levine, ed., *Writing American Indian Music: Historic Transcriptions, Notations, and Arrangements* (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2002), p. xxvii. The stick she discusses was documented in Paul Collaer, *Music of the Americas: An Illustrated Music Ethnology of the Eskimo and American Indian Peoples* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), p. 103. Levine notes that Cayuga singers also used 'a roll call stick or cane as a memory aid in performing the Condolence Council ritual' (p. xxvii).

noticed Mestigoït's band using a song record stick in a 1633 condolence ceremony that the *manitousiou* (lead shaman) Carigonan held in the lodge where the missionary was staying:

The 24th of November, the Sorcerer [le Sorcier, or *manitousiou*] assembled the Savages, and entrenched himself with some robes and blankets in part of the Cabin; so that neither he nor his companions could be seen: there was a woman with them who marked on a triangular stick [un baston triangulaire], half a spear's length, all the songs that they sang.²³

A 'hungry' observer, Le Jeune listened closely to the listening of the ceremony's participants, including that of the unnamed Innu woman who kept the song record.²⁴ Despite his keen appetite for Innu knowledge, he didn't learn much beyond the name of the ceremony (*ouechibouan*, according to Carigonan's youngest brother, Pastedechouan):

I asked a woman to tell me what they were doing in this enclosure, she responded that they were praying, but I believe that she gave me this response because, when I prayed, and they asked me what I was doing, I said to them, *Nataïamihiau missi Khichitât*, I am praying to him who made everything: and thus when they sang, when they howled, beating their drums and their sticks, they said to me that they were making their prayers, without being able to explain to me to whom they addressed them.²⁵

The Jesuit's hosts deflected his questioning about ceremonial practices, and their purpose, that were clearly secret, or at least not for him to know. Tellingly, the woman whom he consulted seems to have translated what was going on into terms the priest could understand — prayer — while declining to satisfy his curiosity, whether from language difficulties (due to Le Jeune's level of comprehension) or as an act of refusal.

The song record stick that Le Jeune described resembles a later Osage stick that Victoria Lindsay Levine included in her anthology, *Writing American Indian Music*. As with the Osage stick, the Innu one

23 Le Jeune, *Relation...1634*, p. 82.

24 Le Jeune's avid observation of song, instrumental performance, and dance in Innu lands is an instance of Robinson's 'hungry listening', a settler practice of gathering Indigenous sonic practices, materials, and knowledge without respecting protocols and in disregard of Indigenous sovereignty. Robinson, *Hungry Listening*.

25 Le Jeune, *Relation de...1634*, pp. 82–83.

had notches along its length, one for each song sung by Carigonan and his associates. As a mnemonic aid, the stick seems to have allowed the woman who used it to keep track of which songs had been sung and where the singers were in the long ceremony. I think it is fair to think of this woman's use of the song stick (following Levine) as a form of music writing.²⁶

This does not mean, however, that the Innu woman's use of the song stick resembled the musical notation that European observers used to transcribe Indigenous singing, or even Le Jeune's own habitual use of a notebook or erasable tablet in the field. Beverley Diamond contrasts this kind of Indigenous song record with the writing practiced by early modern Europeans, which focused on recording 'details' and aimed at 'fixing' events in historical time:

The role of print documents created by Euroamericans often fixes things. Consider, by comparison, such records as Osage or Omaha 'song counting sticks', Haudenosaunee Condolence canes, Passamaquoddy Wampum Records, Navajo jish, or Anishnabe 'song scrolls'. They record historical practices in order not to establish a record for posterity but to perpetuate practice by stimulating memory. They do not describe details but include images that, in an abbreviated form, symbolize processes of receiving knowledge (through dreams, for instance), relationships, or ritual forms, the substance of which is kept only in living tradition. [...] They serve as mnemonic aids in performance situations, thus not fixing but enabling the renewal and re-performance of historical reference points.²⁷

Similarly, the stick that Mestigoit's band used seems to have tracked the sound of voices and drums and helped guide the ritual performers through the cycle of songs across a long performance. In this, it mediated the performers' listening, and it may also have enabled — in Diamond's words — 'the renewal and re-performance of historical reference points' in the band's past.

Listening to participants' listening in ceremonial settings was a fixture of the Jesuits' early field reports in Nitassinan and Wendake

26 Levine, ed., *Writing American Indian Music*, pp. 157–158, xxvii–xxx; and Drew Lopenzina, *Red Ink: Native Americans Picking Up the Pen in the Colonial Period* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012), pp. 47–63.

27 Beverley Diamond, 'Native American Ways of (Music) History', in *The Cambridge History of World Music*, ed. by Philip V. Bohlman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 155–180 (p. 171).

(Wendat territory), and the priests paid careful attention to the media used in ceremonies while trying to determine their purpose and meaning. This was an interested scrutiny, of course, as the Jesuits were known for their readiness to adapt their evangelizing methods to local languages, artistic cultures, and media. (The adaptive process ran in the other direction, as well, as missionized groups often integrated aspects of the Jesuits' teachings, music among them, into existing sacred knowledge and performance.) Whatever the impetus in this case, by the mid-1640s Innu and other Algonkin Christians were using traditional writing technologies, including song record sticks, as aids in Catholic devotion and worship.

In the 1640s, the Jesuits largely relinquished the work of evangelizing Innu bands to baptized part-time residents of the mission villages along the St. Lawrence.²⁸ Jerome Lalemant's letter in the *Relation* of 1645 and 1646 reports that baptized Innus at the mission of Tadoussac had begun adapting French Catholic practices for themselves by the spring of 1646, and some of them used record sticks and bark writing as mnemonic aids for confession. Either Tadoussac Innus or the priest also adapted their record stick technology for use by baptized band leaders during their seasonal hunting journeys. Each of the three bands received five 'books', as the Jesuits put it, recording key Catholic teachings and practices: 'The Father, needing to depart from these good neophytes, left them five books or five chapters of a book made in their way; these books were no other than five sticks variously fashioned, in which they are to read what the Father has persistently taught them'.²⁹

Of special interest for musicologists is the third stick, which apparently worked much like the song stick used in Carignonan's condolence ceremony of November, 1634:

The third is a red stick, on which is written that which they must do on Sundays and Feasts, how they must all assemble in a big cabin, hold public prayers, sing *cantiques spirituels*, and above all, listen to him who will keep these books or these sticks, and who will interpret them for the whole assembly.

28 Clair, "'Seeing These Good Souls'", 284–285.

29 Jerome Lalemant, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable [en l]es Missions des Pères de la Compagnie de Jesus, en la Nouvelle France, [l]es années 1645 et 1646...* (Paris: Sebastian Cramoisy and Gabriel Cramoisy, 1647), pp. 109, 115, <https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.44703/3?r=0&s=1>

The band leaders kept the sticks and presented them periodically, perhaps to recall the relationship established with the Jesuits at Tadoussac:

It is a truly innocent pleasure to see these new preachers hold these books or these sticks in one hand, pull one out with the other [hand], and present it to their audience with these words: 'Behold the stick or the *Massinahigan*', that is to say, 'the book of superstitions, it is our Father who has written it himself. He tells you that it is only the priests who can say mass and hear confessions, that our drums, our sweats, and our trembling breasts are inventions of the manitou or of the bad demon who wants to deceive us', and likewise with all those other wooden books, which serve them as well as the most gilded volumes of a Royal Library.³⁰

It is hard to tell from this account how or why the band leaders used the adapted record sticks, including the third stick for Catholic prayers and songs. Perhaps the Jesuits did indeed appropriate Algonkin record stick technology for their own purposes, as Lalemant's report suggests. Or perhaps they followed the lead of baptized Tadoussac Innus who had already adapted record sticks for their own use.

Regardless of who initiated this usage and why, two things are clear. First, the Innu leaders' use of the record sticks likely meant something quite different to their bands than to the priests, who brought a fundamentally French perspective on religious books and authority. If, as I think is likely, the leaders' record stick recitation drew Catholic practices into an Innu spiritual and diplomatic orbit, band members would also presumably have listened and participated in familiar ways. This includes habits of mediated listening, with song record sticks, inculcated across generations of ceremonial practice.

Other scenes of listening and exchange in Le Jeune's earlier *Relations* hint at features of Innu acoustemologies that endured into the twentieth century. For example, the 1634 report paraphrases a conversation in which his hosts were surprised that the Jesuit did not pay attention to or give credence to dreams, in which other-than-human persons could appear to them and share knowledge and practices, including songs. As he put it, 'Our Savages asked me nearly every morning, did you not dream of Beavers, or of Moose when you were sleeping? and when they saw that I ridiculed dreams, they were astonished, and asked me what do

³⁰ Lalemant, *Relation de...1645 et 1646*, p. 117.

you believe in, then, if you do not believe in your dreams?'.³¹ As Diamond and other ethnomusicologists have noted, listening to dreams was and is a fundamentally important Innu way of living in *nutshimit*; and it is also a source of songs (*nikamuna*), accompanied with the snare-strung frame drum called the *teueikan*.³² Le Jeune's failure to do so was astonishing to Mestigoit's kin, and they rejected his explanation as nonsensical, in another instance of refusal. Responding to the Jesuit's assertion that he believed in the God 'who made everything', they reportedly said, 'you are out of your mind. How can you believe in him if you have not seen him?' (probably meaning, 'seen him in your dreams').³³

As for listening to the French, Le Jeune reports that they compared the priests' singing to bird song: 'They say we imitate the chirping of birds in our songs, which they do not disapprove, as nearly all of them take pleasure when they sing or hear others sing; and despite my telling them that I understood nothing about it, they often invited me to chant some *air* or prayer'.³⁴ This story suggests that Mestigoit's family members listened with ears accustomed to enjoying and interpreting song created by both human and other-than-human persons, such as birds. It also indicates the value they placed on 'responsible reciprocity', here in inviting the priest to join them in singing, by exchanging songs.³⁵ One of Mestigoit's favorite songs apparently voiced this core social value of reciprocity and mutual accountability, repeating a three-word text ('Kaie, nir, khigatoutaouim') that Le Jeune translated as, 'and you will also do something for me'.³⁶

The scenes documented in the *Relations* suggest various modes of listening habitual to Innu hunters, shamans, healers, diplomats, and ceremonial participants, some of which were highly skilled while others were more casual. However, some commonalities do emerge. The Innu people who interacted with missionaries seem to have listened in ways attuned to the immanent world, to dreams, and to communication with human and other-than-human persons. Shared values like reciprocity informed listening norms and protocols, and ingrained, locally

31 Le Jeune, *Relation de...1634*, pp. 63–64.

32 Diamond et al., *Visions of Sound*, p. 190.

33 Le Jeune, *Relation de...1634*, p. 64.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

35 Morrison, *Solidarity of Kin*, p. 121.

36 Le Jeune, *Relation de...1634*, p. 65

grounded listening habits and knowledges proved resilient in the face of priests' efforts to change them.

In contrast, the missionaries' listening has been described as inquisitorial, and it reflected a distinctly Jesuit attitude of enchanted skepticism, weighing sensory evidence with a bias toward natural explanations but an openness to the supernatural.³⁷ As I show in the next section, this mode of listening, which pervades the *Relations* of the 1630s and 1640s, aimed at determining the fundamental reality of sound and song and assigning it a Christian moral value. Unlike their professional counterparts (Innu ritual leaders and healers), Jesuit missionaries sought to extract rationalist knowledge of what they heard, and they or their superiors worked to use this knowledge in support of conversion and colonization.

Jesuit Acoustemology in Nitassinan

Returning to the shaking tent ceremony of 1633, discussed above, the difference between Le Jeune's listening and that of his hosts is striking, and it has much to tell us about the ceremony as a 'zone of [sonic] engagement'. 'I was seated like the others', he wrote, 'observing this fine mystery, forbidden to speak: but as I had never promised them obedience, I did not hold back from saying a little something to the contrary'.³⁸ His refusal to respect his host's protocol asking for his silence was, even in a non-ceremonial setting, a violation of the Innu ethic of reciprocal respect and obligation as the basis for good relations. In a ceremonial context, it amounted to an attempt at desecration.

If Le Jeune's listening made little sense in the context of Innu protocols, it did faithfully reflect French Jesuit ways of listening to and interpreting sound, especially in ritual settings. The missionary's aural habits, and the knowledge he drew from listening, were shaped early

37 This follows Guy Laflèche, 'Le Chamanisme des Amérindiens et des missionnaires de la Nouvelle France', *Sciences religieuses/Studies in Religion*, 9.2 (1980), 137–160, <https://doi.org/10.1177/000842988000900203>; Peter A. Goddard, 'The Devil in New France: Jesuit Demonology, 1611–50', *The Canadian Historical Review*, 78 (1997), 40–62, <https://doi.org/10.3138/chr.78.1.40>; and Pierre Berthiaume, 'Paul Le Jeune ou le missionnaire possédé', *Voix et Images*, 23.3 (1998), 529–543.

38 Le Jeune, *Relation de...1634*, pp. 50–51.

on by his preparatory training in Catholic theology and philosophy.³⁹ He came to the priesthood as a teenage convert from Calvinism, and it is possible that this Huguenot upbringing also informed his outlook on song and its significance. However, more immediately relevant in the 1630s, when Le Jeune penned his field reports, was his Jesuit colleagues' involvement in possession cases in France and in the foreign missions.⁴⁰ Indeed, Le Jeune's inquisitorial approach to sound and song in his 1630s reports would have been familiar to French readers from the period's possession literature — most recently, the sensational reports out of Loudun of the Ursuline Jeanne des Anges' demonic affliction.⁴¹ There, exorcists, including the Jesuit Jean-Joseph Surin, engaged in spiritual combat with the Christian devil by listening carefully to demoniacs' speech and song, evaluating it for signs of diabolical presence, and by chanting the rite of exorcism in return.

This is not to suggest that Le Jeune heard diabolical influence at every turn, even in shamanic chants and songs. On the contrary, his reports stress his empirical and skeptical orientation. The 1634 *Relation* was the first of the Jesuits' North American field reports written with publication in mind, and Le Jeune's preface takes care to underline the empirical basis for his account, including his ear-witness:

Everything that I will say regarding the Savages I either saw with my own eyes or I drew from the mouths of those of this country, namely from an old man well versed in their doctrine and from many others with whom I passed a little less than six months, following them in the woods so as to learn their language.⁴²

39 On Le Jeune's biography, see Réal Ouellet and Alain Beaulieu, 'Avant-propos', in *Rhétorique et conquête missionnaire: Le Jésuite Paul Lejeune*, ed. by Réal Ouellet (Sillery: Editions du Septentrion, 1993), pp. 12–22.

40 On possession cases in France, see Michel De Certeau, *The Possession at Loudun* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); and Sarah Ferber, *Demonic Possession and Exorcism in Early Modern France* (New York: Routledge, 2004). On the sonic and aural aspects of possession cases, see Olivia Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 58–79.

41 Pierre Berthiaume emphasizes the similarities between Le Jeune's inquisitorial interactions with Innu shamans and the Loudun possession chronicles in 'Paul Le Jeune ou le missionnaire possédé'.

42 Le Jeune, *Relation de...1634*, p. 3.

In addition to emphasizing the empirical, Le Jeune often practiced a skeptical listening, as when he accused Innu shaking tent specialists of 'counterfeiting' the voices that participants heard emanating from the tent.

Still, if his listening was skeptical, it was not disenchanting. He often speculated whether the vocal and physical wonders he witnessed in shaking tent and other trance practices were in 'fact' inspired by the Christian devil. This enchanted skepticism was in keeping with Jesuit responses to vocal trance performance (as in possession) in European contexts, but it took on new significance in the context of colonial missionization, where religious reform and land dispossession went hand-in-hand.

The Jesuits' efforts to convert Innu people depended in part on inciting them to cultivate an orthodox Catholic aurality in themselves. This aim was biblically authorized, as Le Jeune himself pointed out. '*Fides ex auditu*', he wrote in 1633 to his superior in Paris, 'Faith enters by hearing'.⁴³ As he would have anticipated, educated French readers of the popular printed *Relations* would have automatically filled in the second half of the verse that Le Jeune quoted: 'ergo fides ex auditu auditus autem per verbum Christi' ('therefore faith enters by hearing, but hearing by the word of God').⁴⁴ Transforming hearing ('*auditus*') through scripture was a fundamental aim, because the Jesuits knew from their experience in other missions that the human sensorium could be a matrix of right understanding, as well as a portal for what they derided as superstition.

One of the key changes the priests sought was to weaken communities' attachment to their own healers and ritual leaders, and they encouraged skeptical listening in traditional rites. In the mission towns, this effort seems to have partly succeeded: Le Jeune reported, in the 1638 *Relation*, 'the sorcerers and jugglers have lost so much of their credit that they no longer blow upon any sick person, nor beat their drums, except perhaps at night, or in isolated places, but no longer in our presence'.⁴⁵ Other

43 Le Jeune, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle France, en l'année 1633...* (Paris: Sebastien Cramoisy, 1634), p. 115, <https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.18296/3?r=0&s=1>

44 Vulgate, Romans 10:17.

45 Le Jeune, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle France, en l'année 1638...* (Rouen: Jean le Boulenger, 1638), p. 222, <https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.36491/3?r=0&s=1>

factors contributed to the public abandonment of traditional rituals in mission towns, especially the higher death rate due to epidemics and intensified warfare; but the priests' relentless campaign against Innu peoples' own sovereign sensorium took its toll.

For his part, Le Jeune often expressed pleasure in witnessing the fruits of this labor, particularly in hearing Innu, Algonkin, or Wendat neophytes singing Catholic music. The seminaries that the Jesuits established in the late 1630s taught children to sing basic Catholic prayers in their own languages, following the practice established in earlier missions in Japan and Paraguay.⁴⁶ With the Innu children who visited the Jesuit residence in Quebec in 1633, Le Jeune used a catechism and translations of Latin prayers that he made in collaboration with his Innu language teacher, Pierre-Antoine Pastedechouan:

After the departure of my teacher, I gathered up and arranged in order a part of what he had taught me [...]. I began to compose something in the way of a Catechism, or on the principles of the faith. Taking my paper in hand, I began to call a few children by ringing a little bell. I have them say the *Pater*, the *Ave*, and the *Credo* in their language [...]. We finish with a *Pater noster* that I have composed almost in rhyme, in their language, which I have them sing; and, in conclusion, I have each one of them given a bowlful of peas, which they enjoy very much. When there are many of them, I give only to those who have answered well. It is a pleasure to hear them sing in the woods what they have learned.⁴⁷

Aural pleasure is not perhaps what we think of in mission settings, but its expression (in Catholic performance settings) is as common across the

46 See Paul-André Dubois, *De l'Oreille au cœur: Naissance du chant religieux en langues amérindiennes dans les missions de Nouvelles-France, 1600–1650* (Sillery, Quebec: Septentrion, 1997); John Koegel, 'Spanish and French Mission Music in Colonial North America', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 126. 1 (2001), 1–53, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrma/126.1.1>; Olivia Bloechl, 'The Pedagogy of Polyphony in Gabriel Sagard's *Histoire du Canada*', *The Journal of Musicology*, 22.3 (2005), 365–411, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jm.2005.22.3.365>; David R. M. Irving, 'Music in the Global Jesuit Missions, 1540–1773', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Jesuits*, ed. by Ines G. Zupanov (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190639631.013.23>; and Olivia Bloechl, 'Music in the Early Colonial World' and 'Case Study 2: The Catholic Mission to Japan, 1549–1614', in *The Cambridge History of Sixteenth-Century Music*, ed. by Iain Fenlon and Richard Wistreich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 128–155 and 163–175, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9780511675874.006>

47 Le Jeune, *Relation de...1633*, pp. 110–112.

Relations as expressions of the priests' displeasure at hearing traditional singing and drumming.

One of the more striking accounts is in the 1637 *Relation*, where Le Jeune appreciated the sound of young Wendat (Huron) and Innu catechists singing in services alongside the French in Quebec, sometimes in multiple languages at once:

It is a sweet confusion to hear them sing publicly in our Chapel the symbol of the Apostles [the Credo] in their language. Now, in order to encourage them more, our French sing a strophe of it in our language, then the seminarians another in Huron, and then all together sing a third, each in his language with a lovely agreement. This pleased them so much that they make this holy and sacred song resound everywhere; they are also made to respond publicly to the questions of the catechism, in order to ground them well and establish their faith. I have heard the French, the Montagnais, and the Hurons sing all together the articles of our belief, and although they use three languages, they agree so nicely that it is a great pleasure to hear them.⁴⁸

If the missionary was correct, the pleasure at these alternatim performances of the Credo was widely shared, so much so that the Wendat catechists sang it for pleasure outside of services. Inculcating enjoyment of Catholic singing was the positive counterpart to the missionaries' discouragement of traditional singing and its pleasures. But it is the missionary's own pleasure in listening that emerges again and again in passages like this, tinged at times with a sense of wonder.

This is a discursive trope of the *Relations*, to be sure, yet Le Jeune was also unusually attuned to music and sound in his reports. There is every reason to suppose that when he or his editors described his aural pleasure in Indigenous Catholic song, this was grounded in genuine evangelical enjoyment based in field experience. However, it was also shared with French readers in the published *Relations* for devotional purposes, as an 'affective script' for imagined sensory experience like those published by French Jesuits in meditative literature of the period (including the *Affectus Amantis* by a Jesuit missionary to Wendake,

⁴⁸ Paul Le Jeune, *Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle France en l'année 1637* (Rouen: Jean le Boulenger, 1638), pp. 199–200, <https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.50858/3?r=0&s=1>

Pierre Chastellain).⁴⁹ As a French reader in France or Quebec, imagining oneself listening in Le Jeune's place was in keeping with the pedagogy of the senses that the Jesuits pursued on multiple fronts.

However, learning to listen like a Catholic in Nitassinan or Wendake may have involved a more drastic transformation, depending on the extent to which individuals adapted Catholic aural habits to their accustomed ones. From the perspective of a locally grounded Innu acoustemology, French Jesuit practices of listening to and writing down songs and their meanings, in notebooks and tablets, were profoundly alien: alphabetic, analytical, skeptical... hungry.

Singing and Hearing as Zones of Colonial Engagement

I cannot stop thinking about the Innu and Wendat children Le Jeune described singing and hearing themselves sing Catholic songs. Maybe it is because I read his reports from the missions' early years knowing something of the subsequent horrors of Canada's residential schools for First Nations and Métis children (1831–1996), many of which were run by the Church.⁵⁰ Ultimately, it is not possible to verify mission reports of Indigenous affective experience, especially at such a remove, but knowing what we do of the centuries since, it is worth approaching such reports with caution. It is entirely plausible, for instance, that the children who visited the Jesuits' house in 1633 enjoyed learning to sing the *Pater*, as the priest wrote; yet they were also probably driven by hunger (that 'bowlful of peas').

'The body is in many ways the most intimate colony, as well as the most unruly'.⁵¹ What does emerge clearly from the Jesuit reports is a sense

49 Pierre Chastellain, *Affectus Amantis Christum seu Exercitium amoris erga Dominum Jesum* (Paris: D. Bechet, 1648). On Jesuit 'affective scripts', including Chastellain's book, see Jennifer Hillman, 'Internal Theater and Emotional Scripts in French Jesuit Meditative Literature', in *Affective and Emotional Economies in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Andreea Marculescu and Charles-Louis Morand Métivier (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 143–163, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-60669-9_8

50 For a list of residential schools in Quebec province, see Christopher Curtis, "Quebec's Residential Schools", *Montreal Gazette*, 25 April 2013. See also Colin Samson, *A Way of Life That Does Not Exist: Canada and the Extinguishment of the Innu* (London: Verso, 2003), 156–84.

51 Ballantyne and Burton, 'Postscript', p. 406.

of multiple projects converging on these young people's singing and listening, as well as that of their elders. The priests targeted catechists' singing and listening for reform, limiting their performance of their own songs and enforcing discipline with corporal punishment that Innu people found abhorrent. Those relatives who sent children to the priests did so for multiple reasons: to dispose of orphans, for diplomacy, for feeding and sheltering, and to have them taught the priests' language and religion. Their sensory formation, including hearing, was just one component of their training. But the *Relations'* persistent attention to Indigenous listening, singing, drumming, and dancing underlines the salience of the body as a zone of colonial engagement, as well as the body's ambiguity as a site of colonial control. The priests' attempts to train the children's singing and listening bodies was colonial in effect; yet the children and their relatives also engaged them in this training for reasons that were outside the priests' control or even, possibly, their understanding.

What is illuminating in Ballantyne and Burton's call to take 'the body as method', in the context of this volume, is its valuation of bodied sonic experience (and the understanding this yields) as a site where colonial or other globalizing processes hit home, and at a deep level.⁵² While postcolonial historians and theorists have long noted the importance of bodily processes for colonial ones, world historians have not conventionally worked with the visceral, sensory, subjective, or meaning-making aspects of large-scale phenomena like missionization and colonialization. Nor have Indigenous and women's histories been centered in most world histories, with some exceptions. Global historians like Ballantyne, Burton, Ken Coates, and Merry Wiesner-Hanks have been pressing for this for some time, in part by taking stock of archives and repositories of memory, like bodies and their knowledges, that their discipline had not considered important.

52 Ibid., p. 407. See Kathleen Canning, 'The Body as Method? Reflections on the Place of the Body in Gender History', *Gender and History*, 11.3 (1999), 499–513, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0424.00159>. For an introduction to the large literature on 'connectedness' and 'entanglement' in world history, see Fernandez-Armesto, with Benjamin Sacks, 'Networks, Interactions, and Connective History', in *A Companion to World History*, ed. by Douglas Northrup (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2012), pp. 303–320, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118305492.ch20>. I explore these processes in the context of global music history, in Olivia Bloechl, 'Music in the Early Colonial World'.

Among other things, they note, the body's ideological usefulness for colonial powers has tended 'to exclude from view the very real stories [...] that it has to tell'.⁵³ Music scholars are used to dealing with what people do with their bodies in music-making and listening, though historical musicologists have relied mostly on textual and other material sources in studying the distant past. For musicologists working on the early modern period, one of the challenges is that the usual sources for early Canadian music history (mission reports and correspondence, catechisms, prayer and hymnbooks in Indigenous languages) are heavily invested in depicting Indigenous people's bodies singing or listening in prescribed ways, although they do transmit information about actual, non-ideal sonic embodiment that can be read and re-purposed critically. Paying closer, critical attention to traces of embodied life in these sources is one way of listening past what their authors wanted us to hear, for other embedded histories. This includes histories involving Indigenous women and girls as agents, such as the shaking tent specialist who warned her audience against relocation, or the song keeper who protected sacred knowledge in the 1634 condolence ceremony.

Reading against the grain in this way is important, and by now it is a standby tactic of postcolonial music history, although centering body practices and knowledges is not. Even more important is starting from the premise of Indigenous sovereignty and agency when using colonial sources, especially those dealing with unconquered peoples and unceded lands. Innu bands interacted with missionaries in ways that were effectively sovereign, although they did not conceive of it in those terms. In just one example of cultural sovereignty, Innu Christians like Pastedechouan were integral to translating Latin and French songs and prayers for communal use, and from parallel cases in later missions we can presume that their own sense of the sacred and aesthetic preferences shaped this corpus.⁵⁴ Sovereignty, self-determination, and 'generative refusal' are also principles of the analytical frames we bring to histories of music in Native/European interactions, because these remain guiding

53 Ballantyne and Burton, 'Postscript', p. 407.

54 Diamond et al., *Visions of Sound*, p. 191. On Algonkian-speaking Christians in the eighteenth century, see Tracy Neal Leavelle, *The Catholic Calumet: Colonial Conversions in French and Indian North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812207040>

principles of many First Nations' struggles with ongoing Canadian and U.S. colonization today.

What can we learn, then, by taking bodied practices and knowledges of the early modern past as starting points for global music history? What stories do they distinctively have to tell? For myself, I can say that starting with Innu and French bodies and body knowledges in this essay has brought out the intimate worldliness of sonic interactions in the French missions, even after having worked with this archive for nearly two decades. Centering bodily experience of hearing and sounding has also led me to a stronger sense of the actors' groundedness in particular environments and situations, and the dependence of their meaning-making on those factors.

Read carefully and with an ear for what they do not say, early mission archives like these do sometimes hold evidence of past interactions in which Indigenous acoustemologies successfully confronted colonial projects aimed at subalternizing their sonic ways of being, making, and knowing. I offer this study, then, as a portrait of Innu refusal and survival in the long-ago, early colonial past, in the hope that it may in some way further decolonial resurgence work in the present.

2. Native Song and Dance Affect in Seventeenth-Century Christian Festivals in New Spain¹

Ireri E. Chávez Bárcenas

Introduction

Ceremonial song and dance traditions were essential for Nahua cultures at the time of European contact.² A wide variety of chronicles contain descriptions of Nahua dancing rituals written by clerics, conquerors, natives, and travelers. Although the terminology is not always consistent, the emphasis on the participants' elegant attire, the sophisticated coordination between drummers, singers, and dancers,

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- 1 I have presented versions of this chapter at various conferences, including 'Atlantic Crossings: Music from 1492 through the Long 18th-Century' (Boston University Center for Early Music Studies, 2019) and the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture Meeting (University of Pittsburgh, 2019). A modified version of this essay will appear as 'Voz, afecto y representación nahua en la canción vernácula del siglo XVII' for the history journal *Historia Mexicana* edited by El Colegio de México. I want to thank the personnel of the Archivo Municipal de Puebla, especially historian Arturo Córdova Durana, who generously guided me through the local archival sources. Preparations for this chapter were supported by grants from the Princeton Program in Latin American Studies and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music.
 - 2 The Nahuas 'were the most populous of Mesoamerica's cultural linguistic groups at the time of the Spanish conquest' and were historically present in diverse regions of today's Mexico and central Latin America. Mexicas, who were the Nahuas that inhabited the imperial capital, Tenochtitlan, are often misleadingly called Aztecs. See James Lockhart, *Nahuas and Spaniards: Postconquest Central Mexican History and Philology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), p. 2.

and the mesmeric collective effect that could last for hours reveal the most impressive aspects of such performances for viewers and readers alike during the first hundred years after the Conquest.³ But this is also the period in which the Catholic Church pondered the use of the senses for the promotion of Christian devotion, and the preservation of native uses and customs were considered essential for a wholehearted engagement with the Catholic faith, especially for certain members of the religious orders in charge of the evangelization of the native population.⁴ Throughout the sixteenth century, trained drummers, singers, and dancers were encouraged to participate in religious ceremonies organized by the mendicant orders in Indian settlements, although the content had to be adapted for the new Christian context. Efforts to combine the local idiosyncrasy, language, and song and dance traditions with doctrinal instruction were led by Bernardino de Sahagún and a selected group of Nahuatl scholars who collected, translated, adapted, and transcribed hundreds of song texts.⁵

This practice was gradually incorporated into the main public festivals in most urban centers in New Spain. In the early seventeenth

3 The terms used by chroniclers to describe the Nahuatl song and dance rituals are *netotiliztli*, *macehualiztli*, *mitote*, *baile*, *areito*, and *tocotín*.

4 In the aftermath of the Council of Trent, the Catholic Church reinforced the practice of religious rituals that involved the use of the body to enhance the religious experience. Although some decrees attempted to regulate expressions of popular piety and certain paraliturgical traditions, reformists also strengthened public forms of religious performance and external devotional practices to stimulate a corporeal understanding of the sacred. These forms of religious expression were highly influential for Franciscans and Jesuits around the globe. The Jesuit José de Acosta, for instance, sustained that Indians should be allowed to maintain these uses and customs because they could channel their joy and celebration 'towards the honor of God and the Saints in their feast days'. Acosta, *Historia natural y moral de las indias...*, ed. by Edmundo O'Gorman (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2006), pp. 356.

5 The custom of preparing Christian texts in Nahuatl in the native style was presumably introduced in New Spain by the Franciscan missionary Pedro de Gante, who arrived only two years after the conquest. See John Bierhorst, *Cantares Mexicanos: Songs of the Aztecs* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), pp. 110–111. The accommodation of native forms and customs such as song, dance, and drama in the local vernacular had been already in use by Hernando de Talavera for the conversion of Muslims and Jews after the Reconquista of Southern Spain. See Mina García Soormally, 'La conversión como experimento de colonización: de Fray Hernando de Talavera a "La conquista de Jerusalén"', *MLN*, 128.2 (2013), 225–244 (at 226–28), <https://doi.org/10.1353/mln.2013.0013>; and Barbara Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire: The New World, Islam, and European Identities* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 105, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511486173>

century the Nahua song and dance tradition was emulated in other devotional genres to represent the native population, including villancicos and sacred dramas. Only a few written examples survive, but the distinctive depiction of Indian characters as devout neophytes and humble workers — especially compared to other characters in similar genres — is particularly meaningful considering the intense debate over the abusive practices of Indian labor, which called into question the legitimacy of the Iberian overseas expansion.

This essay explores a specific poetic and song tradition that survives in early seventeenth-century *villancicos* and other literary genres. These works arguably draw on Nahua song and dance ritual practices as well as the century long tradition of repurposing them for the major festivals of the Catholic Church. To establish the relationship between Nahua performative rituals and these musico-poetic renderings I revise the various records written by chroniclers, ministers, and travelers describing ceremonial songs and dances in the Nahua region, and analyze the Catholic Church's interest in using Nahua's expressive culture as a tool for conversion.

I focus on four villancicos written in Nahuatl for the feast of Christmas in Puebla de los Ángeles from 1610 to 1614 by the Cathedral's chapelmaster Gaspar Fernández. These songs survive with their music, and together with two Marian songs found in Códice Valdés, constitute the principal source of devotional music written in Nahuatl.⁶ In Fernández's villancicos, Indians are represented as humble biblical shepherds in the Nativity scene — an image rooted in a post-Tridentine pastoral tradition that promoted the spiritual values of humility, innocence, and servitude, especially during the Christmas season. I demonstrate, however, that the emphasis on poverty and suffering became an emblem of sorts for the native population in the Novohispanic Christian song.

Studies of early music in Spanish America have interpreted the use of dialects in ethnic villancicos as an instrument of power solely designed to impose a hierarchical social order. Thus the learned elite,

6 For more on the Marian songs in Códice Valdés see Gabriel Saldívar, *Historia de la música en México* (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1934), pp. 101–107; Robert Stevenson, *Music in Mexico. A historical survey* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1952), pp. 119–122; Eloy Cruz, 'De cómo una letra hace la diferencia: las obras en náhuatl atribuidas a Don Hernando Franco', *Estudios de Cultural Náhuatl*, 32 (2001), 258–295.

who arguably wrote and spoke the hegemonic version of Spanish, is perceived as superior to those who spoke a 'deficient' or 'deformed' Spanish.⁷ The villancicos analyzed in this essay, however, provide a new perspective, because they show that the Spanish elite could also be portrayed negatively. Similarly, a broader examination about the use of Nahuatl in devotional songs show theological motivations that have not been accounted for in previous studies. Specifically, this research demonstrates that the religious clergy used native languages to provide familiar sounds to the native population and used images of peasants, workers, and the downtrodden that could better sympathize with the humility and suffering of Christ. From this perspective, Indian workers served as better models for Christian piety than did the Spanish elite.

Nahua Song and Dance Rituals

Detailed descriptions of Nahua song and dance rituals survive in the written record from the early period after the conquest. An early example is included in a chapter of the monumental *Historia General de las Indias* (1552) by the armchair traveler Francisco López de Gómara. Although he never crossed the Atlantic, he describes in great detail the type of dances with which the Emperor Moctezuma entertained the people of the city in the courtyard of his own palace. According to López de Gómara — or to his informants — participants formed concentric circles in strict hierarchical order and sang and danced to the beat of the *teponaztli* and the *huéhuetl*.⁸ These wooden cylindrical drums were essential to ritual ceremonies. Each drum produced two distinct pitches that, combined with orally learned rhythmic patterns, dictated dance movements as well as the intonation, pitch, and rhythm of the

7 Geoffrey Baker, for instance, describes ethnic villancicos as written messages intended to impose an idealized Hispanic order over chaotic local realities. As such, the aim of incorporating popular speech is to mock the deficient use of language of people from diverse regional or ethnic origins. See Baker, 'The Resounding City', in *Music and Urban Society in Colonial Latin America*, ed. by Geoffrey Baker and Tess Knighton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 10–12.

8 The *teponaztli* is a horizontal slit drum with two tongues made of hollow hardwood logs and is played with mallets. Each of its two tongues produces a different tone. The *huéhuetl* is a single-headed standing drum played with bare hands. The *huéhuetl* can also produce two distinct tones by striking either the center of the drumhead or near the outer rim.

text. They were performed by trained celebrants who were strategically placed at the center, so that dancers could replicate the drum beat with a gourd rattle called *ayacachtli*. The circular arrangement also facilitated the participation of hundreds and sometimes thousands of people, who followed the instructions of two trained singers/dancers who coordinated the rhythm, style, and character of every performance. Their essential role is explained in López de Gómara's narrative:

[...] because if they sing, everyone responds, sometimes frequently, sometimes not so often, depending on what the song or the *romance* requires; which is similar here [in Castile] as it is elsewhere. Everyone follows their rhythm [and] they all raise or lower the arms, or the body, or only the head at the same time, and everything is done so graciously, with so much coordination and skill that no difference is perceived from one another, so much so that men are left dazzled. They begin with slow *romances* playing, singing, and dancing very quietly, which seems very solemn, but when they lighten up they sing *villancicos* and other joyful songs and the dance is enlivened with more vigorous and faster movements.⁹

Details in this record are consistent with other descriptions of Nahuatl dancing rituals written by both local and foreign eyewitnesses. Juan de Tovar, for instance, a Jesuit priest born in New Spain, mentions that the elder elite danced and sang from the first circle around the ceremonial drums 'with great authority and soft rhythm'; all the while young dancers taking turns by pairs entered the circle and improvised with lighter movements and greater jumps.¹⁰ Tovar's chronicle is accompanied by dozens of watercolors, one of which reproduces this very scene, showing the two drummers at the center, and the first row of participants made up of members of the ruling elite dancing in precise coordination, wearing rich dresses and elaborate feathered ornaments. The image also shows dancers shaking *ayacachtlis*, which according to the Spanish Jesuit Andrés Pérez de Ribas echoed the rhythm of the *teponaztli*.¹¹

9 Francisco López de Gómara, *Historia de la Conquista de México*, ed. by Jorge Gerria Lacroix (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 2007), pp. 139–140. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by the author.

10 Juan de Tovar, *Historia de la venida de los indios* (c. 1585), f. 58r (MS held by The John Carter Brown Library).

11 Andrés Pérez de Ribas, *Historia de los triumphos de nuestra santa fe...* (Madrid: Alonso de Paredes, 1645), p. 639–640.

The rich descriptive materials provided in these chronicles are crucial for the analysis of poetic and musical attributes of devotional songs and religious lyric poetry that evoke aspects of Nahuatl music-making. These descriptions typically focus on the central role of ceremonial instruments and the close relationship between musical rhythm, dance steps, and other movements. These details, I argue, prevailed in the imaginary of seventeenth-century poets and musicians and informed evocative representations of the native population participating in Christian festivals in sacred songs and other dramatic genres.



Fig. 2.1 'The manner in which the Mexicans dance'. Juan de Tovar, *Historia de la venida de los indios* (Ms., c. 1585), f. 58r. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Language and Expressive Culture as Tools for Conversion

Nahuatl was the most spoken language in Central Mesoamerica in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It was the dominant language before the conquest and continued to function as a *lingua franca* among native peoples long afterwards, which is significant considering the

extensive linguistic diversity of the area.¹² The importance that friars gave to language for religious conversion also contributed to the rapid systematization of Nahuatl and other native languages into Latin characters and the publication of grammars, dictionaries, doctrines, and other language manuals in the sixteenth century. Linguist Claudia Parodi has shown that Nahuatl was used with greater or lesser proficiency in everyday life by non-native speakers (i.e. *mestizos*, *criollos*, Blacks, and Spaniards) and by native and non-native writers in a wide variety of literary genres, including printed doctrines, catechisms, confessional manuals, sermon collections, natural and philosophical treatises, and many other manuscript materials such as chronicles, notaries records, and poetic collections.¹³ In short, the society living in New Spain is presented to us as primarily multilingual and with ample opportunities to experience the Mexica language in oral and written forms. This is confirmed by the Spanish Franciscan missionary Gerónimo de Mendieta, who describes the high fluency in Nahuatl in New Spain in the late sixteenth century, without missing the opportunity to compare the language to Latin in order to justify its use in erudite treatises:

This Mexican language [Nahuatl] is the main [language] that runs through all the New Spanish provinces since here there are many different languages. [...] But there are interpreters everywhere who understand and speak Mexican [Nahuatl] because this is the one that runs everywhere, just like Latin does in all the European kingdoms. And I can truthfully confirm that the Mexican one is no less elegant and curious than Latin, and I dare to say that the former is even more accurate for the composition and derivation of terms and metaphors.¹⁴

As shown by Mendieta, Nahuatl was also prevalent among bilingual and trilingual speakers in New Spanish provinces and thus became optimal to provide religious instruction in Indian settlements. In the early seventeenth century, for instance, the bishop of Tlaxcala, Alonso de la Mota y Escobar — whose episcopal seat was located in the city of

12 Claudia Parodi, 'Multiglosia virreinal novohispana: el náhuatl', *Cuadernos de la Asociación de Lingüística y Filología de la América Latina*, 2 (2011), 89–101 (at 98).

13 Parodi, 'Multiglosia virreinal' (at 93–98). NB the term *criollo* referred to a person of Spanish descent born in the New World and '*mestizo*' to a person of combined European and Native American descent.

14 Gerónimo de Mendieta, *Historia eclesiástica Indiana*, ed. by Joaquín García Icazbalceta (México: Antigua Librería, 1870), p. 552.

Puebla — was a fluent Nahuatl speaker, and every time he visited an Indian parish he insisted in administering the sacraments in Nahuatl.¹⁵ His concern for the language in which Indians received the sacraments is explicit in the records of his pastoral inspections where he consistently includes information about the primary language spoken in every settlement and complains about the poor quality of the doctrine when ministers are unable to communicate with locals in their own language. Likewise, when the native language spoken in a given locality is not Nahuatl, he specifies whether listeners understand Nahuatl or if there are local interpreters who can translate his preaching.¹⁶ What is interesting for this study, however, is not so much the use of Nahuatl during the administration of the sacraments in *pueblos de indios*, but its use in other paraliturgical genres that transcended the marginal confines of Indian settlements and Indian parishes to be introduced at the center of public festivals in most urban centers in New Spain. Such is the case of the Nahua song and dance tradition, which was actively promoted by Franciscan and Jesuit ministers during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Missionaries indicated a strong interest in supporting the local expressive culture not so much for the possibility to fully communicate the principles of the church with native-speakers, but for the potential they saw in the cultivation of the Christian faith. The admiration for local performative customs is repeatedly expressed — if ever so cautiously — in chronicles written by the Franciscan friars Toribio de Benavente (better known as Motolinía) and Sahagún. Both were particularly attracted by the similarities they found — at least to their eyes and ears — with certain Christian rituals, and wanted to find adequate methods for the appropriation of these practices.

Motolinía's close interaction with the native population and his profound knowledge of Nahuatl gave him a broader perspective compared to other writers who described these performances. He is seemingly the only chronicler able to articulate the difference between

15 The episcopal see of the diocese of Tlaxcala was transferred to Puebla in 1543. The term of Mota y Escobar as bishop of Tlaxcala (1607–1625) coincides for the most part with Gaspar Fernández's tenure as chapelmaster of Puebla Cathedral (1606–1629).

16 See Alonso de la Mota y Escobar, *Memoriales del Obispo de Tlaxcala: Un recorrido por el centro de México a principios del siglo XVII* (Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1987).

the two main dancing genres, a recreational one called *netotiliztli* (*baile de regocijo*) enjoyed by the people and the nobility alike in public or private gatherings, and a more virtuous one called *macehualiztli* (*danza meritoria*) reserved for more solemn occasions. According to Motolinía the *macehualiztli* was one of the main ways in which locals ‘solemnized the feast of their demons, honoring them as gods’.¹⁷ The performance included songs of praise for gods and past rulers, which recounted their intervention in wars, victories, and other deeds. Such activities reinforced the collective memory with texts that were learned by heart and reenacted in public performances. Motolinía’s impression of the intense bodily experience that participants had during day-long rituals is recorded in the following passage:

In these [festivals] they not only called, honored, or praised their gods with canticles from the mouth, but also from the heart and from the senses of the body, for which they made and used many mementos (*memorativas*), such as the movements of the head, legs, and feet, or the use of the whole body to call and to serve the gods. And for all of the laborious care they took in lifting their hearts and their senses to their demons, for serving them with all the qualities of the body, and for all the effort in maintaining it for a full day and part of the night they called it *macehualiztli*, which means penance and merit.¹⁸

This testimony shows that while opposing the local belief system, Motolinía is empathetic to these ritual practices, especially when he compares them to Christian singing traditions — in fact, the terminology Motolinía uses to describe the songs’ form and function or the social structures around these performances clearly reflects his formative experience with court and church music making in Castile.

But *macehualiztli* also posed a threat for church and royal authorities, not only for the evident remembrance of a non-Christian past inherent in the genre, but because its ‘obscure figurative language’ made it impossible to understand or to control, even for Nahuatl specialists such as Sahagún or Dominican friar Diego Durán.¹⁹ As a result, the

17 Toribio de Benavente [Motolinía], *Memoriales o Libro de las cosas de la Nueva España...* ed. by Luis García Pimentel (Mexico: Casa del editor, 1903), pp. 339–340.

18 Motolinía, *Memoriales*, p. 344.

19 Opinions regarding the use of native dances varied even among members of the same religious order. This is evident in the contrasting attitudes of the two most vocal Franciscans during the first period of the evangelization project, Motolinía

performance of native dances and *cantares* was prohibited unless they were taught by friars, especially those in honor of ‘old gods’ or ‘devils’.²⁰

Although friars were generally more interested in using Nahuatl’s expressive culture than proscribing it, they had to understand the local customs first. Motolinía, for instance, insists that if Nahuas were already familiar with the tradition of composing new canticles for their gods, the provision of new Christian hymns and songs for the one true God and for ‘the many victories and wonders on Heaven and Earth and Sea’ was essential, but he considered himself unprepared to take on such a specialized task.²¹

Sahagún, also impressed by the ‘mystical’ effect of pre-Hispanic ritual dances, tries to acknowledge the influence of the evangelization process in his own description, stating that, although Indians essentially continued doing the same activities that they had engaged in during pre-conversion performances, they had ‘corrected [*enderezado*] their movements and customs according to what they are singing’. In the same paragraph however, he added an anxious note to the margin that reads: ‘[i]t is the forest of idolatry that is not yet logged’, which explains his resolute attempt to continue reforming such practice.²²

For Sahagún, a close collaboration with native scribes and painters was fundamental in order to document details about local traditions which were not entirely transparent to Western missionaries. He led collective projects dedicated to the compilation and transcription of Nahuatl song-texts from central New Spain resulting in two important collections: *Cantares mexicanos* and *Romances de los señores de la*

and Juan de Zumárraga, the latter a Spanish Franciscan prelate and first bishop of New Spain who prohibited native dances in New Spain in 1539. Dances were promptly reinstated immediately after the bishop’s death.

- 20 The performance of native songs and dances were proscribed by ecclesiastical writ in 1539 and again in the penal code issued in 1546. See John Bierhorst, ‘Introduction’, in *Ballads of the Lords of New Spain: The Codex Romances de los Señores de la Nueva España*, trans. by John Bierhorst (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), p. 16.
- 21 Motolinía understood that the creation of a new repertory of Christian songs in Nahuatl required a specific set of musico-poetic skills he did not have. Hence he asks: ‘[B]ut who will do it? I confess myself unskilled and unmerited because to compose a new canticle or praise requires a good instrument, a good throat, and a good tongue, all of which I very much lack’ (Motolinía, *Memoriales*, p. 356).
- 22 Sahagún uses the term ‘mystical’ when describing the powerful collective effect that resulted from the coordination of sound and movement of large groups of singers and dancers. Bernardino de Sahagún, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España...* ed. by Carlos María de Bustamante (México: Alejandro Valdés, 1829), p. 25.

Nueva España. Although these poems were primarily conceived to be sung — and sometimes danced — no musical notation or other choreographic information is included, which leaves performing details to the imagination of readers and researchers.²³ Similar to contemporary Iberian song-text collections, these anthologies represent a deliberate attempt to preserve a song and dance tradition that until then had been transmitted orally, although in the Spanish American case this effort only represented the first step of a much longer intervention into the genre, since the ultimate goal was to understand, control, and replace its content and meaning.²⁴

The second step of this reformative process was the creation of a new repertoire of song-text materials for the ceremonial dances performed in Christian festivals, exemplified by Sahagún's ambitious collection of song-texts in Nahuatl, published in Mexico City in 1583 under the title *Psalmodia Christiana*. Sahagún describes the volume as 'Christian doctrine in the Mexican language ordered in songs or psalms so that Indians can sing in the *areitos* they perform at churches'.²⁵ The volume itself contains 333 texts for the main festivals of the liturgical calendar.

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- 23 A few songs in 'Cantares' and 'Romances' include drumming-pattern indications with different combinations of the syllables *ti*, *to*, *qui*, and *co*, but no further instructions for musical interpretation are provided for performers. The lack of music notation has limited the attention of musicologists and ethnomusicologists — with a few notable exceptions — especially when compared to the long scholarly tradition generated from other disciplines, such as philology, linguistics, anthropology, and history. This issue is discussed in Gary Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 3–5, 42–49; Lorenzo Candelaria, 'Bernardino de Sahagún's *Psalmodia Christiana*: A Catholic Songbook from Sixteenth-Century New Spain', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 67.3 (2014), 623–633; Emilio Ros-Fábregas, "'Imagine all the people...'" Polyphonic Flowers in the Hands and Voices of Indians in 16th-Century Mexico', *Early Music*, 40.2 (2012), 177–189 (at 177), <https://doi.org/10.1093/em/cas043>
- 24 The collaborative process between native intellectuals and Christian missionaries also meant the 'active destruction and replacement' of pre-existing cultural traditions. Hilary Wyss reminds us that the product of this collaboration 'was never intended for Native use, but rather to educate Spanish missionaries about Native practices and beliefs, the better to eradicate them'. Wyss, 'Missionaries in the Classroom: Bernardino de Sahagun, John Eliot, and the Teaching of Colonial Indigenous Texts from New Spain and New England', *Early American Literature*, 38.3 (2003), 505–520 (at 510), <https://doi.org/10.1353/eal.2003.0049>
- 25 Bernardino de Sahagún, *Psalmodia christiana y sermonario de los sanctos del año en lengua mexicana* (México: Casa de Pedro Ocharte, 1583), ff. 1r–1v, <http://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000085282&page=1>. The first part of the volume consists

Many questions remain about the ways in which these changes were implemented in different communities or how local traditions were specifically affected. The scarce surviving information reveals that Sahagún obtained permission from the highest viceregal authorities to distribute his printed collection among Indian settlements, although it is hard to estimate its effect because no further documentation survives. Spanish Jesuit José de Acosta explains that members of the Society of Jesus 'tried to put things of our faith into their way of singing [...] and translated compositions and tunes, such as octosyllabic verses and songs from *romances* and *redondillas* [...] which is truly a great [medium], and a very necessary one to teach this people'.²⁶ A chronicle written by Pedro Morales about a procession organized by the Company of Jesus in Mexico City in 1578 offers a clearer illustration of some of the mechanisms followed for the Christianization of Nahua ceremonial practices. According to Morales, a group of children garbed in elegant ceremonial attire sang and danced the song 'Tocniuane touian', which was written by a member of the local Jesuit *colegio*.²⁷ Morales explains that (1) 'the music for the dance consisted of a four-voice polyphonic setting harmonized in the Spanish style'; (2) the voices were accompanied by an ensemble of flutes and a *teponaztli*; (3) the text was written to praise St. Hippolytus and other saints; (4) and clarifies that although the children sung in their own language, the text 'followed the Castilian meter and rhyming style'.²⁸

Morales's description offers a glimpse into the visual and sounding effects created by combined Nahua and Spanish ritual practices. It is possible that the *teponaztli* provided not only the sound and affect that was traditionally associated with ceremonial performative practices, but also the necessary metric patterns or rhythmic structures that guided

of a brief catechism with the main precepts and prayers of the Catholic Church translated into Nahuatl.

26 Acosta, *Historia natural y moral de las indias...*, p. 354.

27 The text was composed by another member of the Jesuit Colegio de San Pedro y de San Pablo in Mexico City. Morales' description includes the Nahuatl version and the Spanish translation provided by the same priest. Mariana Masera observes that while the poem in Nahuatl is organized in heptasyllabic lines, the Spanish translation is octosyllabic. See Mariana Masera, 'Cinco textos en náhuatl del "Cancionero de Gaspar Fernández": ¿una muestra de mestizaje cultural?', *Anuario de Letras: Lingüística y filología*, 39 (2001): 291–312 (at 297–300).

28 Pedro Morales, *Carta del padre Pedro Morales de la Compañía de Jesús. Para el muy reverendo padre Everardo Mercuriano, General de la misma compañía...*, ed. by Beatriz Mariscal Hay (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 2000), pp. 32–33.

the dancers' movements. The four-voice polyphonic texture and regular phrasing structure might have offered the familiar sound of devotional singing genres in the vernacular, not only for those who had recently immigrated from the Iberian Peninsula but for locals who were already immersed in the varied musical practices of the post-Tridentine Catholic Church. And perhaps most importantly, the new host of Christian characters offered alternative ontological narratives to older beliefs. In fact, Morales's emphasis on the panegyrics to St. Hippolytus is particularly striking because the saint had not only become the patron of Mexico City but also the very emblem of the Spanish Conquest since Hernán Cortés took control over Tenochtitlan (the capital of the Mexica empire) on the saint's feast day.²⁹ This narrative offers the perfect example of the new type of hybrid native tradition embedded with a Spanish Christian message: according to Motolinía's perception of the two distinct song and dance genres, the children's performance fall into the *macehualiztli* tradition as a song of praise that celebrated the divine intervention of St. Hippolytus given to Hernán Cortés in a battle against the Mexica leader, Cuauhtémoc, which enforced a concise and belligerent testimony of Christian righteousness and power, one that was reenacted and remembered publicly.

Villancicos en Indio

An important aspect for these hybrid practices was the preservation of specific performative elements that audiences could immediately associate with Nahua traditions. These points of reference appear in devotional songs and other lyric narratives that dramatize the participation of the native community in Christian religious rituals. The large collection of villancicos by Gaspar Fernández shows that elements of Nahua musicality discernible in sixteenth-century chronicles were absorbed into a subgenre of villancicos with texts in Nahuatl, identified by the author as 'villancicos en indio'. In these songs, Nahuas are

29 For more about the patronage of St. Hippolytus in Mexico City after the Conquest of Mexico see Lorenzo Candelaria, 'Music and Pageantry in the Formation of Hispano-Christian Identity: The Feast of St. Hippolytus in Sixteenth-Century Mexico City', in *Music and Culture in the Middle Ages and Beyond: Liturgy, Sources, Symbolism*, ed. by Benjamin Brand and David J. Rothenberg (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 89–108, <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781316663837.006>

portrayed as humble workers sympathizing with the poverty and suffering of Christ. I argue that this narrative served to present the native population as Christian models for the Novohispanic society because their situation was more closely related with that of Christ, which casts a new light on the assumed negative representation of people from distinct regional or ethnic origins in the villancico genre.

Fernández's villancicos also show that the elements that shaped the Nahua-Christian song described by Morales in 1578 were current in other parts of the viceroyalty at the turn of the century, however unlike the processional piece arranged by the Society of Jesus for native singers and dancers, these songs were prepared and performed by the members of the music chapel of a major cathedral institution.³⁰ Fernández was the chapelmaster of the Cathedral of Puebla, so he occupied the most prestigious music position in Puebla and the second most important in the viceroyalty.³¹ Among the most important duties of chapel masters in Hispanic cathedrals was the provision of new sets of villancicos for the major liturgical festivals of the year, such as Christmas or Corpus Christi. Fernández is also the author of the *Cancionero Musical de Gaspar Fernández*, one of the largest collections of villancicos that survive from seventeenth-century Spanish territories.³²

Villancicos, essentially devotional songs in the vernacular, were crucial to religious and civic festivals in the early modern Hispanic

30 Fernández only rarely indicates when a villancico is intended for an institution other than the cathedral (as he also composed for female and male religious orders), but as the chapelmaster of the cathedral it would be fair to assume that the vast majority of villancicos correspond with his duties at this institution.

31 Although biographical details about Fernández's life are still under debate, Omar Morales Abril has demonstrated that he is not the Portuguese singer and organist listed in Evora Cathedral in the 1590s, but a much younger musician born in the Guatemalan province. See Morales Abril, 'Gaspar Fernández: su vida y obras como testimonio de la cultura musical novohispana a principios del siglo XVII', in *Ejercicio y enseñanza de la música*, ed. by Arturo Camacho Becerra (Oaxaca: CIESAS, 2013), pp. 71–125.

32 Fernández's *Cancionero* consists of roughly 270 villancicos annotated in an autograph manuscript between 1609 and 1616. This document is held at the Archivo Histórico de la Arquidiócesis de Antequera Oaxaca (AHAAO). For more on Fernández's *Cancionero*, see Aurelio Tello, *Cancionero Musical de Gaspar Fernandes*, Tomo primero, *Tesoro de la Música Polifónica en México 10* (México: CENIDIM, 2001); Tello, *El Archivo Musical de la Catedral de Oaxaca: Catálogo* (México: CENIDIM, 1990); Margit Frenk, 'El Cancionero de Gaspar Fernández (Puebla-Oaxaca)', in *Literatura y cultura populares*, ed. by Mariana Masera (Barcelona: Azul and UNAM, 2004), pp. 19–35; and Morales Abril, 'Gaspar Fernández: su vida y obras'.

world. They were integrated into the customaries of Hispanic cathedrals, court chapels, and other religious institutions for the major feasts of the year, replacing or adding musico-poetic material to antiphons or responsories during the Mass, the Office Hours, or during processions.³³ The villancico was the only music genre performed during the liturgy where people could hear newly composed texts in the vernacular glossing the biblical narrative. The vast majority of villancicos were written in Spanish, but a significant number were also in conventional dialects to represent characters from diverse regional or ethnic origins, such as Basques, Portuguese, or Blacks, and occasionally included the use of native dialects to represent Indian natives in the New World.³⁴

Gaspar Fernández's collection includes four villancicos for Christmas written in Nahuatl and *mestizo*, a mixed dialect that imitates the way in which Nahuatl speakers pronounced Spanish. It would be speculative to propose possible conventions for the 'villancico en indio' subgenre with this limited number of pieces, however there are certain poetic and musical elements that relate suggestively to descriptions documenting the appropriation of Nahua performative rituals by the Novohispanic Catholic Church. The versification, for instance, shows the same procedure described by Jesuits Acosta and Morales where the texts are written in Nahuatl but follow the Castilian style of eight-syllable lines, in this case using assonant rhyme with enclosed or alternate rhyme schemes (i.e. abba and abab).³⁵ In three cases the text closes the first stanza with the octosyllabic elocution of two 'alleluias' in its *mestizo* form 'aleloya, aleloya'.

33 For the liturgical function of the sacred villancico see Álvaro Torrente, 'Functional and liturgical context of the villancico in Salamanca Cathedral', in *Devotional music in the Iberian World, 1450–1800: The Villancico and Related Genres*, ed. by Tess Knighton and Álvaro Torrente (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 99–148.

34 For more on the characteristics and taxonomies of 'villancicos de personajes' (also described as 'villancicos de remedo' or 'ethnic villancicos'), see Omar Morales Abril, 'Villancicos de remedo en la Nueva España', in *Humor, pericia y devoción: villancicos en la Nueva España*, ed. by Aurelio Tello (México: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 2013), pp. 11–38; and Esther Borrego Gutiérrez, 'Personajes del villancico religioso barroco: hacia una taxonomía', in *El villancico en la encrucijada: nuevas perspectivas en torno a un género literario-musical (siglos XV–XIX)*, ed. by Esther Borrego Gutiérrez and Javier Marín López (Kassel: Reichenberger, 2019), pp. 58–96.

35 In early modern Iberian poetry, the two main types of rhyme are perfect rhyme, when vowels and consonants are identical, and assonant rhyme, when only the vowels but not the consonants are identical.

Table 1 Meter and rhyme schemes in Fernández's 'villancicos en indio'.
The *coplas* are not included in this table.³⁶

Text	M	R	Translation
Jesús de mi gorazón,	8	a	Jesus of my heart,
no lloréis, mi bantasia.	8	b	do not cry, my fantasy.
tleycan timochoquilia	8	b	Why are you crying?
mis prasedes, mi apission.	8	a	My pleasure, my affection.
Aleloya, aleloya	8	x	Alleluia, alleluia.
Ximoyolali, siñola,	8	a	Rejoice, my lady,
tlaticpan o quisa Dios,	8	b	because on earth God has been born
bobre y equal bobre vos,	8	b	poor and equally poor like you,
no gomo el gente española.	8	a	not like Spanish people,
Aleloya, aleloya	8	x	Alleluia, alleluia.
Tios mío, mi gorazón.	8	a	My God, my heart,
Mopanpa nipaqui negual;	8	b	because of you I am happy,
amo xichoca abición	8	a	do not cry my affection.
que lloraréis, el macegual.	8	b	because you will make the humble Indian cry.
Xicochi, xicochi, conetzintle,	11	a	Sleep, sweet baby,
ca omizhuihuijoco in	11	a	because the angels have come to lull you,
angelosme.			
Aleloya, aleloya.	8	x	Alleluia, Alleluia.

The songs also share certain narrative and thematic qualities. All of them are monologues written in the first person singular and each one presents the main character taking part in the biblical passage of the Adoration of the Shepherds, although the shepherds in this Nativity scene are Indian natives. The central subject of 'Jesús de mi gorazón' and 'Tios mío, mi

36 All English translations of the texts in Nahuatl are drawn from Berenice Alcántara Roja's study and Spanish translation of Fernández's 'villancicos en indio', where she also discusses their meter and rhyme schemes. See Alcántara Rojas, "En mestizo y indio": Las obras con textos en lengua náhuatl del Cancionero de Gaspar Fernández', in *Conformación y retórica de los repertorios catedralicios*, ed. by Drew Edward Davies and Lucero Enríquez (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2016), pp. 53–84 (at 59–77); this article is followed by a detailed paleographic analysis of the music of Fernández's 'villancicos en indio'. See, Drew Edward Davis 'Las obras con textos en lengua náhuatl', pp. 85–98.

gorazón' is the weeping Child. Both refer to the child as 'mi gorazón' (my heart), a term that is paired with *mestizo* variants of 'afición' (or affection). In the *coplas* of 'Jesús de mi gorazón' the shepherd tries to distract the Child showing him the mule and the ox in the stable, and seemingly ignoring divine providence he asks, 'What is your affliction, my love? / Why are you crying?' or insists 'I do not know why you suffer'. Then the shepherd expresses deeper fondness for the Child comparing him to a beautiful rose (*rosa*), a pearl (*noepiholloczin*), with jade (*nochalchiula*), and a lily flower (*noasossena*). The symbolism of these objects seems obvious, especially if compared to Nativity paintings from the same period that interpret the Child's tears as an anticipation of his pain and suffering on the Cross: lilies, which were traditionally associated with the Virgin, function as an emblem of chastity and purity, but also of Christ's resurrection; pearls were used to symbolize the Virgin's milk from her breast as well as her tears at the Crucifixion; and roses were prominently displayed to represent Christ's blood in the Passion.³⁷ In the same context it is possible that jade — which was a fundamental component in Mexica burial artifacts and sacrificial offerings — could have been associated with the sacrifice of Christ.

The music of Fernández's villancicos reflect the current stylistic procedures of the genre, which is somewhat hinted in Morales' description. Villancicos are typically scored for four, five, or more voices, offering bold contrasting sonorities between the *estribillo* (refrain) written for all voice-parts, and the solo or duo texture for the *coplas* (verses). The cathedral's minstrels joined the vocal ensemble for the performance of villancicos. Upper voices were typically doubled by shawms and sackbuts, the lower voice was doubled with the *bajón*, or dulcian, and the continuo ensemble could include organ, harp, and vihuela. There is no evidence for the use of native percussion instruments by church musicians in seventeenth-century New Spain.

Fernández used various compositional devices to enhance the narrative, such as the selection of meters or modes, the use of syncopations,

37 Pearls were also associated with wealth, especially after maritime jewels harvested in the Spanish Caribbean entered the global market, transforming their role in the imperial economy. For more about pearls in the aftermath of Spanish imperial expansion see Molly A. Warsh, *American Baroque: Pearls and the Nature of Empire, 1492–1700* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2018), pp. 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.5149/northcarolina/9781469638973.001.0001>

hemíolas, dance-like rhythms, as well as alternate polyphonic and homophonic textures. 'Jesús de mi gorazón' is set for five voices in triple meter with a final on F. It opens with a melodious duet for the Tiple 2 (second treble) and Alto parts. The clear and sustained enunciation of the name 'Jesús' — to whom the Indian speaks directly — and the soothing effect of parallel thirds and sixths is interrupted by a sharp sonority for the closing phrase 'no llorés' (do not cry), providing a distinctive effect for the Indian's plea. Then, a brief ascending sequence by step for the reiteration of the words 'mi bantasia' suggests the improvisatorial character of the Spanish instrumental *fantasía*. But the most prominent element in the context of this essay is the insistent short-long rhythmic pattern and the static melodic contour built around the note c which dominate the second part of the *estribillo*; this section is developed in imitative polyphony and repeats after each *copla*. The sudden shift to a homorhythmic pattern sung by all voices provides a sonorous contrast for the only verse that is fully written in Nahuatl, and it is quite possible that here Fernández tried to emulate the rhythms associated with ceremonial dancing patterns, the intervallic possibilities of the *teponaztli*, and the effect of a collective performance through the successive expansion of the initial phrase, as sung by the Tenor, to all voices in imitation.

The image of an Indian moved by the tears of the Child appears again in 'Tios mio, mi gorazón'. The main character is described as a *macehual*, which in Nahuatl means a humble Indian laborer. In this scene, listeners can imagine a poor Indian contemplating the Child in the manger and trying to soothe him with his words. The Indian tells the Child that, although he is full of joy at the infant's birth, the child's tears will make him cry. In this case the central verse ('do not cry my affection') is set with a distinctive descending chromatic tetrachord in the minor mode, a musical gesture associated with the lament. This motive is successively imitated by each voice in the polyphonic section, suggesting not only the movement of tears rolling down from the child's eyes, but also the character's impossibility to restrain himself from feeling such a tender sorrow.³⁸

38 For more about the intimate character of this villancico see Chávez Bárcenas, 'Villancicos de Navidad y espiritualidad postridentina en Puebla de los Ángeles a inicios del siglo XVII', in *El villancico en la encrucijada: nuevas perspectivas en torno a un género literario-musical (siglos XV–XIX)*, ed. by Esther Borrego Gutiérrez and Javier Marín-López (Kassel: Reichenberger, 2019), pp. 233–258 (at 255–256).

Tiple 2
 Je - sós de mi go-ra - zón, no llo - réis, no llo - réis,
 Alto
 Je - sós de mi go-ra - zón, no llo - réis, no llo - réis, mi ban-

10
 Ti 2
 mi ban-ta - sí - a, mi ban-ta - sí - a, mi ban-ta - sí - -
 A
 ta - sí - a, mi ban-ta - sí - a, mi ban-ta - sí - a, ban-ta - sí - a.

18
 T
 Tley-can ti - mo - cho - qui - li - a, mis pra - se - des mi a - pi -

26
 Ti 1
 Tley - can ti - mo - cho - qui - li - a, tley - can ti - mo -
 Ti 2
 - - Tley - can ti - mo - cho - qui - li - a, tley - can
 A
 Tley - can ti - mo - cho - qui - li - a, tley - can
 T
 ssión.
 B
 Tley - can ti - mo - cho - qui -

Example 2.1 'Jesús de mi gorazón', mm. 1–31. [Villancico en] mestizo e indio a 4 [1610], AHA AO, CMGF, ff. 58v–59. Although the original text was written in *chiavette* clefs, this excerpt was not transposed down a fourth in consideration to conventional vocal registers.

Christ's tears in the manger were symbolically associated with his suffering in the passion in order to encourage a deeper reflection about the liturgical meaning of the Nativity. This theology is clearly reflected in the characters' compassionate attitudes shown in 'villancicos en indio', which contrast radically with the rustic or popularizing portrayals of other characters from diverse regional or ethnic origins, also known as 'villancicos de personajes'. The disparity between Indians and Blacks is particularly notorious since 'villancicos en negro' or *negrillas* are characterized by humorous depictions of African subjects celebrating the birth of Christ with much noise and vigor and a limited dominion over their language, their voice, or their body.³⁹ It should be said that other subgenres of 'villancicos de personajes' also make use of literary conventions for the creation of comic stereotypes, representing Gypsies or Muslims as dishonest, Basques or Galicians as ingenious and rustic, or Portuguese as treacherous or narcissistic. Nonetheless, the intimate and contemplative nature of 'villancicos en indio' allowed for the portrayal of Indians as melancholic neophytes, recognized for their empathy, innocence, and poverty.

This is evident as well in the lullaby 'Xicochi conetzintle' set to a text in Nahuatl that translates 'Sleep, sweet baby / because the angels have come to lull you, / Alleluia, alleluia'. This exceptional text does not conform with the octosyllabic verse-line that was identified in early-modern Spanish poetry as 'verses of lesser art'. Instead, as noted by linguist Berenice Alcántara Rojas, the text follows the structure and syntax of 'classical Nahuatl' as used by friars and erudite Indians for

39 As I have demonstrated elsewhere, however, despite the stereotypical comic representation of African slaves in 'villancicos de negros', they also include subversive messages that challenged early modern assumptions of racial difference and gave voice to free and enslaved workers of African descent in seventeenth century New Spain. The recent study by Nicholas R. Jones also demonstrates that African characters portrayed in Spanish literary works very often act and speak with agency, destabilizing the cultural, linguistic, and power relations of the Spanish elite, which offers a compelling revised perspective about the use of the Afro-Hispanic pidgin in early modern Spanish literature. See Chávez Bárcenas, 'Singing in the City of Angels: Race, Identity, and Devotion in Early Modern Puebla de los Ángeles' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Princeton University, 2018), pp. 163–200; and Nicholas R. Jones, *Staging Habla de Negros: Radical Performances of the African Diaspora in Early Modern Spain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 2019), pp. 4–26.

the composition of Christian texts.⁴⁰ Such treatment of the language provides yet another element to distance Indian shepherds from the typical comic or rustic character of 'villancicos de personajes'.

In setting the text, Fernández maintained the distinctive short-long rhythmic pattern noted earlier, here sung homorhythmically from the beginning to the end. The setting for four voices opens with the Tiple 2 introducing the word 'xicochi' (sleep) with a half note, a whole note, and a dotted whole note in triple meter (C3). The other three voices repeat this pattern in elision creating a soothing effect that results from the combined sounds of 'chi' and 'xi-co' and vice versa (mm. 4–7). This is particularly effective with the pronunciation of the fricative consonant 'xi' as 'shi' every downbeat which together with the short-long rhythmic pattern evoke the comforting shushing sound of someone who tries to calm an infant while patting him or her on the back. This euphonious effect is carried over the static harmonic sound of a C major chord, which is sustained for the whole passage through the constant repetition of single notes creating an almost hypnotic state while the text insistently repeats "sleep, sleep, sleep".

One element that is significantly different from descriptions of Nahua performative rituals, however, is that the principal characters in these villancicos are not the elegant elite portrayed in traditional Nahua dances, but marginalized Indians of lower social rank — perhaps because these characters were more compatible with the Christian image of the humble shepherd promoted by post-Tridentine theologians. This is especially evident in 'Ximoyolali siñola', which provides an exceptional image of these characters by associating the humble conditions of Christ's birth with the poverty of Indian natives, only to be contrasted with Spanish wealth.

This final villancico portrays an Indian shepherd inviting the Virgin to celebrate the feast of Christmas with a larger group of natives, which includes singing and dancing in the traditional Nahua style. The text opens with the Indian's exhortation 'Rejoice, my Lady, / because on earth God has been born' ('Ximoyolali, siñola, / tlatīcpan o quisa Dios'). The Indian describes Jesus as 'bobre y equal pobre vos, / no gomo el gente española', or 'poor, and equally poor like you, not like Spanish

40 Alcántara Rojas, "En mestizo y indio", pp. 59.

people', underlining the evident disparity between Christ and the Spanish population, while privileging Indian poverty for its similarity to that of the child and his mother. It is significant that these verse-lines are the only ones written in *mestizo*, so it is the only section that non-Nahuatl speakers would be able to understand. They also constitute the core of the villancico, as this section elaborates in imitative polyphony and repeats after each *copla*. In other words, the intense contrast between Spanish wealth and Indian poverty becomes the central theme in a villancico written in Nahuatl, though executed in a way that is perfectly discernible by all listeners.

Example 2.2 'Xicochi conetzinle', mm. 1-14. Otro [villancico] en indio [a 4, 1614], AHA AO, CMGF, ff. 217v-218r.

Such emphatic attention towards Indian poverty recalls Loyola's exaltation of humility and poverty as necessary conditions for eternal salvation, especially as they relate to Christ's birth. As thoroughly explained in his *Spiritual Exercises*, 'in order to imitate Christ our Lord better and to be more like him here and now', one ought to lower and humble oneself and 'choose poverty with Christ poor rather than wealth'.⁴¹ From this perspective, the Indian shepherd serves as a better role model for society than the Spanish or the Mexica elite, because his marginal condition allows him to experience Christ's humility and suffering with greater empathy. But this startling analogy also reflects the conflictive theological and economic interest of the Spanish imperial regime with regard to the native population. The sympathetic image of Indian laborers displayed in the most popular feast of the year must have been particularly significant in a city like Puebla that kept an ever-increasing number of Indians and Africans working in exploitative conditions in order to support local industries.

Allegories of Nahua Song and Dance

Other literary sources relate closely to the novel portrayals of native characters in 'villancicos en indio', especially two poetic renditions associated with celebrations promoted by the Society of Jesus. These are dramatized Nahua song and dance numbers — which from this time on are consistently identified by authors as *tocotines* — incorporated into larger literary works to allegorize the participation of the native population in major Christian festivals in the New World. The first is *Los Silgueros de la Virgen*, a pastoral novel published in 1620 by Francisco Bramón, a Jesuit priest born in New Spain; the latter, *Vida de San Ignacio*, an anonymous sacred drama written for the entrance of Archbishop Francisco Manso y Zúñiga to Mexico City in October 1627. The poetic attributes of these works are clearly inspired by sixteenth-century chronicles of Nahua rituals and therefore relate to certain musical features found in Fernández's villancicos, especially those that evoke the drumming sound of the *teponaztli* and the *huéhuetl*.

41 Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises and Selected Works*, ed. by George E. Ganss (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), pp. 160.

Bramón, for instance, dramatizes the preparation and celebration of the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin using a great variety of poetic, literary, and dramatic genres around the Marian theme, including apologetic dialogue, emblem poetry, the narrative of triumphal arch designs, religious drama, as well as references to song, dance, and instrumental music. The third section of this work consists of a sacramental play that honors the Virgin's triumph by showing the heartfelt acceptance of the Christian faith by the Mexica people.⁴² This play is attributed to the shepherd Anfriso, one of the main characters of *Los Silgueros* and whose name functions as an anagram of Francisco, allowing thus for the complete projection of Bramón not only as a humble shepherd in the Marian feast but as the dramatist of the play within a play.⁴³

Anfriso's play concludes with a final dance or *fin de fiesta* to represent the Mexicas celebrating both the triumph of the Virgin and her arrival in the New World. The figure of a young and gallant character wearing lavish garments made of gold and feathers serves as an allegory for the Reino Mexicano (Mexican Kingdom). The Nahuatl elite is represented by six principal *caciques* of noble lineage dancing together with the Reino Mexicano and its vassals; they all wear rich Mexica vestments with flowers and instruments on their hands.⁴⁴ Bramón then provides a detailed description of the *teponaztli* and the *huehuetl* that includes aspects about their physical appearance and the materials they are made of; he also clarifies whether they are played with bare hands or with mallets and mentions their tuning possibilities, which together serve to reconstruct the sonority of ceremonial drumming. Only after the attributes of these instruments have been presented do the Reino Mexicano and the Nahuatl elite enter to express their plural entity by way of dance. At this point Anfriso warns the reader that the dance cannot be fully grasped in writing because it is only communicated with 'pleasant rounds, reverential gestures, entrances, intersecting motions, and promenades', which were marvelously displayed by the Mexica dancers 'who excelled and left behind the art, and gave enough

42 Francisco Bramón, *Auto del triunfo de la Virgen* (México: [n.p.], 1620), ff. 130r–161r.

43 Metadrama was a popular dramaturgical device in Spanish Golden-Age *comedia* to blur the boundaries between fiction and reality.

44 Bramón, *Auto*, f. 157r.

evidence that they were moved and animated by the zeal of the sacred enjoyment and triumph of the one who was conceived without original sin'.⁴⁵ Suddenly a group of skilled musicians sung the verses: 'Mexicas, dance! / Let the *tocotín* sound! / Because Mary triumphs / With joyous happiness!'⁴⁶

In this allegorical ceremonial dance, the entire Mexica people is seen joyfully converted and moved by the arrival of Catholicism, as represented by the triumphant Virgin. The Marian dance is no stranger to the hybrid character of past Nahua-Christian performances, which attempted to soften the effects of the Conquest with the display of Indian converts joyfully celebrating the intervention of divine and historical characters.

The *tocotín* that appears at the end of the first act of *Vida de San Ignacio*, however, delivers an entirely different message. In the Jesuit play, before the dance begins, an angel expresses his desire to reverence the humble *tocotín* because he *now* knows how much Heaven appraises the poor and humble Indians 'since in the end, for Indians too / the wings that eclipsed the beautiful light / of the Divine Seraphim / were closed [lit. crossed]' or, to put it simply, because Christ also sacrificed himself for the sake of the Indians.⁴⁷

The contrasting character of this *tocotín* is fully appreciated in the text that exhorts the Indians to dance. The opening stanza reads, 'Moan, Mexicas, / *caciques* moan, / under the heavy burdens / that so meekly you suffer', elevating the suffering condition of Indian workers and setting the tone of the long lament that follows.⁴⁸ The subsequent stanzas critically expose the labor crisis that caused the staggering decline of the native population in the late sixteenth century. In the past, the text continues, 'forty thousand Indians came out to dance', but in the future

45 Ibid., ff. 157v–158r.

46 Ibid., f. 158r.

47 *Vida de San Ignacio de Loyola. Comedia Primera* (c. 1627), cited in Edith Padilla Zimbrón, 'El *tocotín* como fuente de datos históricos', *Destiempos*, 14 (2008), 235–249 (at 238).

48 *Vida de San Ignacio* in Padilla Zimbrón, 'El *tocotín*', 239–240. The opening verses of this *tocotín* were clearly molded after the *tocotín* included in *Los Silgueros* by Bramón, not only for the imitation of the hexasyllabic *romancillo* form but also for the opening exhortation of the Indian population identified as '*mexicanos*'. The *romancillo* form consists on hexasyllabic or heptasyllabic verses with assonant rhyme in the even lines.

people will have to ask what Indians looked like because none of them will survive.⁴⁹ The image of Mexicas dancing while carrying heavy loads is compared again with an ideal better past, when the burdens were not excessive and were distributed among more people. Today, however, 'an Indian is like a camel, / he is loaded until he dies / and he dies dancing / like the warrior dancer [*matachin*]'.⁵⁰

The contemptuous and undeniably subversive tone of this *tocotín* exposes a clear political intention that performances like these could have, especially when witnessed by church and royal authorities during a public festival. This time, the main purpose in allegorizing native ceremonial practices does not seem so much to engage the native population themselves, but to heighten awareness about the exploitative conditions endured by natives, especially for the new appointed archbishop who had just arrived. The text of the *tocotín* continues a tradition inherent in Ignatian theology and echoed in 'villancicos en indio' that exalts the Christian virtues of poverty and suffering by associating the impoverished conditions of Indian workers with that of Christ. This dramatic panegyric to honor the life of Saint Ignatius asks participants to experience in their flesh the unpleasant consequences of the Conquest as mirrored in the suffering of Christ.

Conclusion

The interest in the preservation and appropriation of Nahua song and dance practices as a tool for conversion was motivated by the idea that the strong collective effect of singers, dancers, and percussionists could be rechanneled for the promotion of Christian devotion. The chronicles that document these efforts show the emergence of novel musico-poetic genres that take roots in early modern Spanish lyric poetry and devotional singing traditions of the Hispanic Catholic Church. A close reading of these narratives allows a richer understanding of the effect of hybridized sacred music in colonial contexts.

The extremely scarce musical sources restrict the possibility of further establishing connections with Nahua ceremonial practices. Nonetheless,

49 *Vida de San Ignacio* in Padilla Zimbrón, 'El tocotín', p. 244.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 246.

Fernández's 'villancicos en indio' show a deliberate attempt to create an Indian affect, aided by specific musical devices that suggest the sonority of native performative practices. Audible Nahua influences must have triggered the imagination of attentive listeners during the liturgy, casting a new light on the post-Tridentine desire to harness the affective power of music and reaffirm the place of the sensuous in religious rituals.

The persistent representation of Nahuas as poor or humble suffering workers in villancicos and sacred dramas alike shows that while the main purpose of such representations was to appeal to the native population, they also served as a political tool to talk back to the exploitative practices toward workers and enslaved labor and to critique the stunning demographic decline of the native population. These texts emphasized the humanity of Indian characters, which was originally shaped after the figure of biblical shepherds, so that poverty and humility could give voice — a Christian voice, that is — to the native people.

3. Performance in the Periphery: Colonial Encounters and Entertainments¹

Patricia Akhimie

Early modern English narratives of encounter have a soundtrack in which singing, playing, speeches, and dancing accompany other forms of communication and exchange: offered gifts, and shared meals. Even on the mysterious island in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1623), music signals and shapes moments of cross-cultural contact.² Shipwrecked by the powerful and vengeful Prospero (the deposed Duke of Milan), King Alonso of Naples and his party of Italian courtiers find themselves at the

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- 1 This essay was completed with the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.
 - 2 Shakespeare's play has repeatedly been read as representing cross-cultural and, specifically, colonial contact; see, for example Barbara Fuchs, 'Conquering Islands: Contextualizing *The Tempest*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 48.1 (1997), 45–62, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2871400>; William M. Hamlin, 'Men of Inde: Renaissance Ethnography and *The Tempest*', *Shakespeare Studies*, 22 (1994), 15–44; Paul Cefalu, 'Rethinking the Discourse of Colonialism in Economic Terms: Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Captain John Smith's Virginia Narratives, and the English Response to Vagrancy', *Shakespeare Studies*, 28 (2000), 85–119, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781403973658_2; Jace Weaver, 'Shakespeare among the "Salvages": The Bard in Red Atlantic Performance', *Theatre Journal*, 67.3 (2015), 433–443, <https://doi.org/10.1353/tj.2015.0109>; Deborah Willis, 'Shakespeare's *Tempest* and the Disclosure of Colonialism', *Studies in English Literature*, 29.2 (1989), 277–289, <https://doi.org/10.2307/450475>; Kelsey Ridge, "'This Island's Mine": Ownership of the Island in *The Tempest*', *Studies In Ethnicity & Nationalism*, 16.2 (2016), 231–245, <https://doi.org/10.1111/sena.12189>; John Wylie, 'New and Old Worlds: *The Tempest* and Early Colonial Discourse', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 1.1 (2000), 45–63, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649369950133485>

mercy of the spirits of the island, who operate under Prospero's control and Ariel's command. When the Italians finally encounter the island spirits, they first hear a 'solemn and strange music' and then receive a seemingly transparent gesture of welcome: a banquet and a 'gentle' dance.

Solemn and strange music, and PROSPERO on the top (invisible). Enter several strange shapes, bringing in a banquet, and dance about it with gentle actions of salutations, and inviting the King etc. to eat, they depart.

[...]

ALONSO. What harmony is this? My good friends, hark!

GONZALO. Marvellous sweet music!

ALONSO. Give us kind keepers, heavens! What were these? [...]

GONZALO. If in Naples

I should report this now, would they believe me?

If I should say I saw such islanders

(For certes, these are people of the island),

Who, though they are of monstrous shape, yet note

Their manners are more gentle, kind, than of

Our human generation you shall find

Many — nay almost any.

[...]

ALONSO. I cannot too much muse

Such shapes, such gesture and such sound, expressing

(Although they want the use of tongue) a kind

Of excellent dumb discourse.³

The courtiers are quick to interpret the music and movements as welcoming gestures from the island's inhabitants. They find the performance fantastic, but not unfamiliar, remarking on the strange stories they have read in travelers' tales even as they comment on the 'monstrous shape' and 'dumb discourse' of the 'people of the island'. Yet as soon as King Alonso determines that it is safe to accept these gestures of welcome at face value — 'I will stand to and feed' — and to

3 William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan, rev. edn (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2011), act 3, scene 3, lines 18–39.

partake of the banquet, the tenor of the music and performance changes drastically.⁴

Thunder and lightning. Enter ARIEL, like a harpy, claps his wings upon the table, and with a quaint device the banquet vanishes.

ARIEL. You are three men of sin, whom destiny,
That hath to instrument this lower world
And what is in't, the never-surfeited sea
Hath caused to belch up you, and on this island
Where man doth not inhabit — you 'mongst men
Being most unfit to live — I have made you mad

[...]

*He vanishes in thunder. Then, to soft music, enter the shapes again and dance with mocks and mows, and carry out the table.*⁵

The sudden change and the accusations that follow — as Ariel demands that Alonso take responsibility for his role in the theft of Prospero's dukedom — drive Alonso and his companions to a kind of temporary madness, a desperate guilt. Their willingness to accept the spirits' music, dance, gestures of welcome, and offered banquet as genuine is also proven to be imprudent. Ariel decries their presumptuousness in imagining that they are welcome, wanted, and forgiven for past crimes anywhere, least of all on an island where they are strangers. This kind of reversal — a gentle welcome turned hostile assault — is not Shakespeare's invention, nor is the centrality of music and sound to the tableau.

When early modern English travelers relate their exchanges with the people they have met in far-flung places, they frequently include descriptions of music both familiar and strange, performed by both foreign visitors and Indigenous peoples. As with Alonso and his companions, however, the presence of music and its seemingly transparent meanings may enable perilous miscommunications. Incidents that we might describe as failures of musical interpretation or sudden alterations of meaning in musical exchanges proliferate in

4 Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, 3.3.50.

5 *Ibid.*, 3.3.53–82.

reports of English and European encounters in the Americas. In this chapter, I argue that the English carried with them an epistemology of musical meaning predicated on the ways that music functioned in European entertainments, particularly those associated with the outdoors and with English country estates.

The term 'entertainment', both a synonym for performance and the name of a specific genre of dramatic performance in early modern England, recurs frequently in episodes of colonial encounter that involve music, performance, dance, and other such gestures. Importantly, 'entertainment' has an inherent instability; as an exchange it points directionally both up and down the social scale from high to low and from low to high. The primary denotative meaning is provision: monarchs, lords, and masters make provision for those under their protection, whether material or financial, providing money, goods, food, land, or shelter for servants, soldiers, and livestock. To entertain is to retain service and repay that service with worldly care. Yet to entertain is also to provide amusement, courtesy, and welcome; and in this case entertainment is often offered by the recipients of patronage or largesse to those monarchs, lords, and masters, as a token of love and loyalty. Entertainment describes the offer of hospitality, especially banquets, or the offer of pretty speeches, music or dance. Entertainment thus became the name for a dramatic performance offered as part of a larger gesture of welcome for an elite guest at court or at a country estate.

When the term entertainment is used to describe an exchange between parties of unequal status, it serves to demonstrate a hierarchical relationship understood and accepted by all. When used to describe an exchange between parties of uncertain relative status, it becomes part of a language of conduct, deployed as an interpretive and argumentative strategy. This is true not only in the context of the country house entertainments, transcripts and descriptions of which circulated in printed prose accounts, and in which aristocratic hosts vied for political power and royal favor, but also in the colonial periphery where the term appears frequently in accounts of exchanges between the English and others, including Indigenous groups, in promotional literature about the Americas.⁶ These two kinds of texts share in a discursive field that

6 Promotional literature functioned to inform readers about the landscape and peoples of the 'New World' in an effort to entice new investors and settlers to travel

is at once green, pastoral, and open, and also violent, political, and contested.

Promotional literature emerges at the moment of the English colonial enterprise in Virginia and elsewhere in the Americas and the rise of aspirational and nationalist travel literature, such as Richard Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations* (1589), which attempted to demonstrate that England was the rival of other European nations in its voyaging and colonizing exploits. In the 'New World', there were no clear answers to questions such as who could lay claim to land and the power that came with it, and who was the guest and who the host; thus the familiar yet complex custom of welcome-as-performance takes on a structural function. Certainly, English aristocrats, ambassadors, and monarchs were accustomed to receptions on this level when they traveled to the continent or received important guests from abroad. As I will show, however, it is in the context of English experiences in North America that the familiar form of the country house entertainment as welcome takes on a crucial importance. There, participants struggled to establish their relative social identities and their relationships to a new and newly contested land against barriers of extreme linguistic and cultural difference. Under such circumstances, music became an unreliable narrator, presumed to communicate where words failed, and often foiled by incommensurate cultural assumptions.

to the colonies. The boundaries of the genre are amorphous, encompassing text and image, print and manuscript, personal and corporate interests, and an incredibly varied history of textual transmission and cross-pollination. For an introduction to the genre of promotional literature, see Howard Mumford Jones, *O Strange New World. American Culture: The Formative Years* (New York: Viking Press, 1964); Paul Lindholdt, 'The Significance of the Colonial Promotional Tract', in *Early American Literature and Culture: Essays Honoring Harrison T. Meserole*, ed. by Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola (Newark: University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1992), pp. 57–72 and Richard Beale Davis, 'The Literary Climate of Jamestown Under the Virginia Company, 1607–1624', in *Toward a New American Literary History: Essays in Honor of Arlin Turner*, ed. by Louis J. Budd, Edwin H. Cady, and Carl L. Anderson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1980), pp. 36–53. Paul Lindholdt has compared promotional literature to 'the prospectus printed by modern corporations to attract potential investors', noting that reading audiences would have included not only investors, adventurers, and potential settlers, but also armchair travelers seeking diversion and education in stories about foreign lands (pp. 58–62). Studies of promotional literature tend to focus on a single tract, author, or theme rather than on the genre as a whole, while promotional tracts or 'literature' are considered valuable by some only as historical documents, and unreliable ones at best.

Entertainment on the English Estate

Within English territories, royal and aristocratic country house entertainments were nationalist in their aims. At these lavish events aristocrats welcomed royal guests to their country homes with multi-day celebrations that included dramatic and musical performance, dance, speeches, exchanges of gifts, feasting, and hunting; entertainments were staged in various locations — indoors and out, in green spaces, rooms of state, and purpose-built structures such as arbors, man-made lakes, and temporary buildings.⁷ These performances involved multiple authors and a myriad of actors, some professional, and many local amateurs. As the king or queen traveled the countryside, ritually claiming the lands and estates that made up his or her kingdom, the aristocrats, servants, city, and country folk who participated in these gestures of welcome could perform fealty and, at the same time, present their suits for patronage or blessing to the monarch in person; the sheer cost of such a welcome entertainment was a testament to the loyalty and love of the monarch's subjects.

The following example and illustration, from *The Honorable Entertainment at Elvetham* (1591), recounts the elaborate festivities

7 On the genre of country house entertainments see Suzanne Westfall, "'What Revels Are in Hand?': Performances in the Great Households', in *A Companion to Renaissance Drama*, ed. by Arthur Kinney (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 266–280, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470998922.ch20>; Malcolm R. Smuts, 'Progresses and Court Entertainments', in *A Companion to Renaissance Drama*, ed. by Arthur Kinney (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 281–293, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470998922.ch21>; Muriel Bradbrook, *The Rise of the Common Player: A Study of Actor and Society in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962); Bruce Smith, 'Landscape with Figures: The Three Realms of Queen Elizabeth's Country-house Revels', *Renaissance Drama*, 8 (1977), 57–109, <https://doi.org/10.1086/rd.8.41917137>; Helen Cooper, 'Location and Meaning in Masque, Morality and Royal Entertainment', in *The Court Masque*, ed. by David Lindley (Manchester and Dover, NH: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 135–148; and Cedric Brown, 'Milton's *Arcades*: Context, Form, and Function', *Renaissance Drama*, 8 (1977), 245–274, <https://doi.org/10.1086/rd.8.41917144>. More recent studies include *The Progresses, Pageants, and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I*, ed. by Jayne Elisabeth Archer and Sarah Knight (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Gabriel Heaton, *Writing and Reading Royal Entertainments: From George Gascoigne to Ben Jonson* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), and Elizabeth Kolkovich, *The Elizabethan Country House Entertainment: Print, Performance and Gender* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781316460818>

offered by Edward Seymour, the Earl of Hertford, for Queen Elizabeth on the occasion of her visit in September 1591 (see Fig. 3.1).⁸



Fig. 3.1 Hand-colored woodcut depicting the water pageant at Elvetham, *The Honourable Entertainment Given to the Queenes Majestie in Progresse at Eluetham in Hampshire, 1591*. The Royal Collection / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020.

8 The authorship of the Entertainment at Elvetham is uncertain but, as with most entertainments, many hands contributed to and collaborated on its production. Ulrich Suerbaum offers a full account of the events of the Entertainment at Elvetham in 'Performing Royalty. The Entertainment at Elvetham and the Cult of Elisa', in *Word and Action in Drama: Studies in Honour of Hans-Jürgen Diller on the Occasion of His 60th Birthday*, ed. by Günter Ahrends, Stephan Kohl, Joachim Kornelius, and Gerd Stratmann (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher, 1994), pp. 53–64, while H. Neville Davies unpacks the complex publication history of related documents in the introduction to the Entertainment in *John Nichols's The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth I*, ed. by in Jayne Elisabeth Archer, Elizabeth Clarke, and Elizabeth Goldring, 5 vols. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), III, pp. 563–569. For more on the Entertainment at Elvetham, see Harry H. Boyle, 'Elizabeth's Entertainment at Elvetham: War Policy in Pageantry', *Studies in Philology*, 68.2 (1971), 146–166; Curtis Breight, 'Realpolitik and Elizabethan Ceremony: The Earl of Hertford's Entertainment of Elizabeth at Elvetham, 1591', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 45.1 (1992), 20–48, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2862830>; Ernest Brennecke, 'The Entertainment at Elvetham, 1591', in *Music in English Renaissance Drama*, ed. by John H. Long (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968), pp. 32–56; Albert Chatterley, 'Thomas Watson and the "Elvetham Entertainment"', *Notes and Queries*, 47.1 (2000), 37–40, <https://doi.org/10.1093/nq/47.1.37-b>, and Neville H. Davies, '"To Sing and Revel in These Woods": Purcell's The Fairy-Queen and The Honourable Entertainment at Elvetham', *Renaissance Journal*, 1.6 (2002), 3–14.

This day hir maiestie dined with her Nobles about hir, in the room of Estate, new builded on the hill side, aboue the Pondes head. There sate below hir, many Lords, Ladies, and Knightes [....] The manner of seruice, and abundance of dainties, I omit vpon iust consideration, as also the ordinance discharged in the beginning of dinner, and variety of consorted musick al dinner time.

Presently after dinner, the Earle of Hertford caused a large Canapie of Estate to bee set at the pondes head, for hir maiestic to sit vnder, & to view some sportes prepared in the water [....]

At the further ende of the ponde, there was a Bower, close built to the brinke thereof; out of which there went a pompous arae of sea-persons, which waded brest-high, or swam, till they approached neere the seate of hir maiestie. *Nereus*, the prophet of the sea, attired in red silke, & hauing a cornerd-cap on his curld head, did swimme before the rest, as their pastor and guide. After him came fiue Tritons brest-high in the water, all with grisly heades, and beards of diuers colours and fashions, and all fiue cheerefully sounding their trumpets.⁹

The festivities not only showcase the Earl of Hertford's loyalty to the queen, but also his bid for a favored position in her court — enacted before all those who were present to see the exchange in September 1591, as well as those who read about the event and saw the accompanying illustrations in the pamphlet, which appeared in print later the same year. In this example, the Queen is feted with feasting, music, and performance in structures — a room of state, a canopy by the pond, and the pond itself, a body of water enhanced with stage design to become a performance space — all built especially to receive her. The sounds the narrator describes as accompanying the dinner (despite voicing the decision to 'omit' these details) include the unspecified 'variety of consorted music' and the blast of 'ordinance discharged'.¹⁰ These sounds of more ordinary tribute to an elite guest who is both urbane courtier and military leader, then give way to a more bizarre display. The Earl has 'some sportes prepared' — a water pageant in which Queen Elizabeth's

9 *John Nichols's*, III, pp. 581–582.

10 For a sustained treatment of the music performed in the Entertainment at Elvetham see Brennecke, 'Entertainment at Elvetham, 1591'. For more on music in country house entertainments, see Ross Duffin, *Some Other Note: The Lost Songs of English Renaissance Comedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 123–134, and 'Framing a Ditty for Elizabeth' (forthcoming).

power is demonstrated by her dominion over not only the people on her lands, but also a ‘pompous arae of sea-persons’, strange creatures with ‘grisly heads’ and multi-colored beards, who nevertheless approach the Queen to give her tribute by ‘cheerfully sounding their trumpets’. Within the genre of the court masque or country house entertainment, this kind of submissive gesture from exotic or otherworldly beings — even Nereus himself — is a familiar move indicating the reach and potency of royal power. The narrator goes on to emphasize the congruence between sound and scene: ‘The melody was sweet, and the show stately’, and seems to find reassurance in this balance, a representation of the fair exchange of service for benevolent rule.¹¹

It is important to note that, while in comparison with colonial holdings, the country estate stands as the epitome of domestic stability, even the green space of the English country house with its private forest or chase can be understood as a contested space. The green space of the chase serves to determine the boundaries of the country estate and by extension the nation as culturally imagined. And it follows that within this boundary region or interstitial space, borders are in fact ill-defined, constantly under negotiation. Welcome is never a done deal, though through performances such as that described above, ‘grisly’ strangers may seem to be domesticated and rendered docile subjects of the Queen.

European Entertainments Abroad

The forms and gestures of country house entertainments traveled well and, from the perspective of European travelers, they arrived overseas intact. In the periphery, entertainments consisting of a variety of activities including conversation, feasting, music, dancing, impromptu and scripted dramatic interludes, and hunting, are crucial in conveying welcome.¹² The complexity of the ritual reflects the complexity of the intended (and unintended) messages that welcome delivers. Entertainments contain messages of respect as well as threats

11 *John Nichols's*, III, p. 582.

12 For more on the role of music and musicians in particular in episodes of travel, exploration, and encounter, see Ian Woodfield, *English Musicians in the Age of Exploration* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995) and Bryan White, “‘Brothers of the String’: Henry Purcell and the Letter-Books of Rowland Sherman”, *Music and Letters*, 92.4 (2011), 519–581, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ml/gcr116>

of dominance, gestures that emphasize commonly held beliefs as well as defiant proclamations of cultural difference. ‘The voiage made by Sir Richard Grenville, for Sir Walter Raleigh, to Virginia, in the yeere 1585’, for example, describes an encounter between two rival powers, the English and the Spanish, on Hispaniola. Here, banqueting, polite conversation, music, exchange of gifts and an invigorating hunt on horseback are all incorporated into a ceremony of welcome and hospitality.¹³ The subtext of the meeting, however, is that of parley between two competing military and colonizing powers in the very theater where the contest waxed hottest.

The Spanish Gouvernor receiued [Sir Richard Grenville] very courteously, and the Spanish Gentlemen saluted our English Gentlemen, and their inferiour sort did also salute our Souldiers and Sea men, liking our men, and likewise their qualities, although at the first, they seemed to stand in feare of vs, and of so many of our boats, whereof they desired that all might not land their men, yet in the end, the courtesies that passed on both sides were so great, that all feare and mistrust on the Spanyardes part was abandoned.

In the meane time while our English Generall and the Spanish Gouvernor discoursed betwixt them of diuers matters, as of the state of the Country, the multitude of the Townes and people, and the commodities of the Iland, our men prouided two banquetting houses couered with greene boughs [...] and a sumptuous banquet was brought in serued by vs all in Plate, with the sound of trumpets, and consort of musick wherwith the Spanyardes were more then delighted [...] The Spanyardes in recompense of our curtesie, caused a great heard of white buls, and kyne, to be brought together from the Mounteines, and appointed for euery Gentleman and Captaine that woulde ride, a horse ready saddled, and then singled out three of the best of them to be hunted by horsemen after their manner, so that the pastime grew very plesant, for the space of three houres [...] After this sport, many rare presents and gifts were giuen and bestowed on both partes, and the next day wee plaied the Marchants in bargaining with them by way of trucke and exchange for diuers of their commodities, as horses, mares, kyne, buls, goates, swine, sheepe, bul hydes, sugar, ginger, pearle, tabacco, and such like commodities of the Iland.

13 The account was printed in Richard Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations* (London: Bishop and Newberie, 1589). Grenville transported Ralph Lane and a group of colonists to Virginia in 1585, leaving from Plymouth in April and arriving in the largely Spanish-controlled Caribbean in May before sailing on to the English colony.

The 7. day we departed with great good will from the Spanyardes from the Iland of Hispaniola: but the wiser sort do impute this greate shew of friendship, and curtesie vsed towardes vs by the Spanyards rather to the force that we were of, and the vigilancie, and watchfulnes that was amongst vs, then to any hartly good will, or sure friendly intertainment.¹⁴

By describing the general and governor 'discours[ing]' about various topics including the successes of Spanish colonizing efforts on Hispaniola and sharing in that bounty, the author of this account suggests that the English may (and should) someday be capable of hosting such an event in their own territories. The English offer of a banquet and music is 'recompensed' by the Spanish hunt in a battle for the title of best 'curtesie'. The peaceful meeting between two rival powers implies an agreement or concession that the Spanish have firm control of the island. However, there is also the suggestion that the two groups are competing, though subtly, to decide who is the guest here and who the host. Following a mutual display of force in which the English are apparently at an advantage, the *détente* becomes frivolity, then an oddly commercial bartering for goods and staples. Finally, the narrator asserts that this display of good will has only been possible because of the English party's greater numbers. In this instance, entertainment reflected both the rivalry of two maritime powers, and the specific power dynamics of this one encounter. Under different circumstances, the groups might well have exchanged fire, rather than pleasantries. This knife's edge (conflict or camaraderie) is present in many accounts of entertainments.

In this account, however, it is clear that the forms of the entertainment and its meanings (however complex, multi-layered, or contradictory) are familiar to all. Each major figure (the general and the governor) clearly represents a European nation, acting as an extension of that nation's policies, positions, and customs. In such episodes, the social hierarchy is anything but static, and the outcome of the careful negotiation of participants' relative roles is not predetermined as it is in country house entertainments.

14 Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, pp. 734–735. David Quinn identifies the Spanish general as Captain Rengifo de Angulo in *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584–1590: Documents to Illustrate the English Voyages to North America under the Patent Granted to Walter Raleigh in 1584*, 2 vols (London: Hakluyt Society, 1955), I, p. 163. Hakluyt's source for this episode was an anonymous journal written by someone traveling aboard Grenville's flagship, the *Tiger* (see Quinn, *The Roanoke Voyages*, p. 178, n. 4).

Entertainment in the Periphery

In meetings between English and Indigenous people in the Americas, the forms of welcome also appear familiar, at least to English chroniclers, while the meanings of welcome are in fact far from clear. While inattentive to the diversity of Indigenous cultures in the vast area of North Eastern America, often indiscriminately using the term 'Indian', authors of promotional literature are exacting in their descriptions of the gestures and activities that constituted face-to-face interactions between English colonists and peoples like the Algonquian of coastal New England and the Powhatans of the Mid-Atlantic.¹⁵ In the de Bry engraving that illustrates the 'Arrival of the Englishmen' (see Fig. 3.2) in the 1590 edition of Thomas Harriot's *A Brief and True Report*, an English ship approaches a Virginia shore.¹⁶ Thomas Hariot traveled to

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- 15 Peter Mancall offers a concise introduction to interactions between English settlers and Indigenous people throughout the early modern period in 'Native Americans and Europeans in English America, 1500–1700', in *The Origins of Empire*, ed. by Nicholas Canny (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 328–350, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198205623.003.0015>
- 16 Hariot's patron, Sir Walter Raleigh, supported his work as a scientist and mathematician. Hariot, in turn, used his skills to aid Sir Walter Raleigh in his colonial ventures. Critical attention to Hariot and to *A Briefe and True Report* expanded, particularly in the wake of Stephen Greenblatt's influential essay, 'Invisible Bullets: Renaissance Authority and Its Subversion', *Glyph*, 8 (1981), 40–60. Ed White provides a useful overview of scholarship on Hariot in 'Invisible Tagkanyough', *PMLA*, 120.3 (2005), 751–767, <https://doi.org/10.1632/003081205x63840> but see also Robert Fox, ed., *Thomas Hariot and His World: Mathematics, Exploration and Natural Philosophy in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315236155>; Mary Campbell, 'The Illustrated Travel Book and the Birth of Ethnography: Part I of De Bry's America', in *The Work of Dissimilitude: Essays from the Sixth Citadel Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Literature*, ed. by David Allen and Robert White (Newark: University of Delaware Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1992), pp. 177–195; Andrew Hadfield, 'Thomas Harriot and John White: Ethnography and Ideology in the New World', in *The Arts of 17th-Century Science: Representations of the Natural World in European and North American Culture*, ed. by Claire Jowitt and Diane Watt (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 199–216; Andrew Hadfield, 'Bruited Abroad: John White and Thomas Harriot's Colonial Representations of Ancient Britain', in *British Identities and English Renaissance Literature*, ed. by David Baker and Willy Maley (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 159–177; William Hamlin, 'Imagined Apotheoses: Drake, Harriot, and Raleigh in the Americas', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 57.3 (1996), 405–428, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jhi.1996.0022>, and Peter Stallybrass, 'Admiranda narratio: A European Best Seller', in *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (Charlottesville: Published for the Library at the Mariners' Museum by the University of Virginia Press, 2007), pp. 9–30. De

Virginia in 1585, as part of Grenville's voyage. His short *Briefe and True Report* (1588), was first published to attract support for future voyages to Virginia. It was then reissued as part of Theodor de Bry's 'Grand Voyages', accompanied by large engravings based on the paintings of John White, for which Hariot wrote short captions. In the image, the small English vessel has successfully passed through dangerous shallows where the wrecks of other ships are visible; its passengers look toward the small island of Roanoke, while one sailor at the prow holds up a cross. On the island, Indigenous people engage in hunting, farming, and fishing, and a small raiding party faces off against a group of armed defenders. The historical record of early encounters between English and Algonquian people on and around Roanoke is both conflicted and one-sided, marginalizing the experiences of Algonquian men and women, forgetting the Algonquians' own elaborate social codes around diplomacy and intercultural exchange, and erasing much of the violence of these meetings.¹⁷ Instead, the image conveys a simplistic narrative about a series of unsuccessful European attempts to reach land and make peaceful contact with the Indigenous people who have gone on with their pastoral lives, undisturbed by the voyages of exploration that are, for the English, a great national enterprise. Now that moment of successful contact is imminent, as the caption describes:

Wee came vnto a Good bigg yland, the Inhabitante therof as soone as they saw vs began to make a great an[d] horrible crye, as people which [n]euer befoer had seene men apparelled like vs, and camme a way makinge out crys like wild beasts or men out of their wyts. But beenge gentlye called backe, wee offred them of our wares, as glasses, kniues, babies, and other trifles, which wee thought they delighted in. Soe they stood still, and perceuinge our Good will and courtesie came fawninge vppon vs, and bade us welcome. Then they brought vs to their village

Bry's edition of *A Briefe and True Report*, originally published in French, German and Latin as well as English, has been made readily available to modern scholars and students in two facsimile editions: the 1972 facsimile reproduces the English edition, and a 2007 facsimile from The Mariner's Museum with notes and critical essays reproduces the Latin edition.

- 17 For an in-depth look at the history of Algonquian and English relations at Roanoke, see Michael Leroy Oberg, *The Head in Edward Nugent's Hand: Roanoke's Forgotten Indians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), <https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812203417>, and Seth Mallios, *The Deadly Politics of Giving Exchange and Violence at Ajacan, Roanoke, and Jamestown* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2006).

in the iland called, Roanoac, and vnto their Weroans or Prince, which entertained vs with Reasonable curtesie, althoug[h] the[y] wear amased at the first sight of vs. Suche was our arriuall into the parte of the world, which we call Virginia.¹⁸



Fig. 3.2 'The Arrival of the Englishmen in Virginia', Thomas Hariot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (Frankfurt: Typis Ioannis Wecheli, 1590), Plate II. Call #: STC 12786. Reproduced with permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library, CC BY-SA 4.0.

The English 'arrival' quickly becomes their 'welcome' and 'entertainment' by the 'inhabitants'. This move refigures what might be understood as an English invasion or conquest of an existing society as a positive reception: a welcome arrival, in a mode familiar from country house entertainments. The inhabitants' 'amazement' is then written as the awe of the subject viewing an approaching monarch or lord, allowing the author to imply that the English are now in possession of this new land.¹⁹ In contrast with the entertainment shared with the

18 Thomas Hariot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (Frankfurt: Typis Ioannis Wecheli, 1590), Plate II.

19 On English discourse surrounding Indigenous people's presumed naivety in the reception of theatrical and other performances, see Miles Grier, 'Staging the Cherokee *Othello*: An Imperial Economy of Indian Watching', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 73.1 (2016), 73–106, <https://doi.org/10.5309/willmaryquar.73.1.0073>

Spanish, recounted in 'The voiage made by Sir Richard Grenville', the suggestion of a meeting of equals who are also rivals is missing. Here, the exchange of gifts is one-sided, from the English to the Algonquians, and the gifts themselves are not 'rare presents' but 'wares' and 'trifles'. In a more commercial transaction, gifts elicit welcome from an otherwise non-committal or hostile group. There is also the suggestion that this commercial exchange favors the English, whose gifts are not as valuable as the welcome they receive.

Contradictions abound in this encounter, seemingly readable as 'welcome'.²⁰ The inhabitants are somehow infantile — distracted and swayed by trifles — and also mature hosts capable of 'reasonable curtesie'. This episode introduces an account, not of similarities between Algonquian and English culture, but of cultural differences in both manner of living and forms of entertainment (feasts and banquets). Communication would seem to be impossible between these culturally disparate groups — the Algonquians greet the English with 'crys' and antics that the English describe as inarticulate, bestial, insane. Nevertheless, the passage offers complex semantic interpretations of these noises; they cry 'as people which never before had seen men appaeled like us'.²¹ Moments later, moreover, despite language barriers and other stark differences, the English respond with 'calls' of their own. Miscommunication is recast as clear agreement, with the Algonquians

20 For scholarship on the relationship between conflict and performance (read as both spectacle and dissimulation) in colonial New England and New France, see Matt Cohen, 'Lying Inventions: Native Dissimulations in Early Colonial New England', in *Native Acts: Indian Performance 1603–1832*, ed. by Joshua David Bellin and Laura L. Mielke (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), pp. 27–52, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1df4g7c.4>; John H. Pollack, 'Native Performances of Diplomacy and Religion in Early New France', in *Native Acts: Indian Performance 1603–1832*, ed. by Joshua David Bellin and Laura L. Mielke (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), pp. 81–116, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1df4g7c.6>, and Olivia Bloechl, 'Wendat Song and Carnival Noise in the Jesuit Relations' in *Native Acts: Indian Performance 1603–1832*, ed. by Joshua David Bellin and Laura L. Mielke (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), pp. 117–143, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1df4g7c.7>. See also, Richard C. Rath, *How Early America Sounded* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).

21 Bruce Smith delivers an extended reading of the sounds and sights described in the passage in 'Mouthpieces: Native American Voices in Thomas Harriot's "True and Brief Report of...Virginia"', Gaspar Pérez De Villagrà's "Historia de la Nuevo México", and John Smith's "General History of Virginia"', *New Literary History*, 32.3 (Summer 2001), 501–517, <https://doi.org/10.1353/nlh.2001.0046>

'perceiving' English 'courtesie' and returning their own with legible gestures such as 'fawninge' and 'bidding welcome'.

Presenting a subjective interpretation of events as objective and authoritative, Hariot's account denies the possibility that this encounter between English and Indigenous people might be anything other than amicable. This kind of translation, it should be understood, is a show of power; the move is familiar from country house entertainments.

In a second episode, this one also included in Hakluyt's massive anthology of accounts of travel and exploration, *Principall Navigations* (1589), a group of English settlers in Virginia fail to interpret a song correctly, hearing welcome where they should hear warning:²²

In the euening [...] about three of the clocke we heard certaine sauages call as we thought, Manteo, who was also at that time with mee in boate, whereof we all being verie glad, hoping of some friendly conference with them, and making him to answere them, they presently began a song, as we thought in token of our welcome to them: but Manteo presently betooke him to his peece, and tolde mee that they ment to fight with vs: which word was not so soone spoken by him, and the light horseman ready to put to shoare, but there lighted a vollie of their arrowes amongst them in the boate, but did no hurt God be thanked to any man. Immediatly, the other boate lying ready with their shot to skoure the place for our hand weapons to lande vpon, which was presently done, although the lande was very high and steepe, the Sauages forthwith quitted the shoare, and betooke themselues to flight: we landed, and hauing fayre and easily followed for a smal time after them, who had wooded themselues we know not where.²³

The English party hope to have 'friendly conference' with the group of Indigenous people, who the narrator refers to as 'Savages', and they interpret their song optimistically, as a 'token of [...] welcome'. They are warned, however, by the Indigenous interpreter traveling with them,

22 This discourse (*An account of the particularities of the employments of the Englishmen left in Virginia by Sir Richard Greeneuill vnder the charge of Master Ralfe Lane Generall of the same, from the 17. of August, 1585. vntill the 18. of Iune 1586. at which time they departed the Countrie: sent, and directed to Sir Walter Raleigh*) is authored by or for Ralph Lane and is most probably based on a report to Raleigh on Lane's command of the fort on Roanoke Island 1585–1586 and the loss of the colony (see Quinn, *The Roanake Voyages*, p. 255, n. 3). The report was published in *Principall Navigations* in 1589, but the original manuscript is not extant. Manteo, the Indigenous man mentioned in the passage, acted as Lane's interpreter.

23 Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, p. 741.

a man whom they call Manteo, that the song is not a welcome but a warning, 'that they mean to fight', and are immediately attacked with a volley of arrows.²⁴ The passage recounts a series of sounds: calling out, singing out, and the volley of arrows flying and landing (a sound we can almost hear, but that is not described). The misinterpretation of the call and the song as welcome establishes a failure of communication between the two groups from the first instance of contact. That failure is not recognized in the written account but rather compounded. The marginal note, for example, reads, 'a conflict begun by the savages', enacting yet another unfounded interpretative act through the claim that the exchange was in fact a 'conflict', that the arrows which did not 'hurt' anyone represented an act of violence thwarted only by chance, and that this supposed 'conflict' was unprovoked and instigated solely by the 'savages'. Seen through a different lens the passage recounts not a welcome but a series of warnings: the call, the song, and the volley of arrows. Yet the English fail to receive any one of these messages; the fact that the arrows do not injure anyone is read as a miracle rather than as a warning shot. Here, music occasions miscommunication on multiple levels, both in the moment of encounter and exchange as well as in the record and rehearsal of the moment in printed prose. The episode as recounted reflects the unfounded certainty that English travelers and colonists will always know what music means, that music signals the universal language of entertainment, that the very presence of song counteracts any perceived threat.²⁵

24 For studies of Indigenous interpreters including Manteo, see Scott Manning Stevens, 'Mother Tongues and Native Voices: Linguistic Fantasies in the Age of the Encounter', in *Telling the Stories: Essays on American Indian Literatures and Cultures*, ed. by Elizabeth Hoffman Nelson and Malcolm A. Nelson (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), pp. 3–18; Alden Vaughan, *Transatlantic Encounters: American Indians in Britain, 1500–1776* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Michael Leroy Oberg, 'Between "Savage Man" and "Most Faithful Englishman"': Manteo and the Early Indian-English Exchange', *Itinerario*, 24 (2000), 146–169, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0165115300013061>; and Michael Leroy Oberg, *The Head in Edward Nugent's Hand: Roanoke's Forgotten Indians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

25 Dylan Robinson examines a similar paradigm in his critique of intercultural music, 'Intercultural Art Music and the Sensory Veracity of Reconciliation: Brent Michael Davids' Powwow Symphony on the Dakota Music Tour', *MUSICultures*, 39.1 (2012), 111–128, questioning 'public discourses that champion intercultural art music as the quintessential medium of reconciliation' (113). As he argues, while the collaboration that intercultural music entails is frequently regarded as heralding a new era of 'harmony and "understanding"', and the dissolution or crossing of

Authors of promotional literature and travel narratives about the Americas sought to evaluate the status of Indigenous peoples, but found that their customs of music, dress, diet, and even land-ownership and use were a mystery. In the colonial context, not only the power of entertainment to elevate practitioners by establishing their civility, but also the very meanings of such gestures come under direct pressure. Established correlations between behaviors and social status did not comfortably apply either for settlers (who might well be self-made men rather than gentlefolk) or for Indigenous people whose customs and hierarchies differed (sometimes greatly) from English ones. Ultimately, wherever the term 'entertainment' recurs, whether in domestic or foreign contexts, we can attend to such uncertainty around social position and relation, questioning those authors who employ 'entertainment' rhetorically in order to imply settled relations where in fact turmoil and contest persist.

borders, the efficacy of such works must be interrogated: 'it is important to ask precisely what particular methods of collaboration enact a crossing of borders in the first place and how such border crossings effect the everyday lived encounters of those musicians who take part in performance or those audience members who witness the performance' (113–114). For more on the decentering of settler colonial sensory experience, see also, Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.5749/j.ctvzpv6bb>

4. 'Hideous Acclamations'

Captive Colonists, Forced Singing, and the Incorporation Imperatives of Mohawk Listeners

Glenda Goodman

Just before dawn on 29 February 1704 the Puritan minister of Deerfield, MA awoke suddenly. The town was under attack: 'the enemy came in like a flood upon us', he later wrote.¹ They managed to 'break open doors and windows with axes and hatchets' and, 'with painted faces and hideous acclamations', stormed into the room where John Williams rested with his wife.² Struggling out of bed, Williams reached ineffectually for a weapon, fearing for his family but unable to protect them or himself. The same scene transpired throughout the town. The attack was devastating: fifty Deerfield residents dead and over one hundred taken captive.

The raiders consisted of a combined force of more than 250 Abenaki, Pennacook, French, Wendat (Huron), Mohawk, and Iroquois of the Mountain fighters, and the attack stemmed from multiple causes: for the Abenakis and Pennacooks, pushing back against aggressive English

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- 1 John Williams, *The Redeemed Captive, Returning to Zion. A Faithful History of Remarkable Occurrences in the Captivity and Deliverance of Mr. John Williams*, ed. by Edward W. Clark (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1976 [1707]), p. 44. Williams's account was widely read and repeatedly republished. Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, "'The Redeemed Captive' as Recurrent Seller: Politics and Publication, 1707–1853", *New England Quarterly*, 77.3 (2004), 341–367.
 - 2 Williams, *Redeemed Captive*, p. 44.

settler colonial incursions into Native land; the French also aimed to curtail English expansion in North America (this particular attack a local expression of the War of Spanish Succession); and the Hurons of Lorette, the Mohawks of Kahnawake, and the Iroquois of the Mountain joined the raid to support their French allies and to take captives to bring back to their own communities.³ Capturing Williams in particular was a primary aim because his identity as a Puritan minister made him valuable: possessing him would prove to be of great political use in the post-capture negotiations. But the causes and consequences of the attack would be sorted out later. First, the survivors of the attack were forced to travel north, wading through thick snow and fording icy rivers toward New France.

On the sixth day of their journey, a Sunday, Williams was allowed to lead the other captives—his frightened, much reduced congregation—in worship. Seeking to make sense of their trauma, he chose to read from Lamentations 1:18. ‘The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled against his commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow. My virgins and my young men are gone into captivity’.⁴ But the captors, Mohawk Indians, interrupted the impromptu service with taunts, mocking especially the congregation’s paltry singing. As Williams later recounted, they ‘were ready some of them to upbraid us because our singing was not so loud as theirs’.⁵ What could have been a reassuring opportunity of worshipful communal psalmody became a reminder of their vulnerability.

Williams’s account captures a fraction of the sonic terror of captivity. His and other narratives by those seized by Native Americans in Northeast North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries call attention to the use of music in conjunction with torture, detention, war, and violence more broadly. Recent work has investigated the

3 On the identities of the attackers, as well as the local and imperial motivations behind the attack, see Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, *Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), pp. 1–2. On the attack and its aftermath for Williams, particularly regarding his unsuccessful attempts to recover his daughter Eunice, see John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America* (New York: Knopf, 1995).

4 Williams, *Redeemed Captive*, p. 51. On Puritans’ Biblical allegorization of captivity experiences, see Andrew Newman, *Allegories of Encounter: Colonial Literacy and Indian Captivities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), pp. 19–74.

5 Williams, *Redeemed Captive*, p. 51.

forced listening by those imprisoned by U.S. forces during the global war on terror, the traumatizing soundscapes of military actions, and the experiences of those (including children) whose lives are conditioned by the sonic fearscape that becomes mundane in situations of prolonged violence.⁶ Scholars are no longer unaware of the fact that music and sound are complicit in doing serious harm. Whether the spectacular violence of military strikes, the anticipation and alarm stemming from the sounds of proximal fighting, the psychologically wounding songs used for torture, the wailing of the distressed, or the pompous strains of a victory march, the myriad types of weaponized sound are part of modern conflict cultures.⁷

Although scholars have focused largely on the soundscapes of modern war, sonic agony pervades earlier accounts of violence as well. North American colonial warfare habitually entailed auditory attacks. For instance, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) warriors were particularly feared because of their war cries, and the arrival of guns with Europeans introduced a terrifying new element to the North American soundscape. Fearsome sounds pervade the violent spectacle of the Deerfield raid, with the crashing of doors smashed in with axes, intimidating yelling and 'hideous Acclamations', the screams of the terrified residents and the utterances of the dying. Even though the availability of recording and amplification in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has resulted in a proliferation of the ways in which sound and music can thus be utilized, the damaging use of music and sound is not unique to modernity.

Studies of music and modern violence have focused on the inescapability of sounds, and the colonial period provides numerous

6 Suzanne G. Cusick, "'You are in a place that is out of the world...': Music in the Detention Camps of the 'Global War on Terror'", *Journal of the Society for American Music*, 2.1 (2008), 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1752196308080012>; Steve Goodman, *Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and the Ecology of Fear* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/7999.001.0001>; J. Martin Daughtry, *Listening to War: Sound, Music, Trauma and Survival in Wartime Iraq* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199361496.001.0001>; Jim Sykes, 'Ontologies of Acoustic Endurance: Rethinking Wartime Sound and Listening', *Sound Studies*, 4.1 (2018), 35–60, <https://doi.org/10.1080/20551940.2018.1461049>

7 Margaret Kartomi, 'Toward a Methodology of War and Peace Studies in Ethnomusicology: The Case of Aceh, 1976–2009', *Ethnomusicology*, 54.3 (2010), 452–483, <https://doi.org/10.5406/ethnomusicology.54.3.0452>

examples of this phenomenon. This chapter focuses on a different aspect of musical coercion: not forced listening but forced singing. Unlike the psychological and physical damage that a sensory onslaught entails, non-voluntary singing introduces a different order of powerlessness: the curtailing of agency over one's voice in order to deliver a forced performance, a spectacle for the audition of others. Power, identity, violence, and skill combine potently in such performances. Music and sound mediated all manner of interactions between colonists and Native Americans, from diplomacy to trade to sacred worship to warfare, but captives' forced singing represents musical encounter *in extremis*.⁸

Compulsory musical performances interest me because they reveal the tenuousness of colonial power while also exposing the limits of Western music epistemologies. The recognition of Native American listeners' power initiates a new line of inquiry for scholars who are invested in understanding the sonic construction of racial difference. It does so by calling attention to scenarios in which a white colonialist hegemony cannot be assumed.⁹ As a non-Native scholar investigating the profound cultural changes that transpired on North American soil in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, I find colonists' forced singing to be fruitful, if unusual, examples of musical enactments of identity.¹⁰ To understand such encounters, I seek to uncover both the experiences

8 Captive colonists' forced singing differ in both degree and kind from the variety of ways enslaved people of African descent were forced to sing and dance. Not only were the rationales behind the forced performances different, but the longevity and pervasiveness of the forced performance repertoire enslaved people were subjected to raises it to the level of biopolitics (and is thus unlike the situationally contingent individual experiences analyzed in this chapter). See Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Katrina Dyonne Thompson, *Ring Shout, Wheel About: The Racial Politics of Music and Dance in North American Slavery* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014).

9 Presumed white hegemony undergirds Jennifer Stoever's influential book, *The Sonic Color Line: Race and the Cultural Politics of Listening* (New York: New York University Press, 2016), p. 18, *passim*. On the ambiguities of listening in colonial contexts, see Ana María Ochoa Gaultier, *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Columbia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).

10 In positioning myself in relation to this work I endeavor to follow the recommendation from Native American and Indigenous Studies scholars to render motivations transparent and engage relationally with research subjects. See, for example, Margaret Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Contexts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), pp. 113–115.

of the captive singers and their captor listeners.¹¹ Although my access to Native musical epistemologies is limited, a bilateral approach is necessary in order to avoid a sensationalized depiction of Native American customs, particularly those that involved corporeal assault. Singing was frequently accompanied by acts of physical violence, yet the aim was not merely to inflict pain, nor to do so for the purpose of extracting information or confession. Rather, the ritual practices were aimed at aiding the incorporation of captives into Mohawk society and thus was a necessary part of Indigenous survivance.¹²

Captivity and Power

Both early modern Europeans and Native Americans had longstanding traditions of imprisoning and torturing people. Public punishment was part of penal systems in Europe, and pain infliction was ostensibly functional in that it accompanied interrogation. In these cases, spectacular pain stemmed from, and helped to reinforce, political power.¹³ Indigenous practices aimed at harnessing a different kind of power: the spiritual and social power of the community.¹⁴ Measured by the number and strength of its members, this power was compromised when they suffered a loss of life. Thus, Native Americans across the Northeast and into the Midwest placed a high priority on avoiding fatalities in battle. Replenishment was possible, however, by

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- 11 I use the designations 'captive' and 'captors' throughout this chapter, for although these are not labels that Haudenosaunee people used to denote their roles, the terms helpfully bracket a set of practices and power relations that set the conditions for the kind of singing this chapter analyzes.
- 12 'Survivance' is a neologism that combines survival and resistance, and speaks to Indigenous histories of surviving genocide while resisting narratives and policies aimed at marginalizing and assimilating Native peoples. Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives of Postindian Survivance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), p. xii.
- 13 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995 [1977]), p. 15. According to Foucault, in the eighteenth century torture came to connect power to truth: causing pain shifted from spectacles of punishment to the utility of interrogation.
- 14 Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), p. 30.

incorporating captives either through adoption or sacrifice.¹⁵ In this worldview, captivity meant something fundamentally different than European imprisonment: captives were not being punished; they were undergoing rituals through which their spiritual and social resources could be incorporated into the group. Moreover, this was not done lightly. Grief played a powerful role in Haudenosaunee ontology and was attended to through mourning practices, but if a family's anguish for a killed member could not be assuaged by customs, the female elder could command the village's young men to mount a raiding party to acquire a potential replacement.¹⁶

The need for new community members escalated horrendously in the seventeenth century. With European contact, Indigenous communities suffered massive population loss due to new pathogens against which they had no defense.¹⁷ Disease, plus increased competition for European trade, led to more frequent warfare, which itself was deadlier than ever because of recent access to guns. These combined factors led to a demographic crisis and spurred an unsustainable surge of captive taking in the mid-seventeenth century. Native groups attacked each other with increasing ferocity in their desperation to sustain their communities. The vicious cycle of what some scholars call 'mourning wars' subsided

15 Ibid. pp. 32–35, 66–68. Pauline Turner Strong suggests the term 'incorporation' is more appropriate rather than 'adoption' because it better reflects the process following captivity. Strong, 'Transforming Outsiders: Captivity, Adoption, and Slavery Reconsidered', in *A Companion to American Indian History*, ed. by Philip Deloria and Neal Salisbury (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), pp. 339–356, <https://doi.org/10.1111/b.9781405121316.2004.00002.x>. This chapter focuses on Mohawk captivity practices, but the taking of captives was widespread among Native American nations. James Axtell, 'The White Indians of Colonial America', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 32.1 (1975), 55–88, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1922594>; Brett Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance: Indigenous and Atlantic Slavery in New France* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), https://doi.org/10.5149/9780807838174_rushforth; Christina Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country: The Changing Face of Captivity in Early America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 101–126, <https://doi.org/10.1215/00141801-2010-070>

16 Once captured, the incorporation of a potential new member into the community depended in part on the demography and deportment of the captive. Women and children were more likely to be adopted, adult men to be ritually killed, and the decision was made by the female elders. On how 'requickening', or raising the dead, sustained the lineage, clan, and village by providing spiritual power, see Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, pp. 32–35.

17 Neal Salisbury, "'The Indians' Old World: Native Americans and the Coming of Europeans', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 53.3 (1996), 435–458, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2947200>

somewhat in the 1660s but did not fully lapse.¹⁸ Mohawks and other nations were under urgent demographic pressure to procure and successfully assimilate new members.

The process of incorporation entailed testing captives' aptitude for integration, in part by listening to the captives sing. While auditors tuned their ears for desirable qualities (such as strength and fortitude), for the captives such performances constituted a non-voluntary audition for inclusion in an unchosen community.

Today, scholars know about these practices from oral histories, from early ethnographic writings, from anthropologists who collaborated with Haudenosaunee individuals to rework those sources, from archeological studies, and from contemporaneous European accounts. This chapter makes use of the last category: captivity narratives and published pseudo-ethnological reports on Native American customs.¹⁹ A patchy historical record already hampers research into the music and sounds of colonial North America, and the sources considered in this chapter pose additional challenges.²⁰ The written sources are weighted with cultural biases, for not only were authors writing from perspectives that were unavoidably skewed by early modern ideas about savagery and civilization, but they were liable to sensationalize and exoticize accounts of Native American culture for their readers (who, it goes without saying, were almost certainly non-Native). In particular, published accounts by women or men who were taken and either redeemed or incorporated, a genre known as captivity narratives,

18 Susan Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2017), p. 88; Daniel K. Richter and James H. Merrell, eds., *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and Their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600–1800* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987), p. 20; Daniel Richter, 'War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience', in *American Encounters: Natives and Newcomers From European Contact to Indian Removal, 1500–1850*, ed. by Peter C. Mancall and James H. Merrell (New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 284–310.

19 On the necessary distinction between captivity narratives and 'ethnographic' information, see Yael Ben-Zvi, 'Ethnography and the Production of Foreignness in Indian Captivity Narratives', *American Indian Quarterly*, 32.1 (2008), 9–32, <https://doi.org/10.1353/aiq.2008.0007>

20 On dealing with difficult and/or missing archival sources and my own position as a non-Native scholar doing so, see Glenda Goodman, 'Joseph Johnson's Lost Gamuts: Native Hymnody, Materials of Exchange, and the Colonialist Archive', *Journal of the Society for American Music*, 13.4 (2019), 482–507, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1752196319000385>

must be read against the grain of the author's motivations. Being taken captive must have been terrifying and some authors sought authentically to represent their traumatic experiences. Yet such narratives also reflect trends in the literary marketplace in which they were published, and the fictional aspects of captivity narratives cannot be denied. Fabrication for the purposes of propaganda and self-justification abounded, and indeed fabricated details were part of what made the genre so popular during the early modern period. These narratives thematized encounters as dangerous, presenting readers with gripping accounts of exposure to Native people who were perceived as indelibly different. With vivid descriptions of ambushes, titillating details about torture, and repulsive information about cultural practices (particularly diet), this literature captivated non-Native readers by providing access to a world they could not otherwise apprehend.²¹

The subjugated captives and dominating captors who populated these narratives indicate a radical power imbalance that was a major component of the genre's appeal. As literature, these narratives present an inversion of expected colonial relations — and thus confirm that the more typical relations were in fact correct. Of course, those normative relations were a fantasy, one that was sustained by colonists and their metropolitan sponsors. Taken as historical sources, the captivity narratives provide modern scholars with evidence of how Native Americans vehemently and consistently maintained the cultural practices that the very sources pilloried.²² Because of the dynamics of power inherent to captivity narratives, this type of source contains instances in which colonists unwillingly confront their vulnerability as intruders. Being forced to

21 On captivity narratives' popularity and themes see Alden T. Vaughan and Edward W. Clark, eds., *Puritans Among the Indians: Accounts of Captivity and Redemption, 1676–1724* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1981); Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola and James Arthur Levenier, *The Indian Captivity Narrative, 1550–1900* (New York: Maxwell Macmillan International, 1993), pp. 10–17; Gordon M. Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600–1850* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2002), pp. 137–198. For a concise discussion of this literature, see Audra Simpson, 'Captivating Eunice: Membership, Colonialism, and Gendered Citizenships of Grief', *Wicazo Sa Review* (2009), 105–129 (pp. 108, 114), <https://doi.org/10.1353/wic.0.0031>

22 On the scholarly study of captivity narratives as historical sources as well as literature, see Newman, *Allegories of Encounter*, pp. 9–10.

participate in unfamiliar practices heightened captives' attention; in the case of coerced singing, their discomfort perhaps made authors more likely to try to describe their musical experiences — what and how they were compelled to sing. Finally, because the captives were made to sing in particular ways, the sources indicate the musical priorities of the captors. That is, not only do these sources provide accounts of singing, they also offer us glimpses of Haudenosaunee singing and listening practices.

Pierre-Esprit Radisson's lessons

Pierre-Esprit Radisson was in London in 1668 when he sat down to write, in English, about his youthful experiences in Native North America.²³ At the time of writing, Radisson had spent a decade voyaging around the St. Lawrence River Valley and the Great Lakes region as a fur trader and negotiator for the French. He was adept at fitting in with his various surroundings and was a gifted linguist — traits that made him particularly capable of adapting to the rough circumstances in which colonists in New France lived. In charmingly informal, sometimes idiosyncratic prose he laid out his multifarious experiences with Haudenosaunee, Sioux, and Cree peoples, starting with the earliest events in 1652, when he was captured, tortured, and adopted by a Mohawk family. Radisson had been young when he was taken captive, perhaps fifteen, and during his eighteen months with the Mohawk he successfully incorporated, becoming kin.²⁴

His story began in Trois-Rivières, the French name for a meeting place frequented by Algonquian and Haudenosaunee groups where the French established a small fur trading post in 1634. There, on a morning in late May 1652, Radisson went hunting for ducks with two friends whom he soon left due to a disagreement. Venturing alone, he knew he was a trespasser on Haudenosaunee ground and was watchful for the people whom both the French and their Algonquian allies feared:

23 Pierre-Esprit Radisson, *The Selected Writings, Volume 1: The Voyages*, ed. by Germaine Warkentin (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), pp. 11–12. According to Warkentin, Radisson likely learned English in when he was in New York, Boston, and London in the 1660s.

24 Radisson's birth year is unknown.

they were 'a wild nation called Iroquoites [Haudenosaunee], who for that time weare soe strong and so to be feared, that scarce any body durst stirre out either cottage or house without being taken or kild, save that he had nimble limbs to escape their fury', he told the reader.²⁵ Yet he blithely continued his hunt, only to stumble on the bodies of his two comrades on his return journey; soon thereafter he found himself surrounded by Mohawk men. They took him captive and began the journey back to their village, called Tionnontoguen, where he would be presented to a clan mother as a possible replacement for her deceased son.²⁶

Radisson's initial experiences exemplify the Mohawk captors' interest in incorporating captives through song. They began instructing him the second day of his captivity, starting with some words in their dialect, insisting that he pronounced everything correctly. They 'tooke delight to make me speake words of their language and weare earnest that I should pronounce as they', he wrote.²⁷ They taught him the songs they sang as they embarked on each day's journey. They encouraged him to sing French songs and listened attentively to his performance. 'They tooke an exceeding delight to heare mee', Radisson claimed about his singing, describing how when he 'sunged in French' his captors 'gave eares with deepe silence'.²⁸

Radisson's captors were preparing him for what would happen when they arrived in their village: running the gauntlet, torture, then adoption or death. Captives entered villages in a procession, staggering through a double-row gauntlet of women, men, and children who beat, kicked, and cut them until they reached the end. (The gauntlet provided grieving community members the opportunity to express rage through physical violence and taunting.) Ideally, captives were meant to sing as they entered. As the French Jesuit missionary and proto-ethnologist Joseph-François Lafitau noted of his time among the Kahnawake Mohawks from 1712 to 1717, captives sang 'their death song' while they entered the village. 'The people of the village' meet them, and 'from the

25 Radisson, *Selected Writings*, p. 115. Spelling and punctuation are original.

26 On the village's possible name see Radisson, *Selected Writings*, p. 127, note 66. Tionnontoguen was the largest and most important of the Mohawk's three main villages.

27 Radisson, *Selected Writings*, p. 122.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 123.

moment of the encounter, they [the captives] are stopped; and, while they sing their death song, all the rest of the villagers dance around them following the cadence of their song with their redoubled *hé, hés*, which they draw from the depths of their chests'.²⁹ After the entrance, the captives' ordeal continued: they were placed on scaffolds, where they stood for several days, exposed to assaults from community members with clubs, knives, firebrands, and teeth. At night the village children would taunt and further torment the captives, who were bound and helpless. This torture continued for the duration of time required for the clan mothers and village headmen to decide who would be adopted and who killed. Captives were expected to sing their death songs with a strong voice throughout.

Fortunately for Radisson, he survived the gauntlet and was adopted into a family. As was the common practice, his new mother named him after her deceased son. Radisson was renamed Orinha, 'which signifies ledd or stone'.³⁰ (Perhaps it was a coincidence that this name's meaning was the same as Pierre — Peter, or stone.) He referred to his family as mother, father, brother, and sisters. After a six-week probationary period his mother 'inquired me whether I was *asserony*, a French. I answering no, saying I was *panugaga*, that is of their nation, for which shee was pleased'.³¹ Having denied his French identity and testified to being Mohawk, he underwent a full adoption ceremony. Thenceforth he was part of the Bear clan. (He inherited his *otara*, or clan identity, from his mother, who was herself adopted; she had been born in a Huron-Wendat family, or as Radisson put it, 'shee was not borne in my fathers [sic] country, but was taken litle in the Huronits country'.³²) Radisson was now functionally kin.³³

29 Joseph-François Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times*, Vols. 1–2, ed. and trans. by William N. Fenton and Elizabeth L. Moore (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1974), II: 152. Many captivity narratives include accounts of the gauntlet, such as James Smith, *An Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Col. James Smith* (Lexington, KY: Printed by John Bradford, on Main Street, 1799), p. 7; William Walton, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Sufferings of Benjamin Gilbert and His Family* (Philadelphia; reprinted London: James Phillips, 1785), pp. 28–29.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 127.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 129.

32 *Ibid.*, p. 315, note 16.

33 Not all captives whose lives were spared experienced full adoption; some were enslaved. See Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance*, pp. 18–19.

After living with his family for nearly a year Radisson seized an opportunity to run away, only to be quickly recaptured and forced to undergo the rituals of torture he had previously been spared. Radisson understood what was expected of him: he knew to sing what he called his 'fatal song' when undergoing torture, otherwise they would 'make him quackle like a henne' — in other words, humiliate him. And sing he did, even as they burned him and plucked his nails. His adopted mother, whom he had betrayed but who wanted to reclaim him, encouraged him to keep singing through the torture. At the beginning of a second day of torture, Radisson wrote, 'I was brought back againe to the scaffold [...]. They made me sing a new, but my mother came there and made hold my peace, bidding me be cheerfull and that I should not die'.³⁴ Eventually his Mohawk family successfully petitioned to have him returned to them, and he recuperated in their longhouse for a month.

Radisson's narrative reveals two key instances in which music played a pivotal role. The first occurred on the journey to the village, when his captors taught him their songs and listened closely to him singing. This pedagogical instance allowed the captors to assess his viability for assimilation as well as his spiritual and physical fortitude. The second occurred on entering the village (the second time), when he sang his 'fatal song' during the torture.³⁵ In this instance of audition or trial, Radisson demonstrated what he had been taught and was carefully listened to by the elder women in order to determine whether he could be (re)incorporated.

The label 'pedagogy' might seem at odds with the terror and pain that accompanied Radisson's earliest days as a captive, but in fact other sources confirm that Native captors endeavored to teach European captives the correct ways to behave. John Williams, for instance, had to be shown how to use snow shoes, while others had to learn how to eat unfamiliar foods, to follow protocols of stealth or celebration depending on who was met on the trail, and how to conform to new rules of etiquette. Given the ceremonial role music played in the ritual of torture and incorporation, it is no wonder captors sought to instruct their neophytes. For his part, Radisson proved himself to be quite teachable, not only in music but other areas as well. The second day of his initial

34 Radisson, *Selected Writings*, pp. 134, 139, 141.

35 On death songs see Richard Cullen Rath, *How Early America Sounded* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 152–159.

capture, for instance, he described that the men encouraged him to 'be cheerfull or merry', and although Radisson was still traumatized from the capture ('my part I was both deafe and dumb', he wrote) he rallied and presented 'att least of a smiling countenance, and constraine my aversion and feare to an assurance'. His willingness to be affable indicated he had a pleasing temperament, encouraging his captors to believe him to be a promising candidate for adoption. They began treating him better, and the next day he was 'more and more getting familiarity with them, that I had the liberty to goe from cottage, having one or two by mee'. With greater physical freedom came more lessons, as his captors taught him Mohawk words, showed him how to row without over-exerting himself, and gave him other lessons. In short, in myriad ways the early days of Radisson's captivity entailed near-constant learning, his captors serving as teachers.

Radisson was attentive to what pleased his captors and anticipated their interest in hearing him sing. As he put it, 'They tooke a fancy to teach mee to sing; and as I had allready a beginning of their hoping, it was an easy thing for me to learn', noting that this was especially the case because he had heard the singing of 'our Algonquins', meaning French-allied Native Americans.³⁶ Imitating that style, perhaps in vocal timbre, rhythm, or melodic contour, Radisson performed well enough. His musical adaptability, added to his capacity to sing his own songs on command (as recounted above), endeared him to the Mohawks. Indeed, Radisson received unusually kind treatment; it was more common for captors to initiate captives into their new roles through physical assaults. As one captive wrote about a Seneca war party, the warriors 'stopped each his prisoner and made him sing, and cutt off their fingers, and slasht their bodys with a knife'.³⁷ Once Radisson proved himself to be an amenable student, the Mohawk men who had taken him were lenient.

Radisson's narrative reveals that singing played a pivotal role in key moments of his captivity, and his successful performance ensured his survival. On the trail and in the village, his acuity in deducing his captors' desires enabled him to adapt, personally and musically, to their expectations. Not all captives were able to summon such flexibility; Radisson's case shows the payoff of doing so. For their part, the Mohawks

³⁶ Radisson, *Selected Writings*, p. 123.

³⁷ Wentworth Greenhalgh, a New Yorker, made this report about an encounter in 1677. Quoted in Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, pp. 66–67.

who captured him, those who tortured him, and those who took him as kin, provided feedback with which Radisson was able to improve. They emphasized the importance of accurate pronunciation, made sure he possessed an adequate repertoire of songs, and encouraged him to summon the physical strength and will to keep singing under severe physical duress. Although coerced, Radisson's audition for his Mohawk family was also collaborative.

Torture, Mockery, and Death Songs

The graphic accounts of torture in captivity narratives were written to engross and horrify non-Native readers, not to capture the nuance of complex cultural traditions. Sensational descriptions of torture in the Jesuit *Relations*, for instance, clearly attest to the underlying motives of such accounts, as missionaries wrote explicitly of their wish for martyrdom.³⁸ Radisson's narrative also elaborates all manner of maiming, cutting, and burning, which he recounted in gory detail and a tone that is nearly gleeful, as if he wished to dismay and fascinate his reader.³⁹ Undergoing torture, he scarcely managed to deal with the pain and struggled to keep singing: 'they plucked 4 nails out of my fingers, and made me sing, though I had no mind att that time. I became speechlesse oftentimes'. Each day 'they made me sing a new', even as his injuries mounted.⁴⁰ Such accounts can be jarring for modern readers, but the torture served a purpose: to assess whether a captive was a good candidate for incorporation.

Who knows how Radisson actually performed and whether he was capable of singing his own French songs strongly and without

38 Emma Anderson, 'Blood, Fire, and "Baptism": Three Perspectives on the Death of Jean de Brebeuf, Seventeenth-Century Jesuit "Martyr"', in *Native Americans, Christianity, and the Reshaping of the American Religious Landscape*, ed. by Joel W. Martin and Mark A. Nicholas (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), pp. 125–158, https://doi.org/10.5149/9780807899663_martin; Paul Perron, 'Isaac Jogues: From Martyrdom to Sainthood', in *Colonial Saints: Discovering the Holy in the Americas, 1500–1800*, ed. by Allan Greer and Jodi Bilinkoff (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 153–168.

39 With the exception of the short passage quoted in this paragraph, I am choosing not to reproduce Radisson's description here in order to avoid replicating the sensationalizing tendency of the primary sources. I thank Olivia Bloechl for encouraging my impulse to be circumspect on this subject.

40 Radisson, *Selected Writings*, p. 141.

flinching. Such ideal performances were likely rare. But his account does confirm that captives were expected to sing a particular genre of music: death songs ('fatal songs'). These were songs that confirmed one's identity: 'ancestors' songs' that were imbued with an individual's spiritual power.⁴¹ Lafitau described this repertoire as melodically and rhythmically flexible, with long phrases that cadenced at the end of statements — musical parameters that allowed the singer to improvise lyrics. Those lyrics were defiant, conveying bravery and invoking one's community. According to Lafitau, captives 'sing of their high deeds against their tyrants. They try to intimidate them by threats. They call their friends to help to avenge them'.⁴² Another source described how a Haudenosaunee prisoner maintained control over his voice: 'While they were torturing him, he continued singing, that he was a Warrior brave and without Fear; that the most cruel Death could not shake his Courage; that the most cruel Torment should not draw an indecent Expression from him'.⁴³ Taunting the torturers was a key part of the death song. 'They insult their tormentors as if they did not know their business. They tell them in what way it is necessary to burn, to make the pain more acute', wrote Lafitau. The captive might even recount how he previously tortured his captors' own kin: 'They [the captive] enter into the most exact details of all that they have made them [the kinsman] suffer'.⁴⁴

The physical control and mental fortitude needed to transform cries of pain into mocking songs would be nothing short of virtuosic. Captors made use of ridicule as one of the modes of torture, particularly if the captive failed to perform adequately. Radisson referred to such a practice when he described captives being forced to make humiliating sounds ('quackle like a henne') if they could not bring themselves to sing. More broadly, mockery and goading were integral to Native American strategies of antagonism. English colonist Roger Williams, living with the Wampanoag and Narragansett Indians in southern New England, offered typical mocking phrases and dialogues in his *Key to*

41 Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians*, II: 159.

42 *Ibid.*, II: 160.

43 Cadwallader Colden, *The History of the Five Indian Nations of Canada* (London: Printed for T. Osborne, 1747), p. 136.

44 Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians*, II: 160.

the Language of America (1643). 'Are you afraid? Why feare you? I feare none'. And later on, he included the phrases 'A scorner or mocker. He scornes me'.⁴⁵ Lafitau described the importance of maintaining one's composure while withstanding taunts, including when the ridicule was in jest. At Kahnawake, he wrote, the Mohawks 'make fun of each other with marvellous success' in order to resolve tensions and grudges. This took the shape of a game: one individual would dance around, sing at, and ridicule his target with 'a surprising abundance of fine irony, witty sallies, amusing pleasantries, biting puns and ingenious plays on words' while the target 'obeys unresistingly' and never takes offense.⁴⁶



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Fig. 4.1 Plate 14 from Joseph-François Lafitau, *Moeurs des Sauvages Américains, Comparés aux Moeurs des Premiers Temps, Vol. 2* (Paris: Saugrain l'aîné, 1724): 'Tortures of captives in North America'. In the upper half of the plate the engraving shows the captive's mouth is open, indicating that he is singing. Image courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Public Domain, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b86029431/f339.item>

45 Roger Williams, *A Key to the Language of America* (London: Printed by Gregory Dexter, 1643), p. 178.

46 Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians*, I: 322.

Mocking accompanied deadly attacks and could substitute for physical violence. For instance, in early August 1676, during King Philip's War, the English colonists of Brookfield, MA were trapped in their church by an attacking force of Nipmuck Indians. For two days the Nipmucks bombarded the captives with arrows and with sound, as one of those present subsequently reported: the attackers were 'shotting and shouting [...] and blaspheming', 'reproaching us [...] and] scoffing at our prayers'. The attackers even stood outside the church and 'mocked saying, *Come and pray, and sing psalms*', then went further by mimicking English psalmody: they 'in contempt made a hideious noise *somewhat resembling singing*'.⁴⁷ Similar to how the Mohawk captors mocked John Williams and his captive congregation in 1704, the Nipmucks understood the power of demoralizing their enemy by targeting their sacred music.

Taunting captives was both an accompaniment to and an effective substitute for the infliction of physical pain. Captive colonists and missionaries were unnerved by the mockery; loins girded for physical punishment but receiving the verbal abuse instead, their identities were assaulted and they struggled to mount a meaningful defense. Being harangued was relatively benign, compared to extracted fingernails and other afflictions. But insults, flung at captives as they sang, weakened resolve and could signal to captives their singing's failure. As captive colonists struggled to comprehend the cause and stave off the consequence of mocking, they came to understand that the laughter was deadly serious.

John Williams's Ordeal

It is little wonder that the Mohawk captors ridiculed John Williams and the fragmented Deerfield congregation's psalm singing during their icy trail-side sabbath service in 1704. The survivors likely sang with

47 Thomas Wheeler, *A Thankefull Remembrance of Gods Mercy to Several Persons at Quabaug or Brookfield* (Cambridge, MA: Samuel Green, 1676), p. 7. Emphasis in original. Fuller analysis of this incident in Glenda Goodman, "'But They Differ from Us in Sound": Indian Psalmody and the Soundscape of Colonialism, 1651–75', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 69.4 (2012), 793–822, <https://doi.org/10.5309/willmaryquar.69.4.0793>. On other examples of mocking, including, unusually, French colonists imitating Armouchiquois Indians' singing, see Michaela Ann Cameron, 'Singing with Strangers in Seventeenth-Century New France', in *Empire of the Senses: Sensory Practices of Colonialism in Early America*, ed. by Daniela Hacke and Paul Musselwhite (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018), pp. 88–112, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004340640_005

quavering voices, sounding weak and thin, buffeted by wind amid leafless winter trees, with little resonance on the ice-cruled snow. For the Puritan captives, singing psalms was supposed to provide emotional and spiritual sustenance, but instead it underscored the precariousness of their circumstances. Added to this was the distinctive manner of rural English psalmody: although ostensibly Puritans sang psalm texts to plain tunes in unison (signifying both the congregation's intention to glorify God and their spiritual unity as a community), by the early eighteenth century a turgid and individualistic performance practice had emerged. Congregations sang psalms at a very slow tempo, often taking two or three breaths with each note. They diverged from each other's phrasing and added improvised embellishments to the melody.⁴⁸ To the listening captors, this frayed performance conveyed discordance rather than unity, chaos instead of strength; it was highly unsatisfactory.

However, despite describing being mocked while singing, John Williams emphasized the freedom for worship they experienced under the Mohawks. This is because he wished to contrast it with what awaited them in Quebec: Jesuit missionaries. Among the Mohawks, he wrote, 'we had this revival in our bondage; to joyn together in the Worship of God', that is, the opportunity to worship together. Whereas 'When we arrived in *New France* we were forbidden Praying one with another, or joining together in the Service of God'.⁴⁹ The Mohawk captors may have threatened, slain, and mocked them, but they did not prevent worship. Indeed, in Williams's telling, the Mohawks were incorporated into a Babylonian allegory of captivity, playing the role of biblical captors. When recounting how the Mohawks criticized the captives' singing for not being strong enough, Williams ventriloquized them with words from Psalm 137: 'The Enemy who said to us, *Sing us one of Zions Songs*'.⁵⁰

48 Nicholas Temperley, 'The Old Way of Singing: Its Origins and Development', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 34.3 (1981), 511–544, <https://doi.org/10.2307/831191>. This performance practice was not without its benefits, chief among those the way it allowed individuals to access the affective power of sacred singing. See Glenda Goodman, "'The Tears I Shed at the Songs of Thy Church': Seventeenth-Century Musical Piety in the English Atlantic World', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 65.3 (2012), 691–725, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jams.2012.65.3.691>

49 Williams, *Redeemed Captive*, pp. 51–52.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 51. On Williams's use of Psalm 137, not only as a typological interpretation of captivity but also a credible representation of the historical events, see Newman,

The geopolitical and religious conflicts of early modern imperialism frame Williams's narrative. What transpired, and how he chose to tell his story, was grounded in the competition between French and English forces, overlaid with opposing Catholic and Protestant doctrines (and their musical expressions). In this framing, the Mohawk captors were presented as participants in a broader cross-confessional and inter-imperial contest (rather than agents acting in their own interest). Eventually, aware of his role as a pawn in a larger sectarian-imperial game, Williams ceased to fear for his life, and hence his accounts of Mohawk actions lack any attempt to understand what the Mohawks were interested in achieving. Unlike Radisson, Williams did not see the need to anticipate how his captors would want to hear him sing. Instead, Williams wrote his narrative as an anti-Catholic polemic, and thus his musical descriptions emphasize cross-confessional differences. Confrontations with Jesuit priests fill his account of his months in New France: he sparred with them verbally and resisted their relentless attempts to have him betray his Puritan faith. In Williams's narrative the true enemies trying to incorporate him were not his Mohawk captors but the Jesuits.⁵¹

Yet Williams's position as a captive compromised his ability to resist; like Radisson, he found that some amount of compliance was unavoidable. For instance, Williams met two Jesuit priests at Fort Francis, north of Montreal along the St. Lawrence River, who pressured him to worship with them. The priests warned him that his Mohawk captor would certainly force him to attend Mass, and claimed that it was best simply to go; after all, 'if [the priests] were in New England themselves, they would go into the churches to see their ways of worship'.⁵² Williams later claimed that he coldly declined their invitations, citing his desire to avoid the 'idolatrous superstitions' of Catholic worship.⁵³ But eventually his ability to do so was no longer within his control. In a dramatic section of his narrative, Williams described how his Mohawk 'master' dragged

Allegories of Encounter, pp. 55–56.

51 Indeed, Williams's seven-year-old daughter Eunice was adopted by a Kahnawake Mohawk family and fully assimilated. His ten-year-old son Stephen was adopted by a Pennacook family, but retained his cultural identity and was eventually returned. Haefeli and Sweeney, *Captors and Captives*, p. 155.

52 Williams, *Redeemed Captive*, p. 60.

53 *Ibid.*

him to Mass by force, just as the priests had warned. Williams had never heard a Catholic Mass before, and what he observed, he claimed later, was 'a great confusion, instead of Gospel Order'. Williams grimly noted the ceaseless chanting as 'many others were at the same time saying over their Pater Nosters, and Ave Mary, by tale from their Capelit, or Beads on a String'. One priest was 'singing Prayers among the Indians at the same time'.⁵⁴ For Williams, the elaborate liturgy, the polyphonic music, and the overabundance of priestly noises were far from Puritan 'Gospel Order', which privileged congregational comprehension. Compared to the simplicity and comprehensibility of Puritan worship, the Catholic Mass was an ungodly pageant, the music aimed at seducing rather than inspiring sincere experiences of faith. Williams depicted his encounters with the Jesuits as ordeals in which he was tested and prevailed. His captivity narrative functioned both as a historical account and as an allegory for Puritans' tribulations in the dangerous 'New World' they were trying to convert into a true, pure Christian territory. Unlike Radisson, who faced death and was saved by incorporation, Williams's corporeal life was at not stake (as a highly valued captive it was very unlikely anyone would put him to death), but his soul was. For a Puritan minister, this meant the stakes were high.⁵⁵

Christian attempts at assimilation through cross-confessional conversion stand in contrast to Haudenosaunee interests in incorporation. Although both modes share a foundational premise — the need to garner spiritual and communal strength (broadly conceived) through the gathering of new members — the method and meaning behind the desired identity transformation were different. The Haudenosaunee practice of incorporating captives was a necessary survival strategy in the face of a severe demographic crisis, whereas the harvesting of souls by either Catholics or Protestants was competitive and acquisitive. Both Williams and his Jesuit enemies had well-developed reasons for wishing to populate the so-called New World with their brand of Christianity, and for both sides the reasons were of the utmost seriousness; but neither had experienced communal trauma the way Native groups had

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁵⁵ This compares to modern torture techniques whereby captives are subjected to music and other stimuli that call into question their faith and identity. Cusick, "You are in a place that is out of the world..."', pp. 13, 17.

in the face of disease and warfare. Williams could afford to ignore his captors' prompts to sing because he was focused on a different battle.

The Stakes of Raised Voices

Mohawk auditors' responses to captive colonists' singing illustrate their cultural prerogatives. Their listening was attuned for a Haudenosaunee vocal aesthetic and performance style, their evaluation guided by an underlying musical ontology in which individuals' songs were indicators of identity and genealogy. The conjoining of song, voice, and identity was not foreign for those of non-Native descent; but unlike a contemporaneous European epistemology of music that located subjectivity in the voice, the Indigenous epistemology guiding the reception of captive song was not oriented toward revealing the singer's interiority.⁵⁶ Traits of strength or weakness, determination or timidity, were exposed through song and how one endured the torture; indelible, personal subjectivity was not. The only way to absorb large numbers of non-Haudenosaunee — including Radisson's Huron-born mother — was to accept a pragmatically malleable model of identity that allowed for superficial incorporation.⁵⁷ Thus, although keyed to the captive's identification, forced singing nevertheless left room for psychological recuperation after the fact (although they would not have recognized it with such modern terms). Captors did not aim for identity annihilation; rather, they listened to whether the captives could sustain a defiant demeanor while capitulating to the demands to sing.

The balance of compliance and resistance was a key modality of captive singing, one that captive colonists, unfamiliar with the underlying Indigenous epistemology at work, would have been hard pressed to understand. Radisson and Williams's accounts reveal that for

56 On European ideas about voice and subjectivity see, for example, Gary Tomlinson, *Metaphysical Song: An Essay on Opera* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400866700>; Martha Feldman, et al., 'Colloquy: Why Voice Now?', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 68.3 (2015), 653–685, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jams.2015.68.3.653>. A useful overview of scholarship on voice (including non-Western conceptions) can be found in Amanda Weidman, 'Anthropology and Voice', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 43 (2014), 37–51, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-102313-030050>

57 Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, p. 72.

non-Native captives, singing was conditioned by fear, pain, and outrage. No matter how well coached by captors, forced singing was inexplicable and thus dismaying. I speculate that the coercion would have felt punitive to such captives. *Make it stop* — surely this imperative was at the forefront of captives' minds. The fact that the singing, combined with the physical torment, was the means to a larger end would have been beyond their ability to understand. Indeed, being forced to keep singing for no discernable purpose may have subverted the Haudenosaunee listeners' aims: rather than accessing psychological and physical fortitude, singers may have given up, resorting to singing meaningless syllables, babbling with raised voices in order further to avoid what they experienced as punishment. As Radisson wrote, he kept singing even when he was out of his mind and speechless. What kind of identity was revealed through such a performance? And what of when a voice raised in song transformed into a shriek? Certainly many captives would have been incapable of coaxing their pained utterances into musical contours. European sources about Indigenous peoples routinely emphasized their 'frightening, unassuageable otherness', as Gary Tomlinson puts it.⁵⁸ In scenarios of forced singing, captive colonists confronted their own otherness. Alienated from their vocalizations, their acclamations became hideous.

Recognition of this alienation offers music scholars a new position from which to consider music and colonialism. Once we are aware of forced singing's place in the early American soundscape — including the processes of pedagogy, audition, assessment, and incorporation it heralded — some of the durable frameworks for analyzing intercultural encounters become less useful. Forced singing, for instance, challenges the utility of placing Native and non-Native peoples on either end of an Other–Self polarity. It subverts the assumption that Native utterances were inexplicable by reversing the vector of sound and listening. Finally, it reorients the fundamental purpose of engaging with sound and music, moving away from the customary musicological interest in how Europeans interpreted and negotiated colonialism. Another

58 Gary Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 176. Also see Olivia A. Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

example from Tomlinson illustrates this position, in which he concludes that '[a] history of European colonialism could be written as the story of negotiations of the space between speaking and singing'.⁵⁹ This formulation can now be rearranged: a history of Native American survivance could be written as the story of negotiations of the space between learning and changing, shrieking and singing — a space that could be occupied by Indigenous listeners and European singers.

59 Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World*, p. 196.

5. Black Atlantic Acoustemologies and the Maritime Archive

Danielle Skeeahan

[S]ince speech was forbidden, slaves camouflaged the word under the provocative intensity of the scream. No one could translate the meaning of what seemed to be nothing but a shout. It was taken to be nothing but the call of a wild animal. This is how dispossessed man organized his speech by weaving it into the apparently meaningless texture of extreme noise.¹

—Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*

In Herman Melville's *Benito Cereno* — a fictionalized retelling of events that took place off the coast of Santa Maria, near Chile, on February 20, 1805 — the captain and crew of the Massachusetts-bound *Bachelor's Delight* anchor their ship in the harbor of a small, uninhabited island. They soon find that they are not alone.² Observing a rather battered and

1 Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse Selected Essays* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1999), pp. 123–124.

2 In the historical original, an American sea captain, Amasa Delano, had anchored *The Perseverance* off Santa Maria, while restocking water supplies on a return journey from Canton. While there, a rather battered and weather-beaten Spanish merchant ship soon sailed into harbor and appeared to be in distress. Assessing the situation, Delano decided to approach *The Tryal* and offer his services. In Delano's published account of what followed, he notes that 'As soon as I got on deck, the captain, mate, people and slaves, crowded around me to relate their stories, and to make known their grievances' (Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres* (Boston: E. G. House, 1817), p. 322). Delano was on board *The Tryal* for the greater part of the day, and relates very little else until — at his departure — the Captain of the ship — Benito Cereno — jumps overboard and informs Delano that he had been audience to an elaborate performance carried off by the enslaved Africans on board the ship, that they had revolted, and that Cereno himself was, in fact, their captive. The events are related in three prior written accounts (as well

weather-beaten Spanish merchant ship sail into harbor, the American captain, Amasa Delano, decides to approach the vessel and offer his services. Boarding the *San Dominick*, Delano is immediately struck by the ‘the wailing ejaculations of the indiscriminate multitude’ and the ‘noisy confusion’ resonating throughout the Spanish ship: oakum pickers ‘accompanied the[ir] task with a continuous, low, monotonous, chant, droning and drilling away like so many gray-headed bag-pipers playing a funeral march’ and hatchet sharpeners ‘clashed their hatchets together, like cymbals, with a barbarous din’. Growing ‘impatient of the hubbub of voices’, Delano turns to the captain of the ship, Benito Cereno, and asks him to account for the apparent discord. As Cereno goes on to tell a tale of how sickness and maritime misadventure depleted the crew and battered the ship, the ‘cymballing of the hatchet-polishers’ continues to punctuate the narrative, and Delano — increasingly annoyed by this background ‘din’ — wonders ‘why such an interruption should be allowed, especially in that part of the ship, and in the ears of an invalid’.³

Observing the apparent lack of order on board the *San Dominick* with, in Melville’s words, his ‘blunt-thinking American eyes’, Captain Delano perhaps serves as a cautionary tale for all readers.⁴ By refusing to recognize the ‘noisy confusion’, ‘barbarous din’, and continuous sonic ‘interruption’ as a mode of communication, Delano fails to read — or, perhaps more accurately, to *hear* — what has actually happened on the ship: the enslaved men and women had risen up against their former captors, had taken control of the ship, and were attempting to sail to Senegal. The apparent disorder was, in fact, not disorder at all: rather it was a highly orchestrated ‘operatic’ performance that staged the relationship between free and enslaved — European and New World African — exactly as Captain Delano expected to see it.⁵

as numerous North American newspapers): the ship’s log recounting that day’s events, the Lima court records, and Delano’s *Narrative of Voyages and Travels in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres*. Herman Melville’s *Benito Cereno* takes up the challenge of imagining and recreating the holes in Delano’s narrative and invites us to consider why such an elaborate drama was excluded from the record in the first place.

3 See Herman Melville, *The Piazza Tales* (New York: Dix & Edwards, 1856), pp. 119–125.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 137.

5 There is also a latent threat in the sounds as portrayed in the novella, in that the very sound of the performance serves to warn the captain just how close, how potentially

I begin with this brief reading of Melville's novella because it may also offer new ways for thinking about how we, as scholars, approach the archive of Atlantic slavery. Inevitably, like Captain Delano, we view the contents of ship's logs, captain's journals, and account books with 'a stranger's eye'.⁶ In fact, the cold empiricism of these records encourages us to do just that: to read at a surface level and glean what 'facts' the record may disclose — facts intended by record keepers to be found. And as scholars who have explored the slave trade's systematic documentation show, these records most often serve as evidence for the suppression and eradication of African voices, cultures, and resistance.⁷ However, ships traveling the pathways of the Middle Passage — and beyond — were anything but silent spaces, and perhaps Delano's oversights might serve as an invitation for us to reconsider the ways we read. This, of course, is not an easy task: sound fades and only the writing remains. However, I wonder if there may be something in these records that we have failed to read — or, like Captain Delano, to hear.

This chapter reads the writing of the Middle Passage with an attention to how it characterizes the sonic conditions of ship life. Attention to Atlantic "soundscapes" — in addition to and embedded within alphabetic writing — offers an avenue through which to understand the lived experience of those who did not leave behind their own records, as well as to consider media alternative to writing through which people communicated, expressed themselves, and resisted processes of dehumanization. Because few firsthand narratives of the Middle Passage written or dictated by New World Africans survive, the experiences of men and women traversing the Atlantic has been understood as largely unrepresentable. At best, we refer to the nascent voices of people like Venture Smith, Olaudah Equiano, Mary Prince, and others who survived the passage and lived to tell about it. For these reasons, scholars inevitably return to the records kept by captors, and this writing seems to only confirm the unrepresentable

violent, and how numerous the 'slaves' are (I use quotations since at this point they are 'performing' their enslavement).

6 Melville, *The Piazza Tales*, p. 120.

7 See Stephanie Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007) and Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822387022>

nature of enslaved voices and experiences: where the voices of African captives enter the written record, they are recorded as *noise* rather than communication. Translated as ‘murmurs’, ‘cries’, ‘complaints’, ‘shrieks’, ‘groans’, ‘bursts’, and ‘uproars’, the record renders these communications non-sensible and non-linguistic. We might even say that the discursive authority of the captor — an authority tied to the written word — relied on rendering the sounds produced by enslaved men and women as sonically incomprehensible, non-reproducible, or even silent.

In what follows, I read both along and against the grain of an archive kept by captors and listen for how the sounds of African captives punctuate, disrupt, and contest the attempts to turn people into commodities, as documented in written records. The soundscape of the Middle Passage relied on the human voice, the body, and the ship — rather than traditional musical instruments or writing technologies — to make sound and amplify messages. The ship itself, as I will elaborate below, served as gigantic, migrating, percussion instrument and, as it amplified the sounds emanating from below deck, reminded captain and crew that their ‘cargo’ was one that could think, feel, and act. Ships’ logs, journals, account books, and literary treatments of the Middle Passage — such as James Field Stanfield’s epic poem, *The Guinea Voyage* — translate the sounds of ship life to the page. Examining the sonic outbursts embedded within the written record, I’d like to take up Richard Cullen Rath’s challenge to ‘hear the page as well as see it’.⁸ In doing so, we can see how this writing records the conditions of the Middle Passage from two registers: the calculated master narrative at the surface of the record, and the sounds that erupt from the depths. From this perspective, the writing of the Middle Passage may, in fact, serve as an early audio recording technology. That is, as a means of

8 Richard Cullen Rath, *How Early America Sounded* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. x. Rath defines soundways as ‘the paths, trajectories, transformations, mediations, practices, and techniques — in short, the *ways* — that people employ to interpret and express their attitudes and beliefs about sound’ (p. 2). See also Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004). Thompson explains that a soundscape ‘is simultaneously a physical environment and a way of perceiving that environment; it is both a world and a culture constructed to make sense of that world. The physical aspects of a soundscape consist not only in the sounds themselves, the waves of acoustical energy permeating the atmosphere in which people live, but also the material objects that create, and sometimes destroy, those sounds’ (p. 12).

capturing, reproducing, and visually performing on the page, to invoke Fred Moten's work, the sounds, songs, and sonic media of the captives.⁹

Western Enlightenment-era thinkers favored sight as the most critical of the five senses and, in turn, understood writing as the assumed avenue through which 'reason' and 'rational' thought was transmitted. In this context, we might assume that modernity, colonialism, racial capitalism, and slavery are coterminous processes produced, in many ways, by modes of representation (such as writing) and discipline (such as incarceration) rooted in ocular technologies.¹⁰ Moreover, when we as scholars favor the written word as the primary means of understanding historical events, processes, practices, and peoples, we may also thereby privilege forms of knowledge that are centered on sight and that reproduce the technologies of white supremacy. That is, as we 'examine', 'look to', and 'investigate' histories, the very language we use to 'discover' the meanings of texts points to methodologies inherited from an Enlightenment-era empiricism that favored sight as the most critical of the five senses.¹¹ Enlightenment rationality and its reliance on sight and print publicity as a conduit for reason, is certainly complicit in characterizing enslaved experience as 'unspeakable', 'unrepresentable', and 'unaccountable'. However, as scholars such as Marissa Fuentes and others have shown, sound too serves as a means of discipline and a mode through which to reproduce racial hierarchies.¹² That is to say, a focus on varying registers of sound *and* text allows us to understand modernity as a 'dialectical process [...] poised between the rational and the affective, the discursive and the embodied'.¹³ Listening to Atlantic soundscapes reveals this dialectical struggle between reason and resonance — between writing and sound — that frames knowledge production in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world.

9 See Fred Moten, *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004).

10 See Teresa Brennan and Jay Martin, eds., *Vision in Context: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Sight* (New York: Routledge 1996).

11 Brennan and Jay, eds., *Vision in Context*.

12 See Marissa Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812293005>

13 See Veit Erlmann, 'But What of the Ethnographic Ear? Anthropology, Sound, and the Senses', in *Hearing Cultures: Essays on Sound, Listening and Modernity*, ed. by Veit Erlmann (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2004), pp. 1–20 (p. 13).

In taking up the call of recent sound studies scholars to listen for how sound has shaped the history of human experience, this chapter seeks to destabilize a perceived dichotomy between sight and sound, text and sound making.¹⁴ Writing not only serves as a means through which to hear the past; rather, I argue that the sounds of the past — specifically the sonic media produced by peoples (captors, sailors, and captives) of the Middle Passage — may have been essential to the very formation of Western Anglophone literary traditions. Scholars such as Paul Gilroy have shown how Black Atlantic ‘countercultures’ are dependent upon music and memory, and work in ways that are antithetical to a Habermasian model that would privilege print as an avenue of ‘rational’ communication and subject formation.¹⁵ In this setting, Gilroy argues, a Black Atlantic counterculture ‘defiantly reconstructs its own critical, intellectual, and moral genealogy in a partially hidden public sphere of its own’.¹⁶ As Elizabeth Maddock Dillon has argued, ‘meaning might profitably be lodged, for the enslaved, in the locations where a plantocratic *sensus communis* ended — in sites and sensations that were precisely not self-evident to the master class’.¹⁷ This chapter examines the

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- 14 R. Murray Schafer’s *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Merrimac: Destiny, 1993) is one of the first works to address ‘the enculturated nature of sound [...] and the material spaces of performance that are constructed for the purpose of propagating sound’ (p. 25). See also Mark M. Smith’s essay ‘Listening to the Heard Worlds of Antebellum America’, *Journal of The Historical Society*, 1 (2000), 63–97. Smith invites early American scholars, in particular, to think about how sound can serve as an ‘index of identity’. Similarly, Richard Rath’s 2003 book-length study, *How Early America Sounded* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), attends to *sound* as a way to ‘open up parts of these worlds, not to get a glimpse of them but to listen in’ (p. 9). Most recently, *American Quarterly* published a special issue on sound studies in September 2011 (entitled ‘Sound Clash: Listening to American Studies’, edited by Kara Keeling and Josh Kun) calling for ‘an ongoing project to dismantle dominant hierarchies of knowledge production and critical thought’ (p. 446) that may allow scholars to explore how ‘sound makes us re-think our relation to power’ (Kara Keeling and Josh Kun, ‘Introduction: Listening to American Studies’, *American Quarterly*, 63.3 (2011), 445–459 (pp. 446, 450), <https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2011.0037>).
- 15 See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT University Press, 1991).
- 16 Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 37–38.
- 17 Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, ‘John Marrant Blows the French Horn: Print, Performance, and the Making of Publics in Early African American Literature’, *Early African American Print Culture*, ed. by Lara Cohen and Jordan Stein (Philadelphia: Penn Press, 2012), pp. 318–404 (p. 324).

points where one *sensus communis* — or one register of meaning — ends and another begins, in order to consider how African sonic media functions within and transforms Anglophone writing.

The sections that follow examine: 1) the architecture of slave ships and how ‘slavery at sea’ produces both the soundscape of the Middle Passage and, as Sowande M. Mustakeem has argued, Blackness itself;¹⁸ 2) the ways that ‘non-literary’ manuscripts record Black sounds and how those sounds challenge the role of the record, to invoke Stephanie Smallwood’s work, in transforming captives into commodities;¹⁹ 3) the ways that this soundscape might influence the evolution of eighteenth-century Western literary traditions, such as the epic, and abolitionist writing more generally.

Architecture

Dehumanizing living conditions, the separation of families, poor quality food, and daily routines that included forced exercise, torture, rape, and medical inspection, characterized the slave ship’s culture of terror.²⁰ Some captives were captured thousands of miles from the coast and did not speak the same language as other captives.²¹ On board ships, men, women, and children were often stripped of their clothing and thus of

18 See Sowande M. Mustakeem, *Slavery at Sea: Terror, Sex, and Sickness in the Middle Passage* (Champaign: University of Illinois, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.5406/illinois/9780252040559.001.0001>

19 See Stephanie Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

20 Many ships, of course, listed New World African sailors — free and enslaved — in the ship’s articles. See for instance documents relating to the voyage of the slave ship *Sally* which sailed from Rhode Island in 1764. Records of the *Sally* venture are preserved in the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University, as well as in the archives of the Rhode Island Historical Society. The records have also been digitized and are available here: <http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/sally/>

21 Ship captains purposefully purchased men and women from different regions so as to limit their capacity to communicate with each other and to thus plot insurrections. For instance, Alexander Falconbridge writes: ‘Many negroes, upon being questioned relative to the places of their nativity have asserted, that they have travelled during the revolution of several moons (their usual method of calculating time) before they have reached the places where they were purchased by the Black traders. At these fairs, which are held at uncertain periods, but generally every six weeks, several thousands are frequently exposed to sale, who had been collected from all parts of the country for a very considerable distance round’ (*An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa* (London: J. Philips, 1788), p. 12).

protection from elements, their individuality, and cultural signifiers of home. From here men, women, and children were separated and housed in different sections of the ship. As Alexander Falconbridge would recount in *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*, 'The man negroes [...] the women [and] the boys [...] are all placed in different apartments'.²² For all, the ocean represented the permanent, irrevocable severing of ties to home.

Falconbridge's description of 'apartments' invites us to think about how the architecture of the ship — in addition to on-board practices — was designed to strip men, women, and children of ties to culture and language and to alienate them from each other. That is, the architecture of ships was an important element in what Mustakeem, in *Slavery at Sea*, identifies as a 'human manufacturing process'. As she argues, the Middle Passage was not simply a consequence of the Atlantic slave trade; rather, it was a system that deployed racial terror in order to produce and commodify Black bodies as a coherent group. Mustakeem writes that 'the interior holds of merchant ships served as vital sites of power sailors used to dehumanize captives, enforce dependency, inflict pain, establish authority, and prohibit any sense of control over one's personal life in the near and far future'. In these spaces, she continues, sailors 'relentlessly unmade bondpeople's bodies'.²³ The division of space within holds was equally important to this unmaking and in the simultaneous *making* of racial difference so essential to racial slavery as it evolved over the course of the eighteenth-century.

The spatial divisions of the slave ship and the materials used for its construction contributed to both the 'manufacture' of human commodities as well as, perhaps, the emergence of distinct African diasporic cultures rooted in *acoustemologies* produced within the material conditions of the ship. As Sydney Mintz and Richard Price have argued in their now classic (if controversial) study of creolization, 'What the slaves undeniably shared at the outset was their enslavement; all — or nearly all — else had to be *created by them*'.²⁴ In these conditions, as Ronald Radano points out, 'musical practices come together more

22 Ibid., pp. 19–20.

23 Mustakeem, *Slavery at Sea*, p. 7.

24 Sydney Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of African American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective* (Boston: Beacon, 1992), p. 17.

easily than grammatically specific verbal languages'.²⁵ The ship, in this context, serves as an instrument — in both the metaphorical and literal sense — of racial terror that manufactures slaves, and as something that can be made to 'sound' and 'play' by the captives as they contest their imprisonment, forge bonds, and express themselves in ways that will carry over to and inform New World diasporic cultures.

Slaving ships were structurally transformed off the coast of Africa in order to become the kinds of instruments of terror discussed above. For instance, Samuel Gamble, the captain of the *Sandown*, records the slow process of unloading European commodities — such as cloth, powder, and guns — as the ship coasted off the shore of Upper Guinea as well as the process of refitting the ship to hold a human cargo. The 138-ton *Sandown* sailed from Liverpool in 1793 with twenty-eight crew members and most likely resembled most mid-sized 'Guineamen'.²⁶ Slave ships ranged in size from 10 to 566 tons carrying, respectively, 30 to 700 captives and maintaining a 10–1 captive/sailor ratio. The first slave ships were adapted from merchant vessels, but Guineamen like the *Sandown* would have been designed with the potential for slaving in mind. Slaving specific specifications for a ship the *Sandown's* size would have included increasing the space between decks to roughly 4.5 feet, adding lower deck portholes to moderately improve airflow to the 250 (or more) people held in the hold, and sheathing the oak hull in copper in order to reduce wood rot and worm damage common in tropical waters. Yet despite being designed for slaving voyages, Guineamen needed to be refitted for the Middle Passage section of their trading voyage. Gamble records that 'Most of October 1793 was spent restructuring the ship'. He continues: 'Carpenters finish'd the Baricado Employ'd them taking down the Cabin Bulkhead', and the following day, these same carpenters were 'at work taking down the State Rooms and clearing the Cabin for a Women Room'.²⁷

25 Ronald Rodano, *Lying up a Nation: Race and Black Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2003), p. 62.

26 The *Sandown* lost five crew members on the voyage to Africa, five more on the coast as they prepared to take on their human cargo, and an additional sailor on the way to the West Indies.

27 Log of the *Sandown*, Tuesday October 8, 1793. *A Slaving Voyage to Africa and Jamaica: The Log of the Sandown, 1793–1794*, ed. by Bruce L. Mouser (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), pp. 78–79.

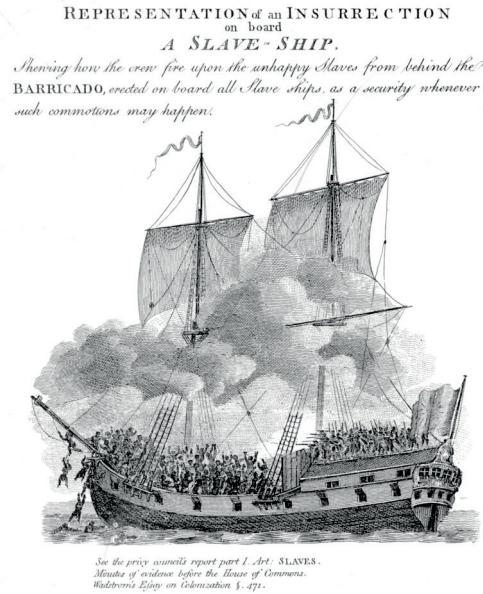


Fig. 5.1 'Revolt Aboard a Slave Ship, 1787', Carl B. Wadstrom, *An Essay on Colonization, particularly applied to the Western coast of Africa... in Two Parts* (London: Harvey and Darton, 1794–1795), fold-out included in pocket attached to cover. Image courtesy of *Slavery Images: A Visual Record of the African Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Early African Diaspora*, Public Domain, <http://www.slaveryimages.org/s/slaveryimages/item/2060>

In addition to separating men, women, and children below deck, populations on the ship were further divided by the 'Baricado' — a structure designed to separate the enslaved from the (primarily) free European crew when men and women were brought on deck for air and 'exercise'. The baricado, a ten-foot-tall wall bisecting the deck at the main mast and extending several feet beyond the ship's sides, divided the deck of the ship into two distinct spaces: one occupied by the enslaved, 'black' cargo, and one occupied by a mixed crew of sailors (some forced into labor themselves) who now came to understand themselves as 'white' and 'free'. In many ways, the baricado — literally 'an obstruction to passage' — created these categories and kept them in place. In the case of an insurrection, the baricado was in place so that sailors could fire at enslaved men and women without shooting other sailors. For insurrectionary Africans, the baricado also worked to keep

sailors at a distance, and — if they ran out of ammunition — to inhibit them from retaking the ship.

William Snelgrave describes just such a revolt on board a ship called the *Henry* in *A New Account of Some Parts of Guinea and the Slave Trade* (1734). ‘Our Ship’s Company consisted of fifty white People’, he writes before continuing to describe the revolt: ‘This Mutiny having been plotted among all the grown Negroes on board, they ran to the fore-Part of the Ship in a Body, and endeavored to force the Barricado on the Quarter-Deck; not regarding the Muskets or half-Pikes presented to them, by the white Men, through the Loop-Holes’.²⁸ On the slave ship, divided by the baricado, the people on board the *Henry* recast themselves as ‘white’ and ‘Black’. That is, ships structurally and discursively transform a multiethnic group of strangers (sailors and enslaved Africans) into newly homogenized groups distinguished by skin color and levels of (un)freedom. The slave ship mechanizes the production of Blackness (and in turn whiteness) as it imagines ways of visualizing and spatially configuring different types of labor and relations to capital.

That said, if ships were spatially designed to produce racial difference, their composition — a ‘hollow place’, in Olaudah Equiano’s words, structured by wood, cloth, and copper — was designed to resonate and carry sound.²⁹ Marcus Rediker has compared ships to drums.³⁰ The hollow center of the ship, punctuated by portholes and access points to get below deck, would surely work to amplify sound. Like the soundboard (or top) on an acoustic guitar, the ‘top deck’ and what we might call ‘sound holes’ on a ship are important to amplifying noise produced in the hold. As the air in a guitar’s cavity resonates the vibrations of the string, the soundboard amplifies the sound. The hollow, concave body of the ship would function in similar ways to resonate the vibrations of voices and bodies, amplifying rather than diffusing sound. Wood, furthermore, has its own unique acoustical properties and produces a longer reverberation time than other materials. For these reasons, in the eighteenth-century as well as today, many theaters

28 William Snelgrave, *A New Account of Some Parts of Guinea and the Slave Trade* (London: James, John, and Paul Knapton, 1734), p. 509.

29 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa the African. Written by himself* (London: [n.p.], 1794), p. 49.

30 Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Viking, 2017), p. 278.

used wood paneling or acoustic tiles on the floors, walls, and ceilings to increase the ‘warmth’ of the sound.³¹ As the eighteenth-century English theater architect George Saunders wrote, ‘Wood is sonorous, conductive and produces a pleasing tone, and is therefore the very best material for lining a theatre; for not absorbing so much as some, and not conducting so much as others, this medium renders it peculiarly suitable to rooms for musical purposes; the little resonance it occasions being rather agreeable than injurious’.³²

While ship architecture and record books deploy a visual and spatial organization of race and freedom, sound has the capacity to travel beyond the spaces that bodies are relegated to — beyond physical compartments and barriers on board the ship, as well as the ontological categories created by logs and account books. In this sense, the material properties of ships may have led to the formation of unique forms of audio production. As Rediker has written, ‘ships forged new forms of life — new language, new means of expression, new resistance, and a new sense of community’.³³ However, thinking about the ship *as instrument* invites us to consider how African captives used the conditions of their captivity to craft new ways of communicating outside of Anglophone literacy — how they crafted an aural *sensus communis* largely misheard by their captors. Making sound is a way of creating a space of cultural autonomy within the space of imprisonment and allowed enslaved people to imagine themselves differently from how the logs, records, and bills of sale imagined them.

Amplification

Sound does not respect boundaries, barricades, or segmentations: the entire ship is designed as a space to carry and echo voices. But what did it *sound* like to be on these ships travelling across vast stretches of

31 The quality people perceive as ‘warmth’ does not refer to a literal change in temperature. Rather, the affect is haptic: as ‘standing waves’ move through the air in all directions, they produce in listeners a feeling of intimacy. See Bruce Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

32 Quoted in Bill Addis, ‘A Brief History of Design Methods for Building Acoustics’, in *Proceedings of the Third International Congress on Construction History*, Cottbus, Germany, May 2009, pp. 1–10 (p. 4), http://www.bma.arch.unige.it/internos/PDF/CONSTRUCTION_HISTORY_2009/VOL1/Addis-Bill_layouted.pdf

33 Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, p. 265.

ocean? What were the sounds heard by sailors and prisoners alike? What sounds did they make and how were they understood by each other? Nineteenth-century U.S. authors such as Melville and Richard Henry Dana Jr. offer some clues to shipboard sonic worlds and, as I show above, often characterized ship life as one apprehended and navigated through sound. For instance, in *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840), Dana — embarking on his first sea journey — recounts leaving the Boston harbor as follows:

‘A-a-ll ha-a-a-nds! up anchor, a-ho-oy!’ In a short time, everyone was in motion, the sails loosed, the yards braced, and we began to heave up the anchor, which was our last hold upon Yankee land. I could take but little part in all these preparations. My little knowledge of a vessel was all at fault. Unintelligible orders were so rapidly given and so immediately executed; there was such a hurrying about, and such an intermingling of strange cries and stranger actions, that I was completely bewildered. There is not so helpless and pitiable an object in the world as a landsman beginning a sailor’s life. At length those peculiar, long-drawn sounds, which denote that the crew are heaving the windlass, began, and in a few moments we were under weigh. The noise of the water thrown from the bows began to be heard, the vessel leaned over from the damp night breeze, and rolled with the heavy ground swell, and we had actually begun our long, long journey.³⁴

The inexperienced Dana describes leaving ‘Yankee land’, in part, by what he hears: ‘unintelligible orders’, the ‘intermingling of strange cries’, ‘peculiar, long-drawn sounds’, and the ‘noise of the water thrown from the bows’ tells him they had begun their long journey to California. Sound was an essential element of ship life. These sounds included elements of the natural world as ships moved through it, such as water, birds, storms; however, they also included spoken orders and resulting work, such as the ‘heaving’, ‘loosing’, or ‘bracing’ described above, often accompanied by songs or sea shanties (which I discuss in more detail below).

While the sounds described by Dana would certainly be present in the soundscape of the Middle Passage, men such as Ottobah Cugoano and Olaudah Equiano describe their entrance into the sonic world of these ships in a very different language. Rather than merely unintelligible and

34 Richard Henry Dana Jr., *Two Years Before the Mast* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1840), p. 1.

confusing, the sounds on slaving ships represent captives' experience of pain, terror, and abjection and are intended to amplify feelings of terror and abjection among their fellow captives. For instance, Cugoano narrates: 'when a vessel arrived to conduct us away to the ship, it was a most horrible scene; there was nothing to be heard but the rattling of chains, smacking of whips, and the groans and cries of our fellow-men'.³⁵ Cugoano's passage into slavery is also a passage into a Black Atlantic soundscape located in realm beyond that which 'language can describe'.³⁶ Equiano similarly describes the failure of language and words as he travelled from inland to coast and littoral and from freedom into slavery: 'From the time I left my own nation I always found somebody that understood me till I came to the sea coast. The languages of different nations did not totally differ [...] They were therefore easily learned; and, while I was journeying thus through Africa, I acquired two or three different tongues'.³⁷ At the sea coast, on the brink of being interred within the slave ship and entering forever the world of Black Atlantic slavery, the word gives way to the scream. It is here that he sees his sister and writes, 'As soon as she saw me she gave a loud shriek, and ran into my arms — I was quite overpowered: neither of us could speak; but, for a considerable time, clung to each other in mutual embraces, unable to do any thing but weep'.³⁸ Her 'shriek' anticipates the sounds and horror Equiano would describe later: 'The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable'.³⁹

Cugoano's and Equiano's accounts of their 'uprooting', dispossession, and relocation within the order of Atlantic slavery resonate with (and perhaps prefigure) Glissant's description of the distribution of sound,

35 Ottobah Cugoano, *Narrative of the Enslavement of Ottobah Cugoano, a Native of Africa; published by himself, in the Year 1787* (London: Hatchard, 1787), p. 124.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 125.

37 Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative*, p. 39.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 39.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 52. Both Equiano and Cugoano describe the Middle Passage using variations on the phrase 'horrible scene' or 'scene of horror' and thus evoke the image of these ships as stages upon which an 'inconceivable' or 'indescribable' drama takes place. By understanding ships as a visual field, they also suggest how sight and vision ascribe power to sailors and ship captains. Their accounts are sites in which visual and auditory registers of meaning collide: they are texts written in English but in which the field of vision is reversed, and when language and sight fail the narrators, they shift to auditory registers.

noise, and silence within Black Atlantic cultures. For instance, Glissant writes:

For Caribbean man, the word is first and foremost sound. Noise is essential to speech. Din is discourse. This must be understood. It seems that meaning and pitch went together for the uprooted individual, in the unrelenting silence of the world of slavery. It was the intensity of the sound that dictated meaning: the pitch of the sound conferred significance.⁴⁰

In this passage, Glissant develops a kind of genealogy of Black Atlantic acoustemology. For the enfranchised, the word is comprised of sounds which, without order, represent noise. For the disenfranchised who are denied speech, din must become its own discourse. Extreme noise — the scream, the shout, the untranslatable sound — becomes a new language, a language perhaps developed on ships as captives developed new textures of camouflaged speech and communication in registers that their captors can only hear as ‘confused’ if not ‘unpleasant’ sound.

The archive of the Middle Passage supports Glissant’s understandings of how white westerners heard an emergent Black Atlantic soundscape. The captain of the *Sandown*, for instance, records feet stomping on boards, hands slapping on thighs and, what seemed to him unintelligible cries.⁴¹ Similarly, Dr. Thomas Trotter, a surgeon on board the *Brookes* recreates the stifled voices crying out from below deck, ‘Yarra! Yarra!’ [We are sick] and ‘Kickeraboo! Kickeraboo!’ [we are dying].⁴² Another sailor, describing sounds as song, comments, ‘what [was] the subject of their songs [I] cannot say’.⁴³ However, as readers of this archive, we can begin to imagine: on another ship, Joseph Hawkins, dramatizing voices and bodies in revolt, writes that enslaved men and women in the hold ‘set up a scream’, ‘shouting whenever those above did any thing that appeared likely’ to overturn the order of the ship.⁴⁴

What Glissant seems to suggest, and what is reiterated in the account of revolt above, is that the soundings of New World Africans

40 Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse Selected Essays*, pp. 123–124.

41 *A Slaving Voyage to Africa and Jamaica*, ed. Mouser.

42 Testimony of Dr. Thomas Trotter, 1790. Quoted in Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, p. 294.

43 Mr. Janerverin, interview, 1770s. Quoted in Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, p. 282.

44 Joseph Hawkins, *A History of a Voyage to the Coast of Africa, and Travels into the Interior of that Country; Containing Particular Descriptions of the Climate and Inhabitants, Particulars Concerning the Slave Trade* (New York: Luther Pratt, 1797).

may represent a counterclaim to political enfranchisement and may provide another model of political process — one, perhaps, that we have failed to hear because it is not necessarily located within access to an Atlantic print public sphere.⁴⁵ As Paul Gilroy has suggested, the ‘unsayability’ of racial terror ‘can be used to challenge the privileged conception of both language and writing as preeminent expressions of human consciousness.’⁴⁶ Language and writing have only a ‘limited expressive power’ to communicate the polyphonic — or multi-sounded — experiences of the Middle Passage. Sound, in the words of Saidiya Hartman, could be said to ‘topple the hierarchy of discourse, and [...] engulf authorized speech in the clash of voices’ — or, as in *Benito Cereno*, the clash of hatchets.⁴⁷ Moreover, if *din* is interchangeable with discourse, an Enlightenment language of rationality might also be merely noise.

Gilroy posits ‘antiphony’ as an auditory model of political action that works in dramatically different ways than those established by Habermas. Antiphony, meaning ‘opposite voice’, often manifested itself in the call and response sonic cultures represented in *both* African political and religious practices, and in Anglo Atlantic and Black Atlantic labor practices.⁴⁸ In many African cultures, call and response characterized a form of political, proto-democratic participation. It was utilized in a number of public situations — in debating civil and political matters as well as structuring participation in religious ceremonies. In turn, sailor’s sea shanties and many New World slave songs transfer the call and response structure to an Atlantic and New World labor setting. And as Ray Costello notes, it is ‘often hard to tell whether in some shanties we are dealing with an Africanized British tune or an actual African tune slightly Europeanized’.⁴⁹ Citing the musicologist, Peter Van der Merwe, Costello suggests that sea shanties and New World slave songs may share a genealogy: that sailors’ sea shanties may have

45 For more on New World Africans’ contestation of the logic of the print public sphere, see Dillon’s ‘John Marrant Blows the French Horn’.

46 Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*, p. 74.

47 Saidiya Hartman, ‘Venus in Two Acts’, *Small Axe*, 12.2 (2008), 1–14 (p. 12), <https://doi.org/10.1215/-12-2-1>

48 See Ray Costello, *Black Salt: Sea Farers of African Descent on British Ships* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.5949/upo9781846317675>

49 *Ibid.*, p. 44.

been influenced primarily by the call and response songs of New World Africans, suggesting that these traditions were brought to the Americas along the routes of the Middle Passage.

Shanties thus point to the creolization and hybridity of the Atlantic soundscape as sailors learned songs from New World Africans in port cities and onboard ships, intermingled them with land-based folk songs, and altered them as they carried these songs along the routes of Atlantic slavery. These sounds, in turn, would have characterized the 'noise' newly enslaved Africans experienced during the Middle Passage and punctuated the memories and forms of communication they brought with them to sites of labor in the New World. What was used for political action in West Africa was reoriented to labor and camouflaged community in the New World. Melville captures how call and response was fully coopted by oceanic labor regimes by the mid-nineteenth century. In *Redburn* (1849), he writes:

I soon got used to this singing, for the sailors never touched a rope without it. Sometimes, when no one happened to strike up, and the pulling, whatever it might be, did not seem to be getting forward very well, the mate would always say, 'Come, men, can't any of you sing? Sing now, and raise the dead'. And then some one of them would begin, and if every man's arms were as much relieved as mine by the song, and he could pull as much better as I did, with such a cheering accompaniment, I am sure the song was well worth the breath expended on it. It is a great thing in a sailor to know how to sing well, for he gets a great name by it from the officers, and a good deal of popularity among his shipmates. Some sea-captains, before shipping a man, always ask him whether he can sing out at a rope.⁵⁰

It was perhaps on slave ships traveling the Middle Passage that this kind of sonic structure was transferred and creolized as Irish and Anglo sailors and African captives inevitably influenced and transformed each other's sound worlds.

A sailor on board the *Hubridas* in 1786, a Liverpool slave trader who later published an account of his adventures, seemed to recognize how Anglo captor and African captive may, in fact, share musical and sonic structures. In writing about ship life, he paid close attention to sound and captured enslaved men, women, and children engaging in call and

50 Herman Melville, *Redburn* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1849), p. 64.

response. He noted that enslaved men and women raised their voices in 'a kind of chorus' that resounded 'at the close of particular sentences'.⁵¹ The sailor's use of the term 'chorus' translates what he is hearing into Anglo-western terminology that he understands: a chorus consists of individual voices coming together to produce a collective, synchronized voice, and in theatrical traditions the chorus served as commentary on dramatic action. It is not unlike call and response: sea shanties — and other forms of call and response work songs — were known for their flexible lyrical forms and improvisation. They typically featured a shanty leader or soloist with the crew sounding the chorus as they completed tasks around the ship. On board ships, for African captives, this type of call and response communication meant that through the production of sound, men and women speaking different languages and dialects began to communicate and comment on the conditions of their captivity. And, on board the *Hubridas*, what began as murmurs and morphed into song before long erupted into the shouts and cries of coordinated revolt. Notably, these sounds are produced by people using the material conditions of their imprisonment — the ship — to contest the logic of their enslavement.

Notation

Gilroy's emphasis on music and Glissant's discussion of noise invite us to consider how New World Africans used alternative media to establish *sensus communis* rather than written discourse; however, as I suggested at the outset of this paper, I would also like to think about how Atlantic and New World soundscapes shaped by African captives, sailors, and others may have in turn shaped Western literary aesthetics in the early years of global modernity. That is, what if we were to understand Atlantic writing as the saturation of sound? And ask: how does sound produce the written word? How might the written word be a different but related kind of 'notation'? And, to what extent do Anglophone writers use the sounds of Black suffering to produce white 'literature'?

The commercial writing of the Middle Passage — ships logs, account books, journals, and sales records — was as important a technology as

51 William Butterworth, *Three Years Adventures* (Leeds: Edward Baines, 1822), p. 94.

the spatial architecture of the ship for producing race and (un)freedom. It was through this writing that captives from different regions, countries, and nations came to be understood as racially homogenous 'African slaves'. Take, for instance, the record of sale produced by captain Esek Hopkins of the *Sally* when the ship reached Antigua in fall of 1765 (see Fig. 5.2).⁵² Like most commercial writing, the sale record establishes a critical relationship between narrative writing and numerical calculation, but in the case of human commodities it is inevitably a political and juridical document as well: it records the transfer of enslaved people from the *Sally's* account book to the ledgers and account books of West Indian plantations. The sale record's vertical lines cordon-off who is recognized as a political or juridical subject and who is not.⁵³ The enslaved Africans who are described only in terms of age-range, gender, and price, are imagined to stand outside of the legal discourse of the contract — they are recognized as people with identifiable characteristics, but they exist extra-legally within the system of Caribbean slavery and their bodies disappear into the 'net profits' recorded on the lower right column of the document.⁵⁴

52 For instance, Hopkins produces an invoice of goods loaded on the ship in Providence, keeps a log that narrates daily events on board the ship, documents financial transactions, and finally records the sale of the ships' captives in the West Indies. Brown University has digitized all surviving documents related to the *Sally's* voyage. These documents are available here: <https://library.brown.edu/cds/sally/>

53 Nicholas Brown and Company was a Providence merchant firm run by four brothers Nicholas, John, Joseph, and Moses Brown. Moses Brown was a prominent abolitionist and critical of his brothers' entering into the slave trade. According to James T. Campbell, *The Sally* was just one of roughly one thousand Rhode Island ships to engage the African slave trade. See Campbell, 'Navigating the Past: Brown University and the Voyage of the Slave Ship *Sally*, 1764–1765', *Imagining America*, 4, Syracuse University, 2007, <https://surface.syr.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1014&context=ia>

54 It is worth noting that enslaved men and women in the Caribbean did, of course, challenge Anglo-centric claims to textual authority *in writing*, and sought legal justice as well. See Nicole N. Aljoe, "'Going to Law": Legal Discourse and Testimony in Early West Indian Slave Narratives', *Early American Literature*, 46.2 (2011), 351–381, <https://doi.org/10.1353/eal.2011.0013>. She argues, 'Caribbean slaves did often (and successfully) seek justice and found audiences through which to voice their cases against slaveholders and establish the injustices of plantation slavery. More broadly, slave narratives and testimonies might be understood as such recourse as well. However, by law, enslaved peoples were often denied such recourses' (351). She specifically references *The History of Mary Prince* (1831), *Negro Slavery as Described by a Negro: Being the Narrative of Ashton Warner, a Native of St. Vincent* (1831), and A

The emphasis on sound in Middle Passage writing serves both to establish the veracity (realism) of the account and to incite empathy (sentimentalism). For instance, the surgeon, Alexander Falconbridge, includes the following in his 1788 *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*:

Exercise being deemed necessary for the preservation of their health, they are sometimes obliged to dance, when the weather will permit their coming on deck. If they go about it reluctantly, or do not move with agility, they are flogged; a person standing by them all the time with a cat-o'-nine-tails in his hand for that purpose. Their musick, upon these occasions, consists of a drum, sometimes with only one head; and when that is worn out, they do not scruple to make use of the bottom of one of the tubs before described. The poor wretches are frequently compelled to sing also; but when they do so, their songs are generally, as may naturally be expected, melancholy lamentations of their exile from their native country.⁵⁵

Falconbridge served as the surgeon on four slaving voyages between 1780 and 1787 before joining the abolitionist cause. His account describes the conditions and perverse treatment of captives — the forced singing and dancing and senseless brutality — in exact detail. His descriptions of captives' songs, however, are intended to elicit sympathy in his readers for the humanity of the men, women, and children on board by showing they not only feel but express the same feelings as Europeans and through a similar form: song. Their songs, described as 'melancholy lamentations of their exile from their native country', further connects the captives' songs to Western aesthetic traditions. The OED, for instance defines melancholy as a 'tender, sentimental, or reflective sadness; sadness giving rise to or considered as a subject for poetry, sentimental reflection, etc., or as a source of aesthetic pleasure'. This definition ties their sadness to artistic pleasure and their exile to the aesthetic practice of nostalgic contemplation. While Falconbridge routes the songs and expressions of African captives through the genres and popular sentiments recognizable to a British audience, we might also think about how he and other Anglophone writers use *African aesthetics* (as they develop in new forms on board ships) to produce *Anglophone traditions*. In this sense, the slave ship does not simply produce the

55 See Falconbridge's *An Account of the Slave Trade*.

conditions and epistemologies of racial capitalism. It also influences the eighteenth-century evolution of Western literary traditions as writers attempted to transcribe the sounds of these ships to the page.

Published within a year of Falconbridge's *Account*, James Field Stanfield's *The Guinea Voyage, A Poem in Three Books* (1789), turns to epic poetry as the form through which to narrativize the voices, events, and sounds of the slave ship. Or, perhaps more accurately, Stanfield transforms the epic in ways that it can be used to tell the story of the men, women, and children on board the ship. The classic epic told the histories of extraordinary people and tied their adventures to the foundation of national histories and shared moral values. Stanfield's poem reroutes the conventions of the epic in order to tell the history of enslaved individuals: that is, it begins in medias res with an invocation to a muse, introduces the theme, shows divine intervention, includes epithets and catalogues, and arguably uses the Middle Passage itself *as* the setting for the hero's descent into the underworld. Considering the traditional use of the epic, Stanfield's reworking invites us to consider what role the modern epic — the epic translated to the conditions of the Middle Passage — may play in shaping the national histories and mores of global modernity.

Turning to Stanfield's verse, it becomes clear that sound was important to the 'underworld' voyage of slave ships of the Middle Passage. Following the traditional opening (invocation and introduction of theme), the poem quickly moves into sonic registers and musical terms:

The direful Voyage to Guinea's sultry shore,
And Afric's wrongs, indignant Muse! deplore.
Or will the Muse the opprobrious theme disdain—
And start abhorrent from the unhallowed strain?
How blast the bard whom happier themes inspire,
Who wakes with kindred lays his melting lyre;
Whose soothing tones by sympathy impart,
Joy's glad emotions to the feeling heart!
But mine be such dread notes as fiercely pour
The shrieks of anguish on the midnight hour!
Be mine the broken strain, the fearful sound,
That wildly winds the howling death-song round!⁵⁶

56 James Field Stanfield, *The Guinea Voyage. A Poem in Three Books* (London: James Phillips, 1789), p. 1.

Stanfield signals from the opening that his epic will serve as a departure from tradition: his theme, a Guinea Voyage, is opprobrious and unhallowed — that is, disgraceful, unconsecrated, and all-in-all, new territory for the epic to take on. In introducing this new theme, he does so through sounds: in comparison to the ‘soothing tones’ of the classical bard’s ‘melting lyre’, his ‘dread notes’ record the shrieks of anguish, broken strains, and fearful sounds of a ‘howling death-song’ amplified throughout the ship. The phrase ‘broken strain’ further establishes the sonic and cognitive dissonance characterizing the ship and his poem. While the word ‘strain’ can intend bodily or emotional injury or damage, as well as struggle or labor, in a musical piece the strain establishes the melody. That is, the melody of this piece is broken. Stanfield, however, returns regularly to the ‘strain’ of his epic poem, writing later, ‘In one long groan the feeble throng unite; / One strain of anguish wastes the lengthen’d night’.⁵⁷ The line suggests that out of discordant voices, emerge sounds that can create a melody or ‘one strain’. That is, the sounds of the enslaved cargo transform radical unbelonging into, potentially, a form of radical resistance — a new song with a new melody unique to New World diasporic conditions.

Stanfield had experienced the Middle Passage as a crew member on several voyages before becoming an abolitionist. In addition to writing poetry, Stanfield wrote musical theatrical works for the English stage such as *The Fisherman*, as well as ballads such as *The Wedding of Ballyporeen*, and was himself a comic opera performer.⁵⁸ In this sense, it is perhaps not surprising that he would turn to the voice and musical and aural registers. While his poem probably presents a composite of different captives he encountered, he does seem to capture some of the unrepresentable voices and experiences of the enslaved. In particular, he tells the story of a woman, Abyeda, who he notes was the ‘theme and mistress of each rural song; / Once the blithe leader of each festive scene’. On board the ship, she maintains her role as story teller and songstress:

Half-meaning fragments of recorded woe,
In wild succession break the pensive lay,

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁵⁸ *The Fisherman* was performed in Scarborough in 1786 and remained unpublished. *The Wedding of Ballyporeen* appeared in print in *Oliver’s Choice Selection of Comic Songs* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Co., 1807). See *Notes and Queries: A Medium of Intercommunication for Library Men, Readers, etc.*, 8.11 (1897).

Through the drear night and lamentable day,
Her sad afflictions lift the melting tones,
And join each cadence with according groans.

She adds her voice to the ‘vocal throng’ as someone who can retell ‘fragments’ of her own personal and perhaps an emerging, collective history of exile and diaspora that includes the Middle Passage.⁵⁹

That said, Stanfield was probably less intent on showing an emergent African diasporic aural aesthetic and more interested in establishing his authority and prominence as an abolitionist writer and perhaps as a literary author as well. While he certainly paints an empathetic portrait, as Saidiya Hartman has shown, this kind of affective position can be just as dangerous as sentiments motivating anti-Black racism.⁶⁰ Moreover, Stanfield’s use of Black voices expressing bodies and psyches in pain to create literature filtered through a canonical Western genre tied to empire and nation building seems to simply coopt these bodies and minds in new ways for the production of the West. For this reason, I’ve sought to hear the page for the ways in which Black voices might destabilize the form of the epic and reroute its meaning and purpose.

That African captives did contest their enslavement by ‘rewriting’ the white page is evident in the work of Black men and women who wrote narratives of their enslavement and in the many examples of revolt from the Middle Passage. Like sounds that resonate through ships, the *story* of revolt has a tendency to migrate — through letters, rumors, and newspaper articles — from port to port and ship to ship between Africa, the Caribbean, and North America. The ‘sounds’ of revolt, in other words, not only reverberate through ships but travel beyond them and infect the print culture of wider Atlantic. In the log of the *Sandown*, for instance, captain Gamble not only records an uprising on his own ship, but uprisings on ships throughout the Atlantic: on the *Pearl* on 1 January 1794, on the *Yanfamara* on 16 March 1794, on the *Jimmy* in late May 1794. The revolt on the *Pearl* — Captain Howard — was less fortunate. The captives on board the *Pearl* killed the captain, ran the ship aground near Mattacong, destroyed all the vessel’s papers, and made a feast of ten dozen fowls and eight goats in the space of thirty-six hours

59 Stanfield, *The Guinea Voyage*, pp. 29–31.

60 See Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-making in Nineteenth-century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

before they were recaptured by the crew on the *Nancy* who must have noticed the wrecked ship.⁶¹ The fact that the captives on board the *Pearl* destroyed the ship's papers — logs, journals, account books — suggests that they may have recognized the role Anglophone writing and accounting played in their enslavement. Furthermore, if these records reduce men and women to abstract numbers, through their destruction, only the rumors or echoes of revolt remain — echoes that reduce Anglophone commercial writing itself to mere noise. While these are stories of unfulfilled insurrections, they produced discursive noise in port towns and in print, and perhaps circulated as counterclaims to political enfranchisement, located at the very center of the writing that seeks to define freedom and unfreedom.

At the outset of this chapter I suggested that we take up Rath's challenge to 'hear the page' for histories otherwise sunk in the sea. The paper trail left behind by the slaving voyages I've referenced here expose a well-rehearsed paradox at the center of Atlantic modernity: commercial avenues that facilitated the distribution of Anglophone writing, knowledge, and culture, also operated as networks to exploit the labor of dislocated peoples. Capitalism's 'free markets' may have paved the way for Enlightenment politics centered on notions of liberty and equality, but these same markets supported and were supported by the 'unfreedom' of others.⁶² However, by using their own bodies to make sound, enslaved Africans challenged the very notion that those bodies were no longer their own. Peter Linebaugh has argued that 'the ship remained perhaps the most important conduit of Pan-African communication before the appearance of the long-playing

61 *A Slaving Voyage to Africa and Jamaica*, pp. 93–94.

62 Scholars such as Eric Williams, C. L. R. James, and Paul Gilroy have long argued that Atlantic geographies defined by slavery are at the foundational center — rather than the periphery — of an Atlantic modernity produced by global capitalism. Hilary Beckles notes, it 'was in the Caribbean vortex of the Atlantic Basin that [...] international capitalism took its early cultural and social identity' (785). Caribbean colonies, he continues, were enmeshed in 'a transcontinental complex of brokers, agents, and financiers', imported 'indentured labor from 'back home' and enslaved labor from Africa', and 'produced crops with capital and credit from Europe, imported food and building materials from mainland colonies, and exported their commodities globally' (778). Beckles, 'Capitalism, Slavery, and Caribbean Modernity', *Callaloo*, 20.4 (1997), 777–789, <https://doi.org/10.1353/cal.1997.0070>. See also Eric Williams's *Capitalism and Slavery* (Raleigh: UNC Press, 1994) and C. L. R. James' *The Black Jacobins* (New York: Vintage, 1989).

record'.⁶³ Both the ship and the ships' logs may function as early 'audio technologies' that prefigure the long-playing record. Ships are conduits of sound — and thus memory and communication — and, as they cross back and forth across the Atlantic, function as recorders of what has been heard.⁶⁴ In this sense, ships act as communicative devices that promote narrative and that bring cacophonous, discordant voices into a chorus. This recording is, on occasion, reproduced in maritime writing, but most often it uses human bodies as conduits. Indeed, the soundscape of the Middle Passage is embedded in the very bodies it transports. The ship itself functions as an instrument that fosters polyphonic forms of expression that carry over to cane fields and other sites of labor in the Americas. These forms not only characterize creole cultures of the Atlantic, but also level a direct challenge to the 'order' that was produced on board ships, reproduced in the plantation economies of the Americas, and that, in many ways, continues to structure the relationship between empire and a postcolonial Caribbean.

Contemporary Caribbean writers, such as Michelle Cliff, have taken up the project of retracing the colonial processes of expropriation and exploitation that have produced Creole cultures of the Atlantic but that are largely absent from official historiographies. Cliff situates her own writing within a larger diasporic project that is 'retracing the African part of ourselves, reclaiming as our own, and as our subject, a history sunk under the sea, or scattered as potash in the canefields, or gone to bush, or trapped in a class system notable for its rigidity and absolute dependence on color stratification. On a past bleached from our minds. It means finding the artforms of these our ancestors and speaking the

63 Quoted in Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, p. 13.

64 This is especially the case with sea shanties that narrate historical events, reference commercial networks, or tell stories about sailors' lives. For instance, the song 'Spanish Ladies', may reference British ships docked in Spanish harbors when Spain and Britain were still allied against Revolutionary France. Moreover, the chorus — 'we'll rant and we'll roar like true British sailors/we'll rant and we'll roar all on the salt sea' — points to the significance of sound to an Atlantic world dominated by sailors and laborers often removed from the official record. 'Spanish Ladies' is referenced in the logbook of *The Nellie* in 1796, suggesting that, at least briefly, the sounds of an Atlantic soundscape entered the written record. On the emergence of an Atlantic pre-industrial proletariat, see Eric Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon, 2001).

patois forbidden us'.⁶⁵ In other words, Cliff calls on writers and artists to find new archives and to read the old archives in new ways. A study of sound — with its antagonistic relationship to Enlightenment-era technologies centered on sight — could generate models of reading through which we do not simply reproduce, in Cliff's words, the systems and stratifications of disempowerment, but that instead retrace or reclaim that which has been scattered across various archives. That is, a study of sound may offer a new language of reading — a way of rehearing the record — that breaks a cycle that otherwise reproduces the cold accounting of the written record. In accounts that record the sounds of insurrection along the routes of colonial slavery, we can begin to listen for the radical breaks in which the scream, the din, and the noise will not be reduced to the visual field of Enlightenment rationality — that is, the page.

65 Michelle Cliff, *The Land of Look Behind: Prose and Poetry* (Ann Arbor: Firebrand, 1985), p. 14.

6. Little Black Giovanni's Dream Black Authorship and the 'Turks, and Dwarves, the Bad Christians' of the Medici Court¹

Emily Wilbourne

The poem, 'Sogno di Giovannino Moro', survives in a single manuscript copy, undated and unattributed, in the Medicean archives in Florence; the first page is shown as Figure 6.1.² Throughout this chapter, I attribute authorship of the 'Sogno' to the enslaved Black chamber singer Giovannino Buonaccorsi, who was active at the Medici court between 1651 and his death on August 15, 1674.³ Buonaccorsi is often identified in contemporary sources by the name Giovannino Moro, Giovannino *il Moro* [Little Black Giovanni], or merely *il Moro* [the Black]⁴ and thus can

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- 1 Research for this paper was supported by a fellowship from the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies at I Tatti, Florence, and by a Scholars' Incentive Award from Queens College of the City University of New York. I would like to thank Paul Kaplan, both for having introduced me to the poem explored in this chapter, and for the several wonderful conversations that we have had about Buonaccorsi and Black Africans in Italian courts. All translations in this chapter are mine unless otherwise indicated; I thank Lucia Marchi for her careful work to ensure their accuracy.
 - 2 The poem can be found at the Archivio di Stato di Firenze (hereafter, ASF), *Mediceo del Principato*, f. 6424, c.n.n.
 - 3 His death is recorded in the Archivio Storico Arcivescovile di Firenze (hereafter, ASAF), *S. Felice in Piazza*, Morti dal 1627 al 1686, RPU 0025.13, c.236v.
 - 4 In seventeenth-century sources, the descriptor *moro* is notoriously difficult to translate, as meanings range from 'brunette' to 'Muslim' to 'Black African', depending on context, or more precisely on the presumptions of a given author or

be associated with the poem by the title alone.⁵ Both previous scholars to have mentioned the poem — the art historians Alessandro Grassi and Paul Kaplan, each of whom consider the poem in relation to the Volterrano painting shown as Figure 6.2 — also attribute authorship to Buonaccorsi.⁶ They do so with a rather pleasurable naiveté — assigning authorship to the most obvious contender as if he were not Black, or a slave; as if he were an autonomous subject fully capable of artistic endeavor. They neatly sidestep the qualifications and disavowals that typically shield such assertions from the charge of overreaching. Buonaccorsi was one of a considerable number of Black African and Middle-Eastern Muslim and newly Christianized court retainers who arrived in Florence under conditions of enslavement, and his very presence in Italy testifies to an endemic practice of Italian slavery with which scholars are only recently beginning to grapple. Within academia the work of documenting the historical presence of Black Africans, slaves, and other racialized minorities within early modern Europe (as Kaplan long has done) has itself been seen as a radical and often destabilizing project. To make a further claim for Black authorship is bold, indeed.

The figure of a Black, enslaved, seventeenth-century (quite possibly castrated) Italian poet is difficult to extricate from the logic of exceptionalism, by which the scholarly authority of arguments, analysis,

scribe. In the sources I have worked with in Florence, the term is used almost exclusively to describe Black Africans who predominantly entered Italy via the Middle East or the Ottoman empire, with the diminutives *morino* or *moretto* used to describe Black children. Muslims more generally were typically described with the term *turco*. I have chosen therefore to translate the term as 'Black' in recognition of the localized Florentine usage.

- 5 Previous scholarship on Buonaccorsi has rendered several confused versions of his name. I trace and clear up this confusion in my forthcoming essay, Emily Willbourne, "'... La curiosità del personaggio': *Il Moro* on the Mid-Century Operatic Stage', in *Seachanges: Music in the Mediterranean and Colonial Worlds, 1550–1880*, ed. by Kate van Orden (Florence: I Tatti Studies, forthcoming).
- 6 The poem is referenced (though not transcribed) by Alessandro Grassi in his catalogue entry on the Volterrano painting included here as Figure 6.2, see Maria Cecilia Fabbri, Alessandro Grassi, and Riccardo Spinelli, *Volterrano: Baldassarre Franceschini (1611–1690)* (Florence: Ente Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze, 2013), p. 245. I heard Paul Kaplan discuss the poem on 23 October 2015, at the conference 'Staging Africans: Race and Representation in Early Modern European Theaters', Columbia University, in his as-yet-unpublished paper, 'Giovannino Moro: A Black African Servant, Musician, Actor and Poet at the Medici Court', which he generously shared with me.

inferences, and conclusions — not to mention the historical, scholarly, and pedagogical value of the work of art — rests on the single claim of authorship.⁷ It is easy to presume that any interest in the work of art is motivated by the intersecting identity categories of author and scholar, and if it can be shown that the art was authored by someone else, even if sufficient doubt can be thrown on the attribution, the value of historical person, scholarly reputation, and published scholarship crumbles (and associated political ideologies devalued). Such pitfalls are familiar (to musicologists, at least) from the history of scholarship on female musicians: the music is good *for a girl*; we only study this because *there were no other women composers*; this specific piece attributed to her is particularly good *from which I assume her brother wrote it*.

In earlier drafts of this chapter I hedged my claims of Buonaccorsi's authorship with words like 'presumed', 'possibly', 'potential', and located my conclusions in the safely deferred linguistic fiction of the subjunctive: 'if Buonaccorsi *were* the author, *then...*'. The more time I spent with the poem, however, the more convinced I became of Buonaccorsi's authorial claim, and more importantly, the more deeply and uncomfortably I became aware that the strongest (perhaps only) counterargument against his authorship implicitly relies on the color of his skin. The purportedly neutral skepticism of academic practice requires a higher burden of proof for exceptions to the straight, white, male model, insisting on the foreignness of the enslaved Black man and presuming his incapacity. According to the traditional logics of musicological practice, the authorial attribution to Buonaccorsi would seem more convincing were I able to point to mistakes in the text: mistakes would *prove* the foreignness of the author and might illustrate a reliance on spoken dialect or foreign words. But grammatical errors can only be used as evidence for Black authorship if we presume an incapacity to write and speak correctly on the part of Black humans. Contemporary Italian authors often made such assumptions or traded in their familiarity, representing the speech of Black characters with a thick stage dialect, discussed at some length in the central part of this chapter.⁸ But we need not perpetuate such assumptions.

7 The issue of Buonaccorsi's probable castration, not developed here, is discussed in Wilbourne, "'La Curiosità'".

8 The practice of staged Black voices was not limited to Italy; the Spanish tradition is explored in Nicholas Jones, *Staging Habla De Negros: Radical Performances of the*

In this chapter I celebrate the subtlety and sophistication of Buonaccorsi's poetry. His sharp critique and witty wordplay place his Black body at the very center of Italian court life. In the poem, the narrator/singer Giovannino⁹ speaks in the first person, conjuring and impersonating a 'Zingara indovina' [a gypsy fortune teller] who mocks a motley crew of Turks, dwarves, and buffoons — a group that Buonaccorsi calls the 'mal'Cristiani' [bad Christians] of the court, most of whom I have identified with contemporary historical figures. The 'Sogno di Giovannino Moro' thus documents the way in which bodily differences — of (racially marked) slaves, freaks, and fools — were enjoyed by the court and provides a rare opportunity to exemplify the ephemeral entertainments provided by the 'cortigiani di basso servizio' [courtiers of lowly service].¹⁰ The poem resonates with other extant buffoonish texts, such as Margherita Costa's *Li buffoni* (1641), a *comedia ridicola* set at the Medici court and populated by a similar strata of courtly inhabitants.¹¹ Buonaccorsi's poem-as-artefact helps jog our historical memory, providing a point of entry into the experience of difference and its lived meanings in early modern Europe.

1. The Text

The 'Sogno di Giovannino Moro' is bound into the unpaginated volume ASE, *Mediceo del Principato*, f. 6424, where an unhelpful if well-intentioned archivist saw fit to extract and collate poetic material from disparate archival sources, thus separating the poems from any accompanying

African Diaspora in Early Modern Spain (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.5325/j.ctv14gp309>

- 9 Throughout this chapter I use the name 'Giovannino' when I refer to the speaking subject of the poem and 'Buonaccorsi' when I refer to the historical person.
- 10 The quote comes from the catalogue entry describing the image that appears in this chapter as Figure 6.3, the *Ritratto di quattro servitori della corte medicea* (c. 1684), and is cited there from an early eighteenth-century description of the painting, see Anna Bisceglia, Matteo Ceriana, and Simona Mammana, *Buffoni, villani e giocatori alla corte dei Medici* (Livorno: Sillabe, 2016), p. 92.
- 11 Margherita Costa, *Li buffoni* (Florence: Massi and Landi, 1641). An excellent translation of the Costa has just been published, see Margherita Costa, *The Buffoons, a Ridiculous Comedy: A Bilingual Edition*, trans. and ed. by Sara Díaz and Jessica Goethals (Toronto: Iter Press, 2018). A facsimile of the 1641 print is also available online, at https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=SNnzCooz258C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

letters or documentation that might date or contextualize them.¹² This particular volume (one of eight such *filze* held in the archive) includes an important early version of Ottavio Rinuccini's *La Dafne*, recently brought to light by Francesca Fantappiè.¹³ It also includes a number of texts for singing associated with the circle of Cardinal Giovan Carlo de' Medici (in whose household Buonaccorsi belonged until the Cardinal's death in 1663), and at least one other racially-charged text: a poem by Ciro di Pers (1599–1663) entitled, 'Al Signore Bali Alessandro Orso Cavaliere vecchio che s'innamora di una schiava mora mentre viene a pigliar del foco alla sua casa' [For old Sir Alessandro Orso, the Bailiff, who fell in love with a Black slave when she came to his house to collect the fire].¹⁴ Di Pers's text provides a useful foil for that of Buonaccorsi precisely because di Pers fails to engage with racial difference or slavery, despite their structural centrality. The di Pers poem pokes fun at the old (white) man's foolishness and constructs an elaborate conceit about the color of the young Black woman's skin, the blackening effects of (literal) fire, the (metaphorical) fire of passion, and the purity (and thus 'whiteness') of love. As such, the Blackness and servitude of the young woman are quickly shifted from the realm of physical fact to metaphorical witticism. While di Pers's poem testifies to the presence of Black slaves and to the exposure of enslaved women to the sexual advances of the men around them, it provides no commentary on the circumstances thus described and no hint of the young woman's thoughts about her situation. Her color operates primarily as a poetic figure rather than as a material feature of her existence in Florence — one which would have had significant consequences for her life and her treatment at the hands of others.

The hand that copied the 'Sogno' is clear, neat, and practiced. A single error (omitting two words) was made on the second page, and corrected seemingly immediately. This is a clean copy, not a draft. The text consists of seven strophes, the first and last of which are composed in *versi sciolti* (mixed lines of seven or eleven syllables), providing both a structural and narrative frame to the poem. These two strophes are spoken in

12 The series *Poesie e Pasquinate* runs from 6420–6427, see *Archivio Mediceo del Principato. Inventario sommario*, Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, 1) (Rome: [n.p.], 1951), p. 240ff.

13 Francesca Fantappiè, 'Una primizia rinucciniana: *La Dafne* prima della "miglior forma"', *Il sagggiatore musicale*, 24 (2018), 189–228.

14 ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, f. 6424, c.n.n.

the poetic voice of Giovannino Moro himself; they explain (in the first instance) the dream that he had and (in the second) the moment in which he woke up. The five central strophes, in contrast, are enunciated in the voice of the gypsy who appears in his dream; they are highly rhythmic, with a tightly controlled rhyme scheme: AaBcCbDD. Here capitalization refers to metric form, with lowercase letters indicating shorter *quaternario* lines (four syllables long) and capital letters *ottonari* (eight syllables long). The first four of the central five strophes treat individual members of the court, addressing each figure in turn using the second person singular ('tu'), while the fifth discusses the group as a whole.

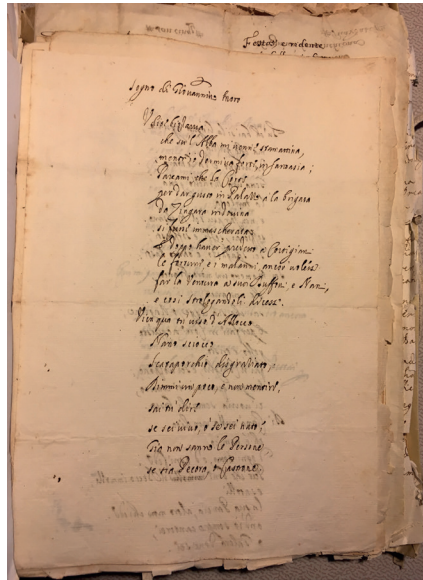


Fig. 6.1 First page of the poem, ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, f. 6424, c.n.n.

Both the textual content and the poetic structure invoke performance. We can imagine the interpellative force of the second-person-indicative text, with the body of the performer (of Buonaccorsi) turning with the start of each new strophe in order to mock his companions one after another. We also need to consider that the poem was almost certainly sung. By mid-century, *versi sciolti* (such as those used in the first and last strophes) were tightly linked to recitative, while full strophes of *versi pari* (lines of verse in even meters, as used in the central five

strophes) were rarely seen outside of musical performance. Strophic poetry is easily paired with a repeating musical unit (that is, each strophe sung to the same music or a lightly altered variant thereof).

Buonaccorsi was described as a 'musico da camera' [chamber musician] in a list of the members of the household of Cardinal Giovan Carlo de' Medici, prepared in early 1663.¹⁵ He is depicted in the act of song in his one known surviving portrait (see Figure 6.2); we can also note that he is shown singing from a sheet of paper, from which the viewer can directly infer his literacy, musical and/or textual. Furthermore, he is known to have sung in an entire series of operas in Florence in mid-century, as well as at least one season at SS. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice,¹⁶ circumstances which testify to a high level of musical training and thus several years of instruction (the musician and composer Jacopo Melani trained at least one young castrato in Giovan Carlo's household).¹⁷ Interestingly, twenty years earlier, when the Grand Duchess wanted 'her *Moretto Abissino* [little Black Ethiopian¹⁸ boy] of around fourteen years of age' instructed and catechized with an eye to his eventual conversion to Christianity, she assigned the task to the priest Giuliano Guglielmi, who testified not only that he instructed the boy directly, but that he assigned him to 'join the lessons of the children of Signore Agostino Sacchetti, who were being educated under the discipline of Messer Vettorino Pennini'.¹⁹ (These details are reminiscent

15 See ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, f. 5358, c.657v.

16 For a discussion of these Black characters, see Wilbourne, "'La Curiosità'".

17 A 'castratino' who sang in *Ercole in Tebe* (in 1661) attracted the attention of the Queen of France, who requested that he be sent — along with Antonio Rivani and Leonora Ballerini — to the French court to sing; Cardinal Giovan Carlo refused, citing the castratino's weak state and his need to remain longer with his teacher, Jacopo Melani. The castrato in question was probably Giovanni Francesco Grossi, later *detto* Siface, who was then only eight or nine and reputedly sang the part of Nettuno. See Sara Mamone, *Serenissimi fratelli principi impresari: Notizie di spettacolo nei carteggi Medicei. Carteggi di Giovan Carlo de' Medici e di Desiderio Montemagni suo segretario (1628–1664)* (Florence: Le Lettere, 2003), letters 803 and 813.

18 In such contexts, the adjective 'Abissino' or 'Etiopie' is more likely to refer to black skin rather than a specific geographical origin in modern or early modern Ethiopia. Indeed, since Ethiopians were largely understood to be Christian at the time, the conversion of this young boy plausibly suggests that he was not literally from Ethiopia.

19 '[I] suo Moretto Abissino d'età 14 in circa'; 'Io fin ora l'ho esercitato in simili operationi, e per mio aiuto l'ho accompagnato con i figlioli del già S. Agostino Sacchetti educati sotto la disciplina del M. Vettorino Pennini'. ASF, *Pia Casa dei Catecumeni*, f. 1, c.n.n. [ins. 91], 28 August 1630. The 'Moretto Abissino' was

of the early education of the late sixteenth-century Black poet, Juan Latino, who was enslaved in Granada, Spain, and accompanied his master's son to lessons.)²⁰ While the evidence concerning Buonaccorsi's education is circumstantial, a trained musician at his level would have been more than capable of improvising an accompaniment or singing a text *contrafactum* to an extant tune.

The musical implications of the 'Sogno' text are further strengthened when we consider the long association between buffoonery and musical performance. In Costa's *Li buffoni*, for example, when Marmotta (the princess of Fessa) and Tedeschino (a buffoon) discuss the requirements of buffoonery, music is the first item on the princess's list:

Marmotta	A tal sorte di gente	For that class of people [buffoons]
	Convien saper cantare,	it's best to know how to sing,
	Sonare, motteggiare,	to play music, to banter,
	Aver frasi galante,	to have smooth sayings,
	Botte ridicolose,	ridiculous retorts,
	Bei motti all'improvviso,	smart offhand quips,
	Saper tacere a tempo,	to know when to keep silent,
	Non parlar fuor di tempo.	to not speak out of turn. ²¹

The 'Sogno di Giovannino Moro' epitomizes the impromptu courtly entertainments produced by buffoons, jesters, dwarves and enslaved court retainers — a type of music-making known to have occurred at

renamed Giovambattista when he was baptized (see L'Archivio storico dell'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore (hereafter, ASOF, *Battesimali maschi*, reg. 38, f. 55). Though both Buonaccorsi and this young boy were called variants of the name Giovanni, I do not mean to imply that they were the same individual. Many baptized slaves were renamed Giovanni, particularly in Florence, where John the Baptist is the patron saint of the city.

20 J. Mira Seo, 'Identifying Authority: Juan Latino, an African Ex-Slave, Professor, and Poet in Sixteenth-Century Granada', in *African Athena: New Agendas*, ed. by Daniel Orrells, Gurminder K. Bhambra, and Tessa Roynon (Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2011), pp. 258–276, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199595006.003.0016>

21 Costa, *The Buffoons*, trans. and ed. Díaz and Goethals, I, 10, pp. 178–179.

Court with some regularity but which was infrequently documented or recorded. The various subjects of Buonaccorsi's verses implicate an interesting cross section of courtly life as present at and (perhaps unwillingly) participant in Buonaccorsi's performance of the poem, excavating a community of 'Turks, and dwarves, the bad Christians' (lines 44–45) who were, in Buonaccorsi's prescient formulation, 'of the Court' (44). These individuals were too familiar to their more evidently European interlocutors (the Princes, patrons, nobles, clerics, and artisans with whom history has largely been concerned) to be truly strangers or truly strange, even while it was their physical, racial, and religious differences that brought them (and bought them) into the court.

2. The Translation

The poem begins with an invocation, calling the attention of onlookers and setting the scene with a gradual layering of information that then permits the direct address and individualized punchlines of the central verses. Though Buonaccorsi himself plays the Gypsy, he cleverly displaces the responsibility for the insults he dishes out: he himself is not telling their fortunes, the Court is, in disguise, and anyway, it was just a dream. The barbed humor of the following verses is remarkably individualized, rendering discernible physical and behavioral traits of the personalities in question.

In the first instance, Giovannino mocks the dwarf Scatapocchio, familiar to scholars as one of the characters in Costa's *Li buffoni*, and identified by Teresa Megale as a *nano* [dwarf] in the service of Prince Leopoldo de' Medici from at least 1640;²² I have seen his name in the accounts as late as 1656.²³ Costa explained for her readers that Scatapocchio was a 'nanetto piccolissimo', that is a particularly small dwarf, and his diminutive stature is emphasized in her play where he serves as a 'bravo' [henchman] to another dwarf.²⁴ In the 'Sogno', the

22 Teresa Megale, 'La commedia decifrata: Metamorfosi e rispecchianti in *Li buffoni* di Margherita Costa', *Il castello di Elsinore*, 2 (1988), 64–76 (p. 70).

23 ASF, *Camera del Granduca*, f. 28b, c.22r.

24 The quote, 'nanetto piccolissimo' comes from the advice 'A' lettori', Costa, *The Buffoons*, trans. and ed. Díaz and Goethals, p. 76.

joke about whether or not Scatapocchio is a newborn implies a similar reference to his size, and the *battuta* [joke] about whether he is to be understood as a female sheep or a *castrone* [a gelded male sheep] suggests that Scatapocchio had a high-pitched or squeaky voice, a common side-effect of primordial dwarfism.

The Spanish dwarf referenced in the following verse is almost certainly Gabriello Martinez, ‘famed in his own time for his ability to “soffiare” [lit. to blow], that is to be a spy’,²⁵ and who regularly appears in the account books of Ferdinando II.²⁶ The poem accuses Martinez of being smelly, and also of using a crutch when it wasn’t necessary. The word that Giovannino uses for cane is ‘muleta’, a Spanish term for a short wooden stick with a red cloth tied to one end, used in the closing stages of a bullfight. He thus cleverly implicates the spectacularized death of a powerful animal and a thoroughly Spanish pastime in his roasting of Martinez.

The subject of the third verse, Maometto Turco [Mohammad the Turk], appears in the account books of the Camera del Granduca several times during 1653.²⁷ He is referred to in the poem as a ‘moro bianco’ [a white Moor], a term I have found repeatedly in contemporary Florentine sources, and which seems to have indicated Ottoman Muslims, frequently dressed in recognizably foreign style, including turbans. This particular verse of the poem gave me the greatest difficulty in translation, though each word taken individually is easily parsed. The poet makes a euphemistic pun based on woodland animals and the natural environment. The reference, I believe, is to sodomitic behavior, which Giovannino accuses Maometto of exchanging for financial and social rewards at Court; Ottoman Turks were widely held to be sodomites by early modern European commentators.²⁸

25 Bisceglia, Ceriana, and Mammana, *Buffoni*, p. 80.

26 For example, in September of 1667, Gabriello nano and Giovannino moro are both mentioned in the accounts in relatively quick succession, see ASF, *Camera del Granduca*, f. 39b, c.4r.

27 See ASF, *Camera del Granduca*, ff. 24 and 25.

28 See Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822385905>; and Mustafa Avcı, ‘Köçek: A Genealogy of Cross-Dressed Male Belly Dancers (Dancing Boys) from Ottoman Empire to Contemporary Turkey’ (PhD thesis, New York University,

I have not identified the addressee of the fourth verse: Canà, possibly nicknamed 'Becco' (Beak, though the capitalization may just emphasize a euphemistic reference to male genitalia). The poem describes him not only as a non-Christian, but as the enemy of every sect and religion, and as a bottomless pit of gluttony. It also suggests that Canà — like many of the Medici court slaves and like the many hundreds of Medici slaves held in Livorno — was once on the galleys.²⁹ The Florentine galleys procured a steady stream of slaves for the state, while only a select few made it into the more-rarified arena of the court. Carali, for example, a young Black man who in 1653 was brought to the Medici court under conditions of enslavement, described his capture and arrival in document held at the Pia Casa dei Catecumeni. Written in 1657, the document 'explains how it was four years ago that he was taken by Captain Flaminio of Livorno and brought to Florence and into the service of his most serene highness, Prince Mattias'.³⁰ In his own words (though transcribed by a priest), Carali attested: 'My name is Carali, I do not know the name of my father, and I was born in Barbary, in Zeila [a coastal city in present-day Somalia] of the race of Granada; [I claim] to be sixteen years old, to live in Florence, and being on the sea, the boat in which I found myself was captured'.³¹

From a musicological perspective, Buonaccorsi's reference to the galleys and to song is particularly fascinating. Here song itself is presented as a medium through which a colleague or companion can be subtly teased, and a past existence — in which presumably much less food was available — can be brought back to mind; the text suggests that 'O Galera dove sei' ['Oh, galley where are you?']

2015). Of course, sodomy was common in Florence and among Italian men, too, as were rumors and gossip about the practice, see, Michael Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships: Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

29 See, for example, Stephanie Nadalo, 'Negotiating Slavery in a Tolerant Frontier: Livorno's Turkish *Bagno* (1547–1747)', *Medievalia*, 32.1 (2011), 275–324, <https://doi.org/10.1353/mdi.2011.0004>

30 ASAF, *Pia Casa dei Catecumeni*, f. 2, c.n.n. [ins. 18]. It is possible that I have mis-transcribed the name Canà and that it is supposed to read Carà, in which case this could be a reference to Carali himself. When Carali was baptized he took the name Mattia Medici (after his owner Prince Mattias de' Medici), see ASOF, *Battesimali maschi*, reg. 51, f. 236.

31 ASAF, *Pia Casa dei Catecumeni*, f. 2, c.n.n. [ins. 18].

could be a popular song that would have been recognizable to contemporary audience members. In the anonymous libretto for *Scipione in Cartagine*, performed in the Cocomero theater, Florence, in 1657, the Black galley slave character Caralì sings in celebration of his imminent freedom: ‘Non biscottu mangiar, / Non corbasciù tucçar’.³² Caralì’s dialogue is rendered in an ungrammatical slave jargon, while the meaning, ‘No more eating ship’s biscuit! No longer touched by the whip!’, provides a poignant contrast with Canà in the ‘Sogno’, who asks for nothing as long as his stomach is sated.



Fig. 6.2 Baldassarre Franceschini (1611–1690), detto il Volterrano. *Ritratto di suonatore di liuto con cantore moro* (Panbollito e Giovannino moro); 1662. Oil on canvas: 95 x 144 cm. Private collection. Photo by DEA / G. NIMATALLAH / De Agostini via Getty Images.

32 Anon., *Scipione in Cartagine*, *dramma musicale; fatto rappresentare da gli Accademici Sorgenti, nel loro teatro, sotto la protezione del Sereniss. e Reverendiss. Princ. Card. Gio: Carlo Di Toscana* (Florence: Gio: Anton Bonardi, 1657), I, 4, p. 34.



Fig. 6.3 Anton Domenico Gabbiani (1652–1726). *Ritratto di quattro servitori della corte medicea*; c. 1684. Oil on canvas: 205 x 140 cm. Florence, Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Pitti, inventario 1890 n. 3827. Used with permission of the Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali e per il Turismo; further reproduction or duplication of this image is not permitted.

The text of the ‘Sogno’ also mentions ‘Panbollito’, the literal meaning of which is a cheap soup made with boiled bread, common in Tuscan peasant cuisines, but perhaps more pertinently was the nickname of Pier Gio: Albizzi, a *staffiere* or footman in the employ of Giovan Carlo de’ Medici.³³ In the painting by Baldassarre Franceschini *detto* il Volterrano, shown in Figure 6.2, Albizzi appears alongside Buonaccorsi. The painting was described in 1663 as representing ‘Pan Bollito who plays the lute, and the *Moro* with a piece of music in hand, with a violin and books, in the hand of Baldassarre’.³⁴ Twenty years later, the art critic and historian Filippo Baldinucci wrote, ‘then, in a painting, [Baldassarre] represented a young footman of [Giovan Carlo’s] court, with Giovannino his *moro*, who was a very good singer, in the act of singing’.³⁵ The only other painting thought to have depicted Buonaccorsi — unfortunately lost — also belonged to Giovan Carlo, and showed ‘the *Moro*’ alongside the dwarf Petricco, holding a bowl of ricotta.³⁶ This shared context of *nani* and *mori* seems habitual at the Medici court, where the two often appear side by side in archival documents, in the ‘Sogno’ text under discussion here, and in paintings such as that of Figure 6.3, dated to later in the century, in which Anton Domenico Gabbiani represented a *Ritratto di quattro servitori della corte medicea* (*Portrait of Four Servants of the Medici Court*).³⁷

33 Pier Gio: Albizzi is identified as ‘P. Bollito’ in the ‘Ruolo dei Cortigiani del Ser.mo Car.le Gio: Carlo a’ quali doppo la morte di S. A. Ill.mo doveva dargli impiego’, ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, f. 5358, cc.728–729.

34 The painting is listed among the Cardinal’s effects, as compiled after his death, in 1663: ‘Pan Bollito che suona il Liuto, et il Moro con una Carta di musica in Mano, con il Violino et libri, di mano di Baldassarre’. ASF, *Miscellanea medicea*, n. 31, ins. 10, c.133v.

35 ‘... dipoi [per il Cardinale Giovan Carlo de’ Medici, Volterrano] rappresentò in un quadro un giovanetto staffiere di sua Corte, con Giovannino suo moro, che fu assai buon musico, in atto di cantare’. The quote continues, ‘Trovasi oggi questo quadro in mano di Girolamo Gerini Senatore Fiorentino’. This part of the text describes works done by Volterrano for the Cardinal Giovan Carlo de’ Medici around 1662. Filippo Baldinucci, *Notizie de’ professori del disegno da Cimabue in qua* (Florence: Royal Printing House, 1682), p. 400.

36 ASF, *Miscellanea Medicea*, n. 31, ins.10, c.9v.

37 See, for example, the repeated payments documented in the accounts of Prince Mattias de’ Medici during the late 1650s and early 1660s, in which Arrigo Vinter is paid ‘per dare il Vitto di numero 6 fra Nani, e Mori’ (to give food to 6 dwarves and Moors). ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, f. 5487; many entries from these accounts are transcribed in Sara Mamone, *Mattias De’ Medici serenissimo mecenate dei virtuosi. Notizie di spettacolo nei carteggi medicei. Carteggio di Mattias de’ Medici (1629–1667)* (Florence: Le Lettere, 2013).

The text of the poem thus makes reference to five different members of the court, four of whom can be linked to specific individuals, and all of whom are made fun of in very specific and individualized ways. These are not generic sexualized or scatological insults, but clever, rhymed references to particular traits. Interestingly, and importantly, the figure of Giovannino Moro himself is never mocked, and this, to my mind, is the strongest argument for Buonaccorsi's authorship of the poem. Not only are no jokes made at his expense, but the figure of Giovannino is not introduced as part of the exordium. Were this written by someone else, we could expect Giovannino's character to be more fully fleshed out: my name is Giovannino, I come from afar, my skin is black as night, etc. Such phrases are habitual in the opening verses of masking songs and carnivalesque texts. Indeed, not only is such material conspicuously absent from the poem's introduction, but Giovannino wakes at precisely the moment in which the Gypsy is moving towards him, about to read his fortune. He thus makes his escape from mockery the structural pivot of the poem, retaining and emphasizing his position as narrator / author: a verse-making subject, not subject of the verse.

I have chosen to translate the title of the poem, 'Sogno di Giovannino Moro', as 'Little Black Giovanni's Dream'. This is only one of several possible renderings. First, I should note that the use of *di* to express possession leaves it ultimately unclear whether it is the dream or the poem that belongs to Giovannino; the title could be translated either as 'The Dream of Giovannino Moro' or as 'The Dream by Giovannino Moro'. My use of the possessive apostrophe is intended to incorporate both possibilities. Second, it could be argued that since 'Giovannino Moro' was a name by which Buonaccorsi was known, it ought to be retained unchanged. Importantly, however, both the *-ino* suffix and the word *moro* had literal indexical meanings implicit in their use — whether or not their use as a nickname normalized the interpolative work they did in the mouths, ears, and minds of Buonaccorsi and his contemporary interlocutors. I have chosen, therefore, to translate the (nick)name itself quite literally, in order to restore something of the shock inherent in the words: to be called (and to answer to) the name 'Little Black Giovanni' meant something, and though we cannot know exactly what it meant, reminding ourselves of the content and context of Buonaccorsi's nickname is important.

Table 6.1 'Little Black Giovanni's Dream', by Gio: Buonaccorsi, c. 1654.

Sogno di Giovannino Moro
ASF, Mediceo del Principato, f.6424, c.n.n.

[1r]

Udite bizzarra

che su'l'Alba mi venne stamattina,
 mentr'io dormiva forte, in fantasia;
 Pareami, che la Corte
 per dar gusto in Palazzo à la brigata³⁸
 da Zingara indovina
 si fusse immascherata.

E doppo haver predetto a Cortigiani
 le fortune, e i malanni, ancor' volesse
 far la Ventura a suoi Buffoni, e Nani,
 e cosi strologandoli dicesse.

Little Black Giovanni's Dream

Listen to this strange thing

which came to me this morning at dawn
 while I was deep asleep, in a dream;
 It seemed to me that—
 to give delight to the Palace crew—
 the Court was disguised
 as a Gypsy fortune teller.

And after she had predicted the fortunes
 and the misfortunes of the Courtiers,
 she wanted to read the destiny of the buffoons and dwarves,
 and so, astrologizing, she said:

38 John Florio defines *brigata* as follows: 'a company, a crew, a knot or rout of good fellowes' (<http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/florio/search/0831.html>)

[Scatapocchio]
 Come here, you wide-eyed fool,
 Silly dwarf,
 Disgraceful Scatapocchio [little prick];
 Tell me a little something, and don't lie,
 Do you know how to say
 whether you're alive or if you're newborn;
 People can't even tell
 whether you're a ewe or a gelding.

[Gabriello Martinez]
 You, who has such a sharp tongue,
 but who stinks,
 from up close and from far away.
 Throw it away, tramp, throw away
 that little cane [*muletta*],

Vien qua tu' viso d'Allocco³⁹
 Nano sciocco
 Scatapocchio⁴⁰ disgraziato;
 Dimmi un poco, e non mentir,
 sai tu' dir?
 se sei vivo, ò se sei nato;
 Gia non sanno le Persone,
 se sia Pecora, ò Castrone.

Tu' ch'hai sì la lingua aguzza,
 mà che puzza
 da vicino, e da lontano.
 Getta via monello getta
 la muletta

- 39 Literally the word 'Allocco' means a tawny owl, though the wide eye feathers and the resulting shocked or stunned expression that the bird has meant that in Italian the word has taken on a metaphorical meaning: the Treccani: '2. fig. persona sciocca, balorda, . . . intonito.' Diaz and Goethals translate the word as 'pimp' in their translation of Costa's *Li buffoni*, though that meaning does not seem relevant here; see p.333n28.
- 40 The word 'scatapocchio' was slang for male genitalia, traced by the Academia della Crusca to the poetry of Burchiello from the Quattrocento (see, for example, the third edition of 1691, vol. 3, p.1457), but was also the name of a dwarf in the service of Leopoldo de' Medici at mid-century, renowned for his particularly diminutive statue. The character 'Scatapocchio' appears in Costa's *Li buffoni*, see details of his identification as a historical person in Diaz and Goethals' introduction (pp.41-42), and in Megale 1988, p.70. The archive source Megale cites is from January of 1640; I have seen reference to him in the account books as late as December 1656; ASF *Camera del Gran Duca*, f.28b, c.22r.
- 41 A *muletta* is a red cloth attached to a stick, used by Matadors in the final stages of a bullfight; thus the reference here is to both Martinez's Spanish heritage and his trickster role.

e non far' più del'Malsano
soffierai, soffi, e soffiasti;⁴²
sei spagnolo, e tanto basti.

[1v]

Sei Mаметto⁴³ un moro bianco,
che non anco
sai che sia legge, ò Ragione;
E per fare in Corte acquisto,
goffo, e tristo
fai il Coniglio, e sei volpone;
ma per quanto io ti conosco,
ci vorria seme di bosco.

and stop being dishonest [lit. unhealthy],
you will spy, you do spy, you have spied,
you're Spanish, and that's enough.

[Maometto Turco]

You're Mohammad, a white Moor,
who knows neither
law or reason,
And in order to make a career at Court,
clumsy, and evil,
you pretend to be a rabbit, when you are a crafty fox;
but given what I know of you,
you'd do better to sow your seeds in the bush.⁴⁴

42 '[L]o spagnolo Gabriello Martinez, uno dei nani di Ferdinando II, celebre ai suoi tempi per l'abilità nel 'soffiare' ovvero nel far da spia, Anna Bisceglia, in her description of the painting *Ritratto del nano Gabriello Martinez*, anonymous, c.1640, olio su tela, 104 x 134 cm., Florence, Gallerie degli Uffizi, Galleria Palatina e Appartamenti Reali, depositi, inventario 1890 n. 5244; restauro Claudia Esposito 2016, in collaborazione con Lorenzo Conti (per il restauro strutturale) e con Aviv Fürst (per la cornice). Analisi scientifiche Art-Test di Emanuela Massa, from the catalogue *Buffoni, villani e giocatori alla corte dei Medici*, 2016, p.80; she in turn cites Magalotti, *Scritti di corte e di mondo* (1945), pp.227, 418 for the information about Martinez and spying.

43 I have seen mention of 'Maometto' and 'Maometto Turco' in the account books of the Grandduke in several instances during 1653, see ASF *Camera del Granduca*, f.24, c.47^{ro} (July 1653), and f.25, 4^r, 12^v, 14^v (September–December, 1653).

44 This is clearly a metaphor, though the meaning is somewhat opaque. My best guess here is that the joke puns on the woodland creatures mentioned in the *battuta* of the previous lines in order to make the underhand suggestion that Maometto is a sodomite or catamite (presumably for financial gain given the 'acquisto' that he gets in return), and that he should instead be using seeds (*seme*) in the bush (*bosco*, offered as a euphemism for vagina in the *Dizionario storico del lessico erotico italiano*, by Valter Boggione and Giovanni Casalegno). Ottoman Turks were regularly held to be sodomites by seventeenth-century Italian commentators. According to Salvatore Battaglia's *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, 'bosco' can also mean 'intrico, confusione (di cose fitte e intricate)', in which case the punchline could translate as 'the beginnings

Di Canà⁴⁵ nulla non dico
 ch'è nemico
 d'ogni setta, e d'ogni fede.
 Pur che bene il Becco⁴⁶ immolli,
 e satolli
 la sua Pancia, altro non chiede
 ond'io sempre canterei,
 ò Galera dove sei.

[2r]

Son di Corte i Turchi, e Nani
 mal'Cristiani
 e sottile hanno l'udito
 Poi ch'infatti à tutti piace,
 con lor'pace,

[Canà or Becco. Possibly Carali?]
 Of Canà I have nothing to say,
 because he is the enemy
 of every sect and of every faith,
 As long as his Beak is kept wet,
 and his stomach
 is sated, he asks for nothing else;
 therefore I would always sing,
 'Oh, galley where are you?'

They are of the Court: the Turks, and dwarves,
 the bad Christians,
 and they have a well-developed sense of hearing,⁴⁷
 In fact, they all like—
 Peace be with them—

of some trick or plot are needed.' I thank Francesca Fantappiè for her recommendation of the Battaglia text, Jessica Goethals for the Boggione and Casalegno, Diana Presciutti for being willing to talk about this one phrase for a very long time, and all the members of the Alterities seminar, May 2018, for helping me figure out various possible significations of this phrase.

45 Kaplan keeps 'Canà' and adds 'scoundrel' in square brackets, presumably based on the Crusca's definition of Canaglia: 'gente vile, e abietta,' (1st ed., 1612, p.147). Boggione and Casalegno note that Canà is a Piedmont word for a canal or drain (and thus an occasional euphemism for female genitalia).

46 This could also be a name or nickname, and the reference to keeping the beak wet could be both a sexual euphemism and a reference to the consumption of alcohol.

47 Lit.: 'They have a subtle sense of hearing.'

il soffiar' nel' Panbollito⁴⁸
 han Vescica che non tiene
 raspan male, e cantan' bene.

Qui mi parve, ch'allora
 venisse a me Costei
 per legger del morin sul'libro ancora.
 quando da gli occhi miei,
 mentre manco il pensai,
 fuggi la Corte, il sogno, e mi destai.

Here it seemed to me, that at that point
 She [the fortune teller] came towards me,
 to read more about the little Moor in her book,
 when from my eyes,
 without me realizing it,
 the Court, and my dream, fled; and I woke up.

48 Panbollito, which literally means 'boiled bread,' was the nickname of Pier Gio: Albizzi, a *staffiere* or footman in the employ of Cardinale Giovan Carlo de' Medici; Albizzi was known to have played the lute. See ASF *Madiceo del Principato* f.5358, c.756v for the details of his employment, and Volterrano's painting of Panbollito and Giovannino il Moro.

3. Authorial Voice

It is noteworthy that the 'Sogno' is written in idiomatic Italian, and not the slave *gergo* favored by (white) Italian authors and poets to represent the speech of both *mori* (which Gio: Buonaccorsi was) and gypsies (which the poem impersonates). This linguistic level, too, encourages an association with Buonaccorsi, who frequently sung Black roles written in proper Italian. Of the Black parts that featured on the Florentine stage at mid-century, only three used *gergo*, and only one of the three can be linked directly to Buonaccorsi — namely, the Black gypsy 'Moretta', in Giovanni Andrea Moniglia's *Il pazzo per forza* of 1659.⁴⁹

It is revealing to contrast Buonaccorsi's operatic performance as 'Moretta' with the gypsy impersonated by Giovannino in the 'Sogno'. The libretto of *Il pazzo per forza* includes a range of different Zingari. There was a chorus of gypsies, sung (according to the cast list) by Michele Mosi, Francesco Lionardi, Antonio Ruggieri, Nicola Coresi, and Giovanni Michele de Bar; a gypsy dance was also performed by various noblemen of the academy. In addition to our Moretta, played by Buonaccorsi, there was a fake gypsy, 'Muretta', impersonated by the page character Ligorino, played by the castrato Antonio Rivani, disguised using Moretta's clothes. The largest of these roles is that played by Rivani as Ligorino/'Muretta' (Rivani was well reputed and was the highest paid of the Cardinal's singers). Ligorino is given many opportunities to show off his cleverness and cunning, fulfilling the stock commedia role of the wily servant who ensures the convoluted story's happy ending.⁵⁰ Part of the joke is that Ligorino successfully pulls off his

49 The other two *gergo*-speaking characters were both called Carali and, as I have argued elsewhere, were almost certainly sung by Carali-Mattia. See Wilbourne, "'La Curiosità'". The 1659 libretto of *Il pazzo per forza* includes a cast list published on the final page which assigns the role of 'Moretta' to 'il Moro di S. A. Reverendiss'; I know of no other Moor who was owned directly by the Cardinal at this particular time. See Giovanni Andrea Moniglia, *Il pazzo per forza, dramma civile rusticale, fatto rappresentare in musica, da gl'illustriss. Sig. Accademici Immobili nel loro teatro, sotto la protezione del sereniss e reverendiss. Principe Cardinale Gio: Carlo di Toscana* (Florence: per il Bonardi, 1659), p. 124.

50 Emily Wilbourne, *Seventeenth-Century Opera and the Sound of the Commedia Dell'arte* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226401607.001.0001>

gypsy disguise by assuming not just the clothes, but also the name, and the language of the real gypsy. He assures his dubious master:

Ligurino	Quando presi la veste	When I took the clothes
	Di Zingara, pur anco 'l nome presi	Of the Gypsy, I took also the name
	Di Moretta da lei, ch'a me la diede,	Of Moretta from she who gave them to me.
	Per Moretta mi spaccio a chi mi vede;	I pass myself off as Moretta to all who see me;
	L'abito è in tutto eguale al suo, se vengo	My outfit is equal to hers in all ways, if I am
	Scoperto, getto via	Discovered, I will throw away
	(Badi vo signoria)	(Note well, Your Lordship)
	Linguaggio, panni, e nome.	Language, clothes, and name. ⁵¹

By language, Ligurino means slave *gergo*: a mashup of Neapolitan dialect words, un-conjugated verbs, and often a substitution of *b* for *p*.⁵² Ligurino's disguised voice is itself funny, but the elevation of sound also makes a joke about visual (racial) difference, since Ligurino (Rivani) was white and Moretta (Buonaccorsi) was Black. This color-change would have made it immediately obvious to the audience which Moretta was on stage at any given time and magnified the foolishness of the onstage characters who were tricked. Indeed, Ligurino is quite explicit about this difference, telling Trottole that (s) he has the power to change the color of her skin:

51 Moniglia, *Il pazzo per forza*, II, 12, p. 64.

52 Of the slave's *gergo* and its use by Black characters, Decroisette writes, 'questa figura di moro è abituale nei drammi di Moniglia, che gli dà un linguaggio esotico maccheronico, dominato dalla ù finale, dalla sostituzione di -p- in -b-, dall'uso degli infinitivi verbali, e dalla soppressione degli articoli'. See her editorial apparatus to Giovanni Andrea Moniglia, *Il vecchio balordo* (Venice: Lineadacqua, 2014), p. 149. Despite Decroisette's assertion, this kind of text is not typical of Buonaccorsi's roles. Gianfranco Salvatore has argued that many of the unfamiliar words in transcribed slave dialects are drawn from the African language, Kanuri, see Gianfranco Salvatore, 'Parodie realistiche: Africanismi, fraternità e sentimenti identitari nelle canzoni moresche del Cinquecento', *Kronos*, 14 (2011), 97–130.

Ligurino	Mi gran virtù tinir,	The biggest talent that I have:
	Chillu, ch'è biancu nigrù,	He who is white, black,
	Chillu, ch'è nigrù biancu far vinir.	He who is black, I make turn white. ⁵³

When later Trottolo encounters Moretta, he assumes that the two are one and the same person, placing his faith not in her skin color, but in her voice and her clothes:

Trottolo	Quanto è furba costei:	How sneaky she is!
	Ma io ben più di lei	But I — far better than she —
	Son di calca: Moretta,	Am a trickster: Moretta,
	Alle vesti, al parlar ti riconosco;	By your clothes and way of speaking I recognize you!
	E ben ch'adesso nera, e dinazi bianca,	And even if now you are black, and before were white,
	Questo a fe non ti franca,	This does not absolve you, I swear,
	Variare i colori	You told me that you know how
	Saper tu mi dicesti,	To vary your colors
	Come appunto facesti,	Just like you have done now
	per mascerar l'inganno.	To mask the trick. ⁵⁴

The Black Moretta appears only a few times, most notably at the ends of the first and second acts, emphasizing her relationship to comedy rather than narrative. Her presence serves to set up the two end-of-act dances and thus the intermedi. In Act I, Scene 37, Moretta enters to find Sgaruglia, Bellichino and a troupe of *battilani* [woolworkers] drinking. She sings a short aria in ternary form and then offers to read

53 Moniglia, *Il pazzo per forza*, II, 16, p. 69.

54 *Ibid.*, II, 28[b, the scenes are mis-numbered], p. 82.

their palms. Sgaruglia and Bellichino make it quite clear that they are not to be so easily tricked, at which point Moretta offers each of them a piece of advice. She whispers in their ears, 'If you don't watch out, your companion will steal your purse', picking their pockets as she does so (in the process, she knocks out a letter which drops to the floor, a mishap that ultimately proves crucial to the plot). Moretta takes her leave, and only later do both men realize that they have been robbed and — misled by her earlier advice — blame each other. They thus fight (dance) along with the *battilani*, which serves to close the act.

Moretta, Sgaruglia, Bellichino, Truppe di Battilani

Moretta Ligrizza, ligrizza,
 Si nun avir billizza
 Nun vulirmi dispirar:
 Ballar,
 Cantar,
 Miu curi,
 Miu amori,
 Muritta cusì
 Star tutta pir ti:
 Per visu liggiadru
 I Mundo star ladru;
 Chi bella vidir,

 Bramusu vulir
 Cun munita d'amur cumprar
 vaghizza.
 Liggrizza, ligrizza &c.

Sgaruglia Zinganina, degnate.

Moretta Manu vustra
 Guardar, buna vintura
 Pir vui tinir sicura.

Sgaruglia Nun ch'ho fede, nun c'ho.

Bellichino Quest'é una trappolla

*Moretta, Sgaruglia, Bellichino,
 troop of woolworkers*

Happiness, happiness,
 Even if I have no beauty,
 I don't want to despair.
 To dance,
 To sing,
 My hearts,
 My loves,
 Thus, Moretta,
 Is all yours.
 For a pretty face,
 The world becomes a thief.
 Whoever sees a beautiful
 woman
 Wants, with desire,
 To buy that beauty with the
 money of love.
 Happiness, happiness
 etc.

Little gypsy, look at my
 hand.

[In] your hand,
 I see, good fortune
 Comes for you, for sure.

I have no faith in this, no I
 do not.

This is a trap

	Da quattrinni, ma io E non ci spenderei n'anc'una lappolla: Andate a[l] fatto [v]ostro.	To get our money, but I Would not even spend a red cent. Go away and mind your own business.
Moretta	Dirvi sula In uricchiu parula.	I will tell you only One word in your ear.
Sgaruglia	A ufo.	[Only if it's] for free.
Bellichino	A ufo anch'io.	For free, for me too.
Moretta	Mi star cunvinta.	You have convinced me.
	<i>Moretta accostandosi all'orecchio or dell uno, or dell altro gli leva di tasca l'involto, e cadon in terra le lettere.</i>	<i>Moretta, coming close to the ear of first one and then the other, lifts the bundle out of their pockets, and the letters fall to the ground.</i>
	Se ti non ben guardar, Cumpagnu tuo tu bursa rubar.	If you don't watch out, Your companion will steal your purse. ⁵⁵

Unfortunately, the music composed by Jacopo Melani for this opera has not survived. Visually and metrically the text of Moretta's opening aria is striking, for the lines get longer as the song progresses. This Zingara offers to read palms, but is rebuffed; she picks pockets without being caught; she speaks *gergo*. She thus provides a strong contrast with the Zingara in the 'Sogno': unlike Buonaccorsi, Moretta relies on her wits, not on her witticisms. Later in the opera she is the unexpected (but delighted) recipient of money that Ligurino/'Muretta' had hoped to collect, and in the final scene of Act II delivers it to her gypsy companions. The scene is a 'field with gypsy wagons',⁵⁶ where a chorus of *zingari* sing 'Di stelle o crudità', a melancholy lullaby, which alternates between various groups of voices (one, two, and four singers) as well as the chorus as a whole.

55 Extract from Gio: Andrea Moniglia, *Il pazzo per forza* (performed 1659), I, 37.

56 'Prato con trabacche di Zingari', *ibid.*, p. 88. John Florio defines *trabacche* as 'Pavillions, Tents, that are remooved too and fro, and suddainely set up. Also booths or bowres. Also shelters or skaffolds made of boordes' (Florio, *Queen Anna's New World of Words, or Dictionarie of the Italian and English Tongues* (London: Melch and Bradwood, 1611). The dictionary is searchable online at <http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/florio>; for this entry, see <http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/florio/search/585r.html>

When Moretta arrives, she tells them not to lament because now she has lots of money; they celebrate with song and dance.⁵⁷

We can recognize familiar elements of the modern gypsy stereotype in this opera: foreign, wanderers, poor trickster fortune tellers, pickpockets, thieves, who live in wagons and camp in fields. Despite the presence in Italy of peoples identified as Romani — on 16 March 1662, for example, the Grand Duke's account books record distributing 40 lire to 'certi Zingari' [certain gypsies]⁵⁸ — the Zingara in both of these works (the poem and the opera) is most important as a figure available for impersonation: the fake gypsy is more important to the plot than the 'real' gypsies. The mask of the gypsy doubles down on the clever tricks in which Ligurino/'Muretta' delights, and it is Ligurino's craftiness that the plot ultimately celebrates. Indeed, it is this same deliberate distancing-through-disguise and yet flagging-of-trickery on which the 'Sogno' relies: Giovannino dreams of the Court disguised as a Gypsy whom he then goes on to impersonate.

It is possible that Buonaccorsi played a second Black gypsy woman in the remake of *Ciro* staged at SS Giovanni e Paolo, in Venice, in 1665.⁵⁹ Unlike *Il pazzo per forza*, this libretto was not written with Buonaccorsi (or any of the Florentine singers) in mind (an earlier Neapolitan libretto was modified for Venetian performance in 1654, and then reprised with updated music in 1665), but again we find two gypsies, one white and one Black, though this time both characters are in disguise. 'Fatama Mora, slave [to Cleopilda, an Egyptian princess], dressed as a gypsy',⁶⁰ speaks (sings) the same *gergo* as Moretta,⁶¹ like her she is repeatedly

57 Moniglia, *Il pazzo per forza*, II, 35 and 36, pp. 88–89.

58 ASF, *Camera del Granduca*, f. 31, c.116r.

59 There is no known cast list for this season or documentation indicating that Buonaccorsi was in Venice at the time. Buonaccorsi performed in the previous season for the same impresarios, and it is notable that this particular character seems so well suited to his repertoire.

60 The cast list in both the 1654 and 1665 editions actually describes the character as 'Fatama Mora, Schiava d'Elmera, vestita di Zingara', but the libretto makes clear her relationship to Cleopilda, not Elmera, and indeed, Cleopilda is also 'in habito di Zingara'. See Giulio Cesare Sorrentino, *Ciro, drama per musica. Nel teatro a SS Gio: e Paolo l'anno 1665* (Venice: Per il Giuliani, 1665).

61 Indeed, Fatama has such a slim grasp on Italian that she misunderstands Euretto: he declares that he who loves is foolish, finishing with the word 'innamora'; she repeatedly hears her own name (Mora, Black woman) in the final syllables *innamora*, and wants to know why he calls for her; see *ibid.*, II, 5, pp. 47–48.

linked to the act of fortune telling or palm reading; and like Moretta, Fatama closes out one of the acts: at the end of Act I, Fatama steals a key from Delfido (a stuttering hunchback), and when he puts his hands on her in an attempt to get it back, cries rape. A chorus of Ethiopian Moors comes running to her rescue — they call her their 'Paesana' [countrywoman] — and after Delfido flees they dance and sing.⁶² There is an interesting slippage between Fatama as Black and Fatama as gypsy, which is magnified by her servitude to an Egyptian princess (tradition had long held that European gypsies originated in Egypt).⁶³ Indeed, we might assume that Africa, black skin, and magic (such as fortune telling) were linked together in the popular imaginary.⁶⁴

The similarities between Moretta and Fatama Mora point up the familiarity of the Black gypsy on the seventeenth-century operatic stage, and thus illuminate one of the lenses through which Buonaccorsi's performances of his poem would have been received. Fascinatingly, while Moretta and Fatama fall victim to the foreignness of the gypsy stereotype — an element explicitly marked by the linguistic distortions of the *gergo* sound — Giovannino flaunts his ability to assume the gypsy disguise whilst remaining thoroughly Italianate. The 'Sogno di Giovannino Moro' is remarkable in the extent to which it frames the speaker as a canny viewer of, articulate commentator on, and consummate participant in Italian court life.

4. Community

Each of the identifiable people in the 'Sogno', including the author, were present at the Medici court in 1653, several for a number of years either side of that date. Buonaccorsi represents these individuals as a specific

62 Ibid., I, 17, pp. 40–41. The second act ballet also involves Delfido, who is accused of smuggling goods into the city under his hunched back; he is then stoned by a chorus of pages with slingshots; see II, 17, p. 63.

63 The association between Egypt and European gypsies is traced in Leonardo Piasere, 'L'invenzione di una diaspora: I nubiani d'europa', in *Alle radici dell'europa: Mori, giudei e zingari nei paesi del mediterraneo occidentale, Volume I: Secoli XV–XVII*, ed. by Felice Gambin (Florence: Seid, 2008), pp. 185–199.

64 I am reminded of a letter in the Medici archives from Francesco de' Medici dated 1632, discussing a Black priest who had once worked in Florence as a fortune teller ('fa professione d'indovino'). See ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, f. 4959, c.437; this document is also available online as part of the Medici Archive Project, doc. 10752.

community, a definable subset of the *brigata* (the ‘crew’ or ‘gang’ — here a reference to the courtiers, line 5) who inhabited the Court: ‘suoi Buffoni, e Nani’ (10); ‘Son di corte i Turchi e Nani / mal’Cristiani’ (44–45). In Buonaccorsi’s text these figures stand in ribald intimacy: Giovannino makes fun of his peers with an impunity that implies a relative degree of friendship — we can assume that (superficially at least) Giovannino’s insults were taken as good fun; there is no implication that the poet risks physical retribution. At the same time, the antagonistic structure of the poem invokes the competitiveness of the more visible layers of court culture, with the *buffoni* and *nani* engaged in competition for the resources and favors of those in power, much as the noble courtiers competed for precedence within each court, and the various courts themselves (and/or their ruling families) acted within the political arena of the Italian peninsular and European public life through military, artistic, and matrimonial displays of influence and power. The clever sidestep of the poem’s final verse — in which the ‘Zingara indovina’ evaporates precisely at the moment in which she approaches Giovannino and is expected to point out his flaws — permits Buonaccorsi a moment of literary and performative triumph over his rivals.

The historical memory of Black slavery within Italian courts has persisted primarily through the genre painting of patron-prince (or princess) and Black page, in which the enslaved, racially-marked other serves a decorative function illustrating the financial and geo-political power of the sitter. In such contexts the Black child is not just objectified but becomes a literal object (represented in paint) that is owned by the sitter and the owner of the painting. (Please note that I have chosen not to illustrate this specific form of objectification in the images accompanying this chapter. I assume that most readers will be familiar already with the genre; those who are not can easily find examples in online reproductions.) Faced with such images, it is difficult to find a vocabulary with which to discuss the Black subjects that does otherwise than merely re-inscribe their conscription into a colonialist project of white supremacy. Buonaccorsi’s poem provides an opportunity for a different approach, not only because the ‘Sogno di Giovannino Moro’ stands as a moment of articulate Black excellence in which Buonaccorsi speaks back, his voice, wit, and performative force echoing still, hundreds of years after the fact, but because of the community of *buffoni*,

nani, and *mal' Cristiani* that his text brings into focus. The 'Sogno' restores agency to each of the characters it describes, from the details of Martinez's crutch and dishonesty, to the dubious sexual activities of Mohammad. In this context, Buonaccorsi's excellent Italian and the subtle distinctions he makes between the subjunctive space of his dream (*venisse, dicesse*) and the *passato remoto* of his morning activities (*mi venne, mi destai*) suggest a long engagement with the Italian language, placing his arrival at Court (in Florence or elsewhere) at a very young age — and making this very poem and others like it the consequence or afterlife of the Black children shown in paintings.

Buonaccorsi and the community of freaks and misfits illustrated within his poem provide crucial insight into the institution of court slavery. He himself calls attention to the difference between life on the galleys and the luxurious trappings of the court when he describes Canà's gluttony. The harsh conditions, physical labor, and deprivations of the galley were far removed from the rich fabrics and abundant food of court servitude. That did not, however, equate to freedom. A list of court salaries compiled in 1663 details explicit monetary amounts for each of the household members of Cardinal Prince Giovan Carlo de' Medici, with two exceptions: 'Gio: Buonaccorsi Moro' and 'Gio: Gaetano *il Mutolo*' [the Mute], each of whom were instead provided with 'Vitto, e vestito' [food and clothes].⁶⁵ In addition, the 'wretched' exchanges made by Mohammad in return for acquisitions at court (31–35) and the di Pers poem about the enslaved woman who becomes the target of the old householder's lust underscore the ways in which enslaved bodies were appropriated for the physical pleasures of slaveholders. The distinction between galley and court slaves doesn't map precisely onto the 'field slave/house slave' model more familiar to scholars from studies of plantation chattel slavery, though the comparison is useful.

More illuminating for our understanding of the specific structure of European court slavery is the tight coupling evidenced between racial, religious, and physical differences in Buonaccorsi's poem and elsewhere, including the Gabbiani painting shown as Figure 6.3. The contiguity of these categories is one that scholars have yet to fully account for, either for what it illustrates about race and physical deformity as 'wonderous'

65 'Ruolo dei provisionati del Serenissimo Principe Cardinale Gio: Carlo di Toscana', ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, f. 5358, c.757v.

(in a Daston/Park sense of the word) exceptions to the norm, or about the ways in which the court servitude of dwarves, buffoons and fools approached slavery.⁶⁶ An expanding literature on court dwarves has noted that they were effectively owned by the court,⁶⁷ and that their opportunities for upward social mobility were simultaneously enabled and limited by their marked physical differences. The intimacy and access of the court dwarf role meant that they (like many itinerant performers) could be effective spies (cf. Martinez, line 26) and trusted confidants (a notable example is the letters between a young Prince Giovan Carlo de' Medici and the court dwarf Battistone, published by Teresa Megale).⁶⁸ The 'Mutolo' participated in a similar economy.

As Buonaccorsi insists on the importance of this group and their participation in court life ('Son di Corte'), he knows his place as entertainer. Much like Margherita Costa, cited above, who portrays this same group of *buffoni*, *nani*, and *schiaivi* as knowing 'how to sing' but also 'when to keep silent / to not speak out of turn', the 'Turchi, e Nani / mal'Cristiani' of Buonaccorsi's text 'have a well-developed sense of hearing', 'they scratch badly, and sing well'. In both of these accounts of the *buffoni* knowing their place, sound is central: the protagonists speak and sing, and they listen carefully and attentively in ways that show them as aurally literate participants in the complex protocols of courtly behavior. If a focus on aurality explains the scarce resources that have survived into the present, rendering more difficult the task of historians who would think about Italian court slavery and the lives and experiences of the individuals who thus became a part of European history, it also stands as a model for how we can proceed. Appropriately, the 'Sogno' begins with an exhortation to 'Udite!' — listen up. We have to develop a subtle sense of hearing to recover voices such as that of Buonaccorsi.

In Volterrano's double portrait of Buonaccorsi and Albizzi, the generic dyad of Black slave/white master is unsettled. Both musicians

66 Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), especially their introduction.

67 Thomas V. Cohen, 'Furto Di Nano: The Case of the Purloined Dwarf', Early Modern Rome Three Conference, Rome and Bracciano, 5–7 October 2017.

68 These letters are included as part of the editorial introduction to Bernardino Ricci's buffoonish text, see Teresa Megale, 'Bernardino Ricci e il mestiere di buffone tra cinque e seicento', in *Il Tedesco ovvero Difesa Dell'arte del Cavalier del Piacere* (Florence: Le Lettere, 1995), pp. 7–75.

(Black and white) are placed into a dependent relationship with the viewer-patron, waiting for the right moment to begin. Buonaccorsi's confidence is striking — both in comparison to the canon of Black page imagery and continuing stereotypes of Blackness in European contexts. Representations of confident and professional young Black men are regrettably rare (even) today.

Listen! Buonaccorsi says. *Udite!* When you're ready to hear me, I'm going to sing.

7. A Global Phonographic Revolution

Trans-Eurasian Resonances of Writing in Early Modern France and China

Zhuqing (Lester) S. Hu

In 1758, Paris found itself in the middle of two literary quarrels. One erupted six years earlier, when a staging of Giovanni Battista Pergolesi's *La serva padrona* at the Académie de Musique ignited debates over the merits of Italian versus French operas. Though this 'Querelle des Bouffons' reached its peak in 1754, it reverberated throughout the decade on account of a fierce Italianist, Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In the aftermath, Rousseau penned his *Essay on the Origin of Languages* (dated to the late 1750s),¹ which — thanks to Claude Lévi-Strauss and Jacques Derrida — would become one of the most widely interpreted texts in Western philosophy.² Around the same time, a second quarrel broke out at the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres where Joseph de

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- 1 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Essay on the Origin of Languages and Writings Related to Music*, trans. and ed. by John T. Scott (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998), pp. 289–332. On dating the *Essay*, published posthumously in 1781, see Catherine Kintzler, 'Introduction', in Rousseau, *Essai sur l'origine des langues*, ed. by Catherine Kintzler (Paris: GF Flammarion, 1993), p. 9.
 - 2 Derrida accords to Rousseau a 'privileged place [...] in the history of logocentrism' and dedicates the entire Part II of his *Of Grammatology* to reading Lévi-Strauss reading Rousseau's *Essay*. See Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp. 97–100.

Guignes, curator of Eastern manuscripts of the Bibliothèque du Roi, argued that China originated as an ancient Egyptian colony.³ As popular as it was controversial, de Guignes's lecture amplified a century-long debate over the relationship between what Enlightenment Europe considered to be two of the world's oldest civilizations.⁴ Largely inspired by the Jesuit polymath Athanasius Kircher, the debate raged among *philosophes*, colonial officers, and Jesuits, decades before the Rosetta Stone reinvented Egyptology in the early nineteenth century.

Though the two Parisian quarrels never substantially interacted, I argue in this chapter that their participants shared an agenda of mapping the universal history of writing and the voice in order to recuperate lost knowledge of and/or about the earliest humans. I argue not only that China served the two quarrels as the primary source for such grammatological and phonological histories, but that similar concerns about the relation between writing, song, and speech were simultaneously transforming eighteenth-century Chinese scholarship under the Qing Empire (1636–1912). While we cannot assume any direct exchange between the French quarrels and contemporary Chinese debates on philology, folksongs, and opera, I compare these two scholarly cultures in order to raise a question of historiographic and philosophical importance: is there a global connection between (early) modernity and theories of the relationship between writing and the voice?

My comparison shows that both places underwent what I call a Phonographic Revolution: a reconceptualization of writing (*graphē*) as the writing of the voice (*phōnē*), which was in turn enshrined as the more immediate conduit of meaning. I begin by analyzing the dialectical relationship between the two Parisian quarrels. Though the Egypt-China debate focused on writing and the 'Querelle des Bouffons' focused on the singing-speaking voice, both quarrels presumed a *longue durée* evolution of writing from pictographs representing things-in-themselves into phonographs representing human utterances, particularly alphabetic

3 Joseph de Guignes, *Mémoire dans lequel on prouve que les chinois sont une colonie Egyptienne* (Paris: Desaint & Saillant, 1759).

4 Don Cameron Allen, 'The Predecessor of Champollion', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 104 (1960), 527–547; Alexander Rehding, 'Music-Historical Egyptomania, 1650–1950', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 75 (2014), 545–580 (pp. 550–566), <https://doi.org/10.1353/jhi.2014.0037>

letters. Identifying the influx of Chinese writing into Europe as the primary source of this historiography allows me to pivot to China. Here, I show that studies on the Confucian *Canon of Songs*, folksongs, and opera gave rise to a new paradigm of historical phonology in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These burgeoning singing cultures contributed to the overhaul of Chinese philology according to the notion that writing, despite the apparent pictography of Chinese characters, is fundamentally phonographic.

Graphocentric versus Phonocentric Restorations

During the early modern period, European scholars generally dated ancient Egypt to between the Flood and ancient Greece in their universal chronology. Thus, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Egyptology promised to uncover a lost knowledge that predated even the revered Greeks, be it divine revelations or antiquarian facts.⁵ Believed to have preserved this knowledge, hieroglyphs engrossed the study of Egypt. Humanist scholars uncovered Greco-Roman glosses of hieroglyphic texts,⁶ and the influx of sources from the Ottoman Empire helped Western European scholars recognize Coptic as a descendent of the ancient Egyptian spoken language; Athanasius Kircher even compiled a Coptic dictionary (1636).⁷

In hindsight, identifying Coptic as a living Egyptian language was the crowning legacy of early modern Egyptology: it was Coptic that would allow Jean-François Champollion to decipher hieroglyphs in the 1820s. Yet what captured the early modern Egyptological imagination was not the Coptic language, but Chinese writing. Even Kircher, who attempted to decipher the hieroglyphs through esotericism in *Oedipus aegyptiacus* (1652), later proposed Chinese characters as an alternative route in *China illustrata* (1667).⁸ That a system of writing practiced on the

5 Daniel Stolzenberg, *Egyptian Oedipus: Athanasius Kircher and the Secrets of Antiquity* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp. 36–70.

6 The most important source was Horapollon's *Hieroglyphica*, a dictionary of the purported symbolism of hieroglyphs. See Stolzenberg, *Egyptian Oedipus*, pp. 41–42.

7 Alastair Hamilton, *The Copts and the West, 1439–1822: The European Discovery of the Egyptian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 195–228.

8 Athanasius Kircher, *China monumentis qua sacris qua profanis nec non variis naturae & artis spectaculis aliarumque rerum memorabilium Illustrata* (Amsterdam: Joannes Jansson, 1667), pp. 225–237.

other side of the globe was deemed more promising than an indigenous Egyptian language speaks volumes for the paradigm of Egyptology at the time: a graphocentric mapping of sound, writing, and meaning. European scholars singled out Chinese characters because they (mis) took Chinese and Egyptian to be distinctly non-phonographic writing systems that represent objects and ideas directly, unlike almost all other writing systems that represent the sounds of the voice with letters or syllabograms.⁹

Proponents of the Egyptian origin of China posited this resemblance between Egyptian and Chinese writings as their strongest evidence.¹⁰ In return, the Egypt-China hypothesis also offered a concrete paradigm for Egyptology. If China did inherit its core institutions — including its non-phonographic writing — from Egypt, then modern Chinese writing could be considered an evolved or degenerate form of ancient Egyptian writing. Individual Chinese characters could be traced to individual hieroglyphs, and the specific pairings of characters and meanings in Chinese writing applied to reading Egyptian texts. Figure 7.1 shows an example of this paradigm at work in a three-way correspondence between the Royal Society in London, the Académie des Inscriptions in Paris, and the French Jesuits in Beijing.¹¹

The history of writing was also an important topic for Rousseau, who concurred in his *Essay* that Egyptian and Chinese writings were uniquely non-phonographic. Yet unlike the graphocentrism of the Egypt-China hypothesis, Rousseau examined the history of writing not in itself but in relation to the history of the voice (*phōnē*). Rousseau begins Chapter Five, ‘On Writing’, with the degeneration of speech and song. The carefree clime of the south produced among the primitive savages a passionate melodious speech-song, yet this deteriorated into

9 The myth of Chinese as a purely ideographic or logographic script persists even today; see John DeFrancis, *The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1984).

10 De Guignes, *Mémoire*, pp. 58–60.

11 Anon. [Pierre-Martial Cibot], *Lettre de Peking sur le génie de la langue chinoise et de la nature de leur écriture symbolique comparée avec celle des anciens égyptiens, en réponse à celle de la Société Royale des Sciences de Londres, sur le même sujet* (Paris: J. L. de Boubiers, 1773). See also Allen, ‘Predecessors of Champollion’, 540–542.

the cold monotonous modern languages as humans moved north.¹² Parallel to this Fall of voice is the perfection of writing:

The cruder the writing, the more ancient the language. [...] The first manner of writing is not to depict sounds but the objects themselves, whether directly as the Mexicans did, or by allegorical figures as the Egyptians did of old. This state corresponds to passionate language [...].

The second manner is to represent words and propositions by conventional characters, which can be done only when the language is completely formed and when an entire people is united by common Laws; for there is already here a double convention. Such is the writing of the Chinese: this is truly to depict sounds and to speak to the eyes.

The third is to break down the speaking voice into a certain number of elementary parts, whether vowels or articulations, with which one could form all imaginable words and syllables. This manner of writing, which is our own, must have been devised by commercial peoples who, traveling in several countries and having to speak several languages, were forced to invent characters that could be common to all of them. This is not precisely to depict speech, it is to analyze it.¹³

For Rousseau, the history of writing is the rise of phonography: writing (*graphē*) gradually ceased to 'depict [...] the objects themselves' but began to intrude on the voice (*phōnē*) by 'depict[ing] [its] sounds'. As the voice lost its primitive power of immediately conveying passions, phonographic writing rose as a 'supplement' to recuperate such passionate communications. Yet by 'breaking down' the sounds of the voice into its letters, writing depletes the voice's melodious passions even further.¹⁴ Indeed, Rousseau understands alphabetical writing as the epitome of man-made laws: like statutes and social mores, orthography substitutes artificial conventions for the natural community and passionate communications that once bound the primitives.

12 Rousseau, *Essay*, p. 296.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 297.

14 Gary Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 11–18; Edward Nye, *Mime, Music and Drama on the Eighteenth-Century Stage: The Ballet d'Action* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 30–34, <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511794223>

Besides reflecting the broader Enlightenment interests in the origin of language and society,¹⁵ Rousseau's intertwined history of voice and writing was a targeted polemic against Jean-Philippe Rameau and French opera after the 'Querelle des Bouffons'. In the second half of *Essay*, Rousseau uses his critique of phonographic writing to attack *ramiste* harmony as an example of such writing. Rousseau argues that the primitive speech-song, being monophonic and unaccompanied, necessarily comprised 'multitudes of sounds and intervals' or microtonal variances. Just as alphabetic writing restricts speech to a paltry number of letters, harmony restricts songs to a few 'harmonic intervals' while eradicating any passionate inflection that 'does not belong to its system'.¹⁶

There is little doubt that the harmonic 'system' here refers to Rameau's theory of 'triple progressions', which sought to justify European harmony. Observing that the two lowest overtones of a string sound an octave and a perfect-fifth-plus-an-octave above its fundamental pitch and that their vibrating frequencies bear a 2:1 and 3:1 proportion, Rameau posits duple and triple ratios as the empirical basis of harmony. By repeating the 3:1 or triple proportion, Rameau shows that the resulting chain of perfect fifths — such as F-C-G-D-A-E-B — embeds the diatonic scale, major and minor triads, dominant-seventh chords, and the subdominant-tonic-dominant progressions fundamental to functional harmony. These conventions of European harmony are therefore not artificial but naturally derived from the physics of sound.¹⁷

Besides naturalizing European harmony, Rameau posited triple progressions as the universal foundation of all musical systems. Amid heated exchanges with Rousseau, Rameau pointed out that the same chain of perfect fifths produces the ancient Greek tetrachords and Chinese pentatonic scales.¹⁸ Few Europeans ever heard Chinese music, and yet, as was the case for ancient Greek music, their lack of auditory experience was supplemented with translations and digests

15 Sophia Rosenfeld, *A Revolution in Language: The Problem of Signs in Late Eighteenth-Century France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 13–56.

16 Rousseau, *Essay*, pp. 321–322.

17 Thomas Christensen, 'Eighteenth-Century Science and the "Corps Sonore": The Scientific Background to Rameau's "Principle of Harmony"', *Journal of Music Theory*, 31.1 (1987), 23–50 (pp. 23 and 41–42), <https://doi.org/10.2307/843545>

18 Thomas Christensen, *Rameau and Musical Thought in the Enlightenment* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 236–238.

of Chinese music theory.¹⁹ This influx of Chinese sources served Rameau and his followers in the same way Chinese writing served early modern Egyptologists: as a key to retracing the common origin of all civilizations. Rameau, Pierre-Joseph Roussier, and Benjamin de la Borde all used ancient Greek and Chinese scale systems to map out how music evolved from the original revelation Adam and Noah received from God to modern European harmony.²⁰

Whereas Rameau portrayed harmony as a timeless universal, Rousseau dismisses it as a modern artifice, arguing in *Essay* that neither the ancient Greeks nor the 'American savages' used harmony. Besides the prevalent monophony in ancient Greek music (as described in Classical sources) and Amerindian songs (as told in colonial travelogues), Rousseau reiterates their use of microtonal intervals, or 'inflections which we [modern Europeans] call false because they do not enter into our system and because we cannot notate them'.²¹ By conflating the modern 'system' of harmony with notation, Rousseau defines harmony as a form of writing and thus a futile attempt to recuperate the lost passions of the primitive speech-song. For Rousseau, such recuperation is possible only through reforming the voice itself. In the last chapter of *Essay*, 'Relationship of Languages to Governments', Rousseau argues that writing ousted not only the speech-song but also the freedom and democracy of the primitive societies, which relied on the immediate communication of passions.²² 'Languages favorable to liberty [...] are sonorous, prosodic, harmonious languages, in which discourse can be made out from a distance', while '[modern speeches] are made from the murmuring in sultans' Council-chambers'.²³ This politicization of the voice as a victim of writing implies a phonocentric mode of

19 The French Jesuit Jean-Joseph Marie Amiot provided mid-eighteenth-century French *philosophes* with two manuscripts on Chinese music, of which only one appeared to have survived; see Jim Levy, 'Joseph Amiot and Enlightenment Speculation on the Origin of Pythagorean Tuning in China', *Theoria*, 4 (1989), 63–88 (pp. 64–65).

20 See Levy, 'Joseph Amiot and Enlightenment Speculation', 65–75; Rehding, 'Music-Historical Egyptomania', 563–566. See also Jean-Philippe Rameau, *Code de musique pratique* (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1760); Pierre-Joseph Roussier, *Mémoire sur la musique des anciens* (Paris: Lacombe, 1770); Benjamin de la Borde, *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne* (Paris: Imprimerie royale: 1780).

21 Rousseau, *Essay*, pp. 321–322.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 328.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 332.

restorationism. Whereas the Egypt-China hypothesis uses the genealogy of writing to restore the lost knowledge of the earliest civilizations, Rousseau hopes to restore the natural liberty of the primitives by freeing the voice (*phōnē*) from writing's representational violence, be it writing *per se* or comparable conventions like harmony or notation.

The *Jouissance* of Chinese Scripts

The restorationist ambitions of the Egyptologists and Rousseau seem to embody a writing versus voice dichotomy: the former hoped to use modern Chinese characters to uncover the lost Egyptian writing and knowledge, whereas the latter sought to restore the primitive perfection of society by liberating the voice from writing and making it passionate and melodious again. Nonetheless, both agendas presumed a linear history of writing evolving towards phonography ('voice-writing'). Kircher and de Guignes could imagine deciphering the Egyptian hieroglyphs through Chinese characters only by recognizing the latter as the former's descendants on account of their shared non-phonography. Rousseau could portray the history of voice as the degeneration from the primitive speech-song only by observing the parallel evolution of writing from silent pictographs to voice-recording phonographs.

What convinced early modern European scholars of this evolution towards phonography? The answer, I argue, is found in Chinese sources on the history of Chinese writing.²⁴ Brought to Europe through various commercial and missionary networks, these sources gave the impression that Chinese characters originated as naturalistic pictographs that mimicked things in nature — comparable to Mesoamerican and Egyptian scripts — before evolving into their current shapes as schematic logographs that each bear a standardized meaning and pronunciation through the 'double convention' Rousseau mentions. It was only a small step for European scholars to extend this evolution to include the

24 Mesoamerica was also a critical part of early modern European reflections on writing. See *Writing without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*, ed. by Elizabeth Hill Boone and Walter Mignolo (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1220k2d>. Yet Chinese writing was unique in affording to European scholars an evolutionary historiography of writing.

alphabets as the final stage, whose purely phonographic letters are even more streamlined and conventionalized than logographs.

Two types of Chinese sources convinced early modern Europe of this evolution. First, Chinese chronicles detailing the deeds of the ancient kings — whom Jesuits identified as the Biblical patriarchs²⁵ — constantly laud these legendary rulers for inventing writing. Most chronicles quote the canonic dictionary *Explicating Glyphs and Analyzing Characters* (Shuowen jiezi 說文解字, 121 CE) by Xu Shen 許慎:

During the Yellow Emperor's time, his scribe Cang Jie saw the footprints of birds' feet and beasts' hooves. He understood that he could distinguish between the various types of birds and beasts by differentiating between the patterns of their footprints. In so doing, he invented writings and inscriptions. [...] Through the later Five Sovereigns and then the Three Dynasties, the strokes of some characters were changed, and the shapes of some characters were altered. As a result, at Mount Tai, none of the inscriptions left by the seventy-two successive rulers who had performed rites there resembles another.²⁶

Xu Shen's history of Chinese writing is a *longue durée* process of schematization: ancient pictographs imitating the footprints of birds' feet and beasts' hooves were gradually replaced with the simplified strokes and dots that make up the modern characters.

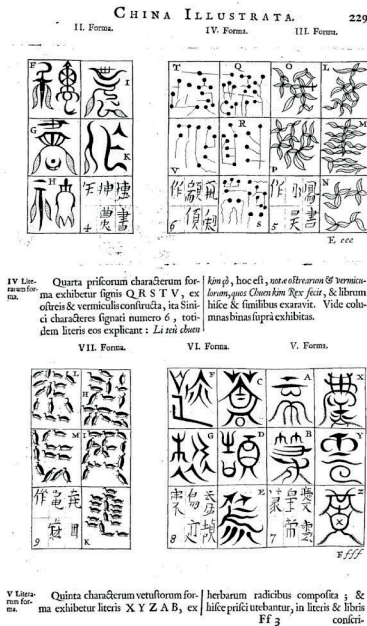
Second, since a major grammatological reform in the third century BCE, Chinese literati took great interest in ancient character forms, known as *zhuan* 篆 scripts, and a few exemplars of these scripts reached early modern Europe. In *China illustrata*, for example, Kircher incorporates sixteen woodcuts, each featuring a group of five characters first written in a supposedly ancient script and then written (rather clumsily) in the modern script (see Figure 7.2).²⁷ Each example describes the supposed origin of its own script. The five characters in the second woodcut ('II. Forma' in Figure 7.2) read, 'the wheat-ear script was created by [Emperor] Shennong' (稷書神農作), who legendarily invented agriculture;

25 Nicholas Standaert, *The Intercultural Weaving of Historical Texts: Chinese and European Stories about Emperor Ku and His Concubines* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), pp. 303–314, <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004316225>

26 Xu Shen 許慎, *Shuowen jiezi 說文解字* (121 CE), ed. by Xu Xuan 徐鉉 (986 CE), 15 vols. (*Wenyuange Sikuquanshu 文淵閣四庫全書* [hereafter WYGSKQS], 1781), XV, part 1 of 2, ff. 1r–v.

27 Kircher, *China... Illustrata*, pp. 228–232.

accordingly, the strokes of this script resemble plants of wheats. The sixth woodcut ('VI Forma') reads, 'Cang Jie created [this script] based on the footprints of birds' (倉頡鳥跡製), a clear reference to Xu Shen's narrative quoted above; accordingly, the strokes of this script comprise footprints of birds. The seventh woodcut ('VII Forma') reads, '[King] Yao made [this script] because a tortoise emerged [from River Luo]' (堯因龜出作), an exceptionally auspicious omen in Chinese traditions; accordingly, the strokes of this script comprise lines of tortoises.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

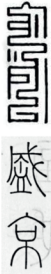

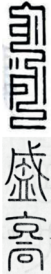
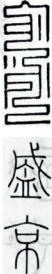







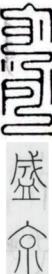




Fig. 7.2 From Kircher, *China... Illustrata* (1667), p. 229. Images courtesy of the BnF, Public Domain, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k111090s/f259.image>



(*Mukden* “the rising capital [name of the Qing’s first capital]”)

盛
京

(*Shengjing* “the rising capital [the Chinese name of Mukden]”)

Jade Chopstick	Fantastic Glyph	Grand Seal	Small Seal	Square Seal	Tomb	Wheat Ear	Hanging Chives
							
Willow Leaves	Astrology	Sesame Buds	Green Jade	Dripping Dew	Dragon Claw	Low Clouds	Tadpole
							

Bird Footprint	Corrosive Worms	Unicorn	Goose Head	Birds	Phoenix	Tortoise	Dragon
Scissors	Knots of Ropes	Needle Puncture	Lance	Metal Wetstone	Inscribed Icon	Brushing Broom	Bronze and Bell

Fig. 7.3 Manchu and Chinese names of the city of Mukden/Shengjing (盛京, modern-day Shenyang) written in thirty-two 'ancient scripts' in BnF, *Mandchou* 110 'Han-i araha Mukden-i fujurun bithe' and BnF, *Chinois* 1578–1581 'Yu zhi sheng jing fu you xu 御製盛京賦有序', the Chinese and Manchu version of *Rhapsody of Mukden* (1748) sent by the French Jesuit Jean-Joseph Marie Amiot. Images of the Manchu words are taken from each of the thirty-two fascicles of *Mandchou* 110, photographed by the author; images of the Chinese words are taken from each of the thirty-two fascicles of *Chinois* 1578–1581, courtesy of the BnF, Public Domain, <https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc26060d>

Kircher's woodcuts proved influential over the following century.²⁸ Though the English theologian William Warburton ridiculed Kircher's interpretations of the Egyptian hieroglyphs, he borrowed Kircher's woodcuts to expand the evolution of Chinese writing from pictographs to logographs into a universal history of writing evolving from Mesoamerican pictographs to Egyptian hieroglyphs, to Chinese characters, and finally to phonographic alphabets.²⁹ Partly translated into French in 1744, Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses* (1738 and 1741) became a canonic reference on the origin of language and writing for French *philosophes*, including Rousseau.³⁰

The source of Kircher's sixteen ancient scripts was a sixteenth-century 'encyclopedia for everyday use' (*riyong leishu* 日用類書), a popular genre in early modern China where the expansion of literacies beyond the scholar-official class boosted the demand for 'how-to' guides.³¹ Kircher received the encyclopedia from the Polish Jesuit in China, Michał Boym,³² and the encyclopedia likely copied those scripts from an ancient scripts miscellany (*za zhuan* 雜篆), a type of calligraphic copybook (*tie* 帖) consumed and produced by the Chinese literati since at least the tenth century. Typically, these miscellanies copy or print a single text in scores of different ancient scripts.³³ While some of the most commonly used scripts in such compilations did come from ancient bronzes and monuments, most were later concoctions and are better referred to as fonts rather than scripts *per se*: they simply take an attested ancient script and replace its strokes and dots with idiosyncratic motifs

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- 28 Kircher mistranslated the second woodcut as 'The Book of Agriculture that King Shennong wrote' (there is no reference to any *Book of Agriculture*), the sixth as 'Cang Jie wrote books with the small wings of birds' (as opposed to their footprints), and the seventh as 'King Yao wrote this script with turtle shells' (as opposed to in the form of tortoises).
- 29 Warburton, *The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated*, 10th ed., 3 vols. (London: Thomas Tegg, 1846), II, pp. 180–181, Plate 6, which contains a direct replica of a woodcut from Kircher's *China... Illustrata*, p. 227.
- 30 Rosenfeld, *Revolution in Language*, pp. 36–53; Tomlinson, *Singing of the New World*, pp. 18–20.
- 31 Haun Saussy, *Great Walls of Discourse and Other Adventures in Cultural China* (Cambridge, UK: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), pp. 50–55. For the late-Ming publication boom see Kathryn A. Lowry, *The Tapestry of Popular Songs in 16th- and 17th-Century China* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), pp. 31–77.
- 32 Kircher, *China... Illustrata*, p. 225.
- 33 Yu Kuo-ching 遊國慶, 'Sanshi'er ti zhuanshu Jingang jing zhi yanjiu' 三十二體篆書金剛經之研究, *Tushu yishu xuekan* 圖書藝術學刊, 4 (2008), 77–142.

such as tortoises, wheat ears, or tadpoles that refer to the documented deeds of an ancient king.

Regardless of their (in)authenticity, copying and publishing these ‘ancient scripts’ constituted a material way of narrating a visual history of Chinese writing as the gradual schematization of once-naturalist characters. Yet it turns out that early modern Europeans put much more faith in these fonts than did their Chinese contemporaries. While Kircher, Warburton, and Rousseau took them as testaments to the evolutionary history of Chinese writing and writing writ large, in China, the eighteenth-century capstone of the ‘ancient scripts’ genre reflected a growing doubt — not only about the antiquity of these oft-copied scripts, but also about the entire endeavor of grammatology. In 1743, the Qianlong Emperor (r. 1736–1796) composed a *Rhapsody of Mukden* (Shengjing fu 盛京賦) commemorating his visit to Mukden, the former capital of the Qing Empire before it invaded China in the 1640s. He then ordered his work be printed in the manner of the ancient script miscellanies, and the ensuing thirty-two *juan* [volumes] publication prints the Emperor’s five-thousand-character rhapsody in thirty-two different types of supposedly ancient scripts (see Figure 7.3).³⁴

What distinguishes *Rhapsody* from all other ancient script miscellanies is that the Emperor commissioned a parallel thirty-two-script publication of the text in Manchu, the native tongue of the Qing’s rulers.³⁵ This is an intriguing decision, because Manchu writing is phonographic through and through. Ancient scripts miscellanies hark back to the supposed pictographic origin of Chinese writing, yet there was no such origin for Manchu: its alphabet developed in 1599 from the Mongolian alphabet, which can be traced through Old Uyghur, Aramaic, and Syriac scripts all

34 Yu Kuo-ching, ‘Gu hanzi yu zazhuan li — yi sanshi’er ti zhuan shu Shengjing fu weli’ 古漢字與雜體篆 — 以三十二體篆書盛京賦為例, *Tushu yishu xuekan* 圖書藝術學刊, 2 (2006), 71–94.

35 Through Amiot, both the Chinese and the Manchu versions of *Rhapsody of Mukden in Thirty-Two Ancient Scripts* reached Paris, and a French translation was published. See Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), *Chinois* 1578–1581; BnF, *Mandchou* 110; and Jean-Joseph Marie Amiot, *Éloge de la Ville de Moukden et de ses Environs; poème composé par Kien-Long, Empereur de la Chine & de la Tartarie, actuellement régnant* (Paris: N. M. Tilliard, 1770). For the importance of Manchu in the Qing Empire, see Pamela Kyle Crossley and Evelyn S. Rawski, ‘A Profile of the Manchu Language in Ch’ing History’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 53.1 (1993), 63–102, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2719468>

the way back to Phoenician, the fountainhead of all alphabets. The long-established history of Chinese writing portrays ancient kings mimicking visual phenomena in nature with pictures, yet the imperially canonized history of Manchu writing quotes Nurgaci (1559–1626), founder of the Qing's ruling clan, spelling out spoken words with letters: 'Put the [Mongolian] letter *a* and add a *ma* to it, isn't this *ama* "father"? Put the letter *e* and add a *me* to it, isn't it *eme* "mother"?'³⁶ Thousands of Manchu dictionaries and textbooks further attested to the consensus that Manchu letters, unlike Chinese characters, represent units of sound; studies on Chinese phonetics even borrowed Manchu letters to transcribe Chinese words in order to distinguish between minutely different consonants.³⁷

So why did the Qianlong Emperor request 'ancient script' motifs of wheat ears, knots of strings, and bird footprints be added to Manchu letters, even though their allusions to the original Chinese pictography violate the established history of Manchu phonography? Clues can be found in the Emperor's preface to the multi-script publication:

The sounds of the Manchu writing of our country accord to the *ur*-sound [*da jilgan*] of the cosmos, and its shapes were sagely created and established. Therefore, whether [the letters] are separate or conjoined, whether few strokes or many strokes are used, everything is naturally written to perfect precision [*ini cisui lak seme acanambi*]. Yet when it comes to the shapes of ancient scripts, although there had been a few created before, because they have never been thoroughly completed, imperial and official seals still use the original script [*da hergen*]. [...] ³⁸

The reason for adapting Manchu writing to ancient Chinese scripts was rather mundane: updating the imperial seals. Following previous Chinese regimes, the Qing inscribed the Chinese characters in its bilingual seals in various ancient scripts. Because there was no comparable ancient script for Manchu, Manchu letters could only be inscribed in the regular font. By this multi-script publication, the Qianlong Emperor hoped to invent 'ancient Manchu scripts' to visually match the Chinese inscriptions.

36 *Manju yargiyān kooli* (1635), reprinted in *Manju i yargiyān kooli/Da Qing Manzhou shilu* 大清滿洲實錄 (Taipei: Huawen shuju, 1969), pp. 108–110.

37 Yang Yiming 杨亦鸣 and Wang Weimin 王为民, 'Yuanyin zhengkao yu Yinyun fengyuan suoji jiantuanyin fenhe zhi bijiao yanjiu' 《圆音正考》与《音韵逢源》所记尖团音分合之比较研究, *Zhongguo yuwen* 中国语文, 293 (2003), 131–136.

38 BnF, *Mandchou* 110, I, *hese*, ff. 1r–2r.

Inscribing Manchu seal texts in the style of ‘ancient Chinese scripts’ might have served to legitimize the Qing’s rule of China as a foreign conquest regime by situating its Manchu rulers within the lineage of Chinese emperors tracing back to the ancient kings. Yet the Qianlong Emperor and his officials seemed indifferent to such ideological potential. Instead, even as he ordered Manchu writing be adapted to Chinese fonts that bespeak a pictographic origin of writing, the Qianlong Emperor reiterated in his preface that Manchu letters are phonographs — ones that ‘accord’ not only to human utterances but also ‘to the *ur*-sound of the cosmos’. In the Chinese version of the preface, this ‘*ur*-sound’ (*da jilgan*) is translated as *yuansheng* 元聲, a term often used to describe the perfection of musical tuning; according to the Qing’s official music theory treatise *Orthodox Meaning of Pitch Pipes* (Lülü Zhengyi 律呂正義, 1714), ‘when the *Huangzhong* pipe is correctly tuned, the cosmic *ur*-sound will be harmonious’.³⁹ The pictorialist ancient Chinese scripts are trivialized into a mere matter of aesthetics, whereas the phonography of Manchu letters is given a cosmic significance.⁴⁰

The postface to *Rhapsody*, written by officials in charge of the project, went farther still. Besides concurring that the new Manchu fonts served to make the imperial seals visually harmonious, the postface rejects the entire study of grammatology and ancient scripts as an invalid scholarly pursuit, criticizing that ‘people who study ancient [writings]’ eagerly hoard inscribed bronzes and stones but ‘never endeavor to verify or investigate them’ (*umai kimcime baicara be kicerakū*).⁴¹ This is no small criticism: since the Manchu conquest of China, the *kaozheng* 考證 or evidential learning movement had dominated Chinese scholarship, emphasizing ‘investigating’ (*kao* 考) and ‘verifying’ (*zheng* 證) concrete evidence in reconstructing the language and institutions of the ancients.⁴² To accuse scholars of not ‘verifying or investigating’ their sources was to

39 Yün-c’y and others, *Lülü zhengyi* 律呂正義 (1714), 5 vols. (WYGSKQS, 1778), I, f. 2r.

40 The praise of Manchu writing as phonographic was a consistent narrative in Qing-imperial sponsorship. See Jiang Qiao 江桥, *Kangxi Yuzhi Qing wen jian yan jiu* 康熙《御制清文鑑》研究 (Beijing: Beijing Yanshan chubanshe, 2001), pp. 195–208.

41 BnF, *Mandchou* 110, XXXII, *tucibun*, ff. 1v–2r.

42 Benjamin Elman, ‘Early Modern or Late Imperial Philology? The Crisis of Classical Learning in Eighteenth Century China’, *Frontiers of History in China*, 6 (2011), 3–25, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11462-011-0118-z>

dismiss the epistemic legitimacy of their research, and yet, during the long eighteenth century, it became commonplace for evidential scholars to dismiss studies and compilations of ‘ancient scripts’ in exactly such negative light. In 1815, Duan Yucai 段玉裁 (1735–1815) published *Annotations of Explicating Glyphs and Analyzing Characters* (*Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字註), in which he glosses every entry of Xu Shen’s aforementioned dictionary. In a preface, Wang Niansun 王念孫 (1744–1832) praised Duan by disparaging both the jouissance of compiling ‘ancient scripts’ and the entire pursuit of grammatology:

For the seventeen centuries [since Xu Shen’s *Explicating Glyphs*], there has never been a work like Duan’s! As for those who esteem themselves for differentiating between standard and vulgar character forms through their strokes and dots and for observing the simplification process from the ancient script to the modern script, these people have never heard anything about those common instances of cognate derivatives [轉注] or phonographic rebuses [假借]. They only know about writing but nothing about sounds or glosses [知文字而不知有聲音訓詁]. What a great difference between the shallowness of their learning and the depth of that of [Duan’s]!⁴³

Thus, while European scholars based their universal histories of writing on Chinese narratives of the gradual schematization of Chinese characters, Wang dismissed the ‘shallowness’ of such graphocentric narratives that address only the changes of visual shapes. As we will see, rather than zooming in on the minute details of ‘strokes and dots’, eighteenth-century Chinese scholars opened their eyes — in order to listen to the sounds on the page.

Folksong Mania

To recall, both the Egypt-China debate and Rousseau’s speculation on the origin of languages strove to mitigate a perceived loss of knowledge of and about the earliest humans. Loss was likewise a recurrent theme in Confucianism. Confucian scholar-officials aspired to restore the ways of the ancient kings — including the Yellow Emperor and the so-called

43 Wang Niansun 王念孫, preface to Duan Yucai 段玉裁, *Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字註, 30 vols. (Jiangqing ershinian Jingyunlou keben 嘉慶二十年經韻樓刻本 1815), *xu*, ff. 1v–2r.

Three Dynasties, i.e. Xia (c. 2070–1600 BCE), Shang (c. 1600–1046 BCE), and Former Zhou (c. 1046–771 BCE). Rulers of these eras reputedly wielded perfect laws, rites, and music that were later lost in civil wars and foreign invasions.⁴⁴

This Confucian restorationism surged in the seventeenth century when China fell to the ‘barbarian’ Manchus. The foreign conquest compelled many Chinese literati to advocate a return to the ancients’ textual heritages, blaming previous generations for neglecting the study of Confucian classics. One target of such criticism was the ‘learning of the mind’ (*xinxue* 心學), a school of Confucianism that had flourished in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁴⁵ Often characterized by modern scholars as a radical subjectivism, learning of the mind emphasized self-truthfulness: since the self is an integral part of the cosmos, one only needs to look inward to acquire the cosmic principles.⁴⁶

As part of this authenticity discourse, many sixteenth-century Chinese writers collected and emulated what may be best characterized as ‘folksongs’: popular tunes from among the urban and rural commoners outside the scholar-official class. These collections and emulations always referenced the Confucian *Canon of Songs* (*Shijing* 詩經, eleventh to sixth century BCE). Tradition posited that Confucius himself edited this volume of some three hundred song lyrics comprising three genres: *feng* 風 ‘local songs’, *ya* 雅 ‘courtly songs’, and *song* 頌 ‘sacrificial songs’. Unlike the other two genres that came from ancient court music, *feng* ‘local songs’ were supposedly collected by the ancient kings from among their commoner subjects in order to observe the state of their realms. Literally meaning ‘wind’ and metonymically ‘mores’ and ‘local songs’, *feng* materializes the perceived correlations between the climate, cultural norms, and songs of any given region.⁴⁷

44 This loss was most famously articulated by the chapter ‘Record of Music’ (*Yueji* 樂記) in the Confucian canon on rites, *Records of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記, c. fifth to third century BCE).

45 Willard Peterson, ‘Confucian Learning in Late Ming Thought’, in *The Cambridge History of China*, VIII: *The Ming Dynasty 1368–1644*, Part 2, ed. by Denis C. Twitchett and Frederick W. Mote (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 708–788 (pp. 716–728).

46 *Ibid.*, pp. 719–722.

47 For a general introduction to the *Canon of Songs* in English, see Joseph R. Allen, ‘Postface: A Literary History of the *Shi Jing*’, in *The Book of Songs: The Ancient Chinese*

The significance of these ancient ‘local songs’ in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century discourses on folksongs is articulated in the preface to *Mountain Songs* (Shan’ge 山歌, c. 1630s), a collection of folksongs and folksong-emulations published by Feng Menglong 馮夢龍 (1547–1646):

Since the invention of writing and inscription, each ancient dynasty had its own songs and ditties. They were collected by the grand historians and were called ‘local songs’ [*feng*] and ‘courtly songs’ [*ya*]. Over the following millennia, emotive songs of the Chu style and highly regulated lyrics of the Tang era vied to show off their beauty, whereas the sounds of the temperaments and affections of the commoners were no longer admitted to the world of poetry but were separately called ‘mountain songs’ instead. [...] Although the present day finds itself at the declining end of an era, there is only inauthentic literary poetry and prose, but no such thing as an inauthentic mountain song. This is because mountain songs do not compete for renown against poetry or prose and thus disdain to feign. So, shouldn’t I be permitted to seize upon them in order to preserve the authentic? Today, people want to behold those songs from ancient times that were collected by the grand historians, yet following are the more recent songs that have remained among the commoners, and perhaps the latter should also count among sources through which we gauge the ethos of an age.⁴⁸

Notably, Feng compares these modern songs gathered from ‘among the commoners’ (*minjian* 民間) to the ancient *feng* ‘local songs’ collected from the commoners back then. This comparison is remarkable, because it puts the singing voices of the mostly illiterate masses on an equal footing with ancient texts, a corpus that defined the scholar-official class: both modern folksongs and ancient texts are residues of the ancient time — the former vocalized, the latter written — and can help restore the lost knowledge of/about the ancient kings, even though scholars had long looked down upon the commoners’ songs.⁴⁹

Li Mengyang 李夢陽 (1472–1529) went even farther. Never a collector or imitator of popular songs, Li championed the ‘restoring the ancient’

Classic of Poetry, ed. with additional translation by Joseph R. Allen, trans. by Arthur Waley (New York: Grove Press, 1996), pp. 336–383.

48 Feng Menglong 馮夢龍, *Shan’ge* 山歌, 10 vols. (Ming Chongzhen keben 明崇禎刻本, c. 1630s), *xu*, ff. 1r–2r.

49 The rather defensive tone in Feng’s preface suggests that he was speaking to a scholar-official or literati audience in defense of these ‘vulgar’ songs. See Lowry, *Tapstry of Popular Songs*, pp. 161–169.

(*fugu* 復古) movement in fifteenth-century poetry, dismissing modern poetry as decadent and emulating historical styles. Yet Li betrayed a crippling insecurity in regard to folksongs in the preface to his poetry anthology. The preface describes Li's conversation with a friend, who schools him on the futility of emulating historical poetry transmitted in textual sources and touts the value of folksongs instead:

[The friend said:] Poetry is the natural sound of Heaven and Earth. Today, when someone roars on the side of a road or sings in an alley, when the belabored one groans or the happy one chants, when one sings and a crowd responds, it is an authentic song, and it is called a 'local song' [*feng*]. Confucius once said: 'when the proper rites are lost, go find them among the wild countryside!' Today, the authentic poetry exists among the people, whereas the literati and the learned often versify only for the sake of rhyming.⁵⁰

Attributed to Confucius,⁵¹ the quote 'When the proper rites are lost, go find them among the wild countryside' (禮失而求諸野) was used by sixteenth-century scholars to argue that the illiterate common folks possessed unique residues of ancient knowledge unbeknownst to the literate scholar-officials, particularly in the realm of sound. Zhu Zaiyu 朱載堉 (1536–1611), for example, used this quote to justify his invention of twelve-tone equal temperament: while music theory treatises had stipulated the 2:3 and 4:3 proportions for millennia, Zhu observed that professional musicians had been adjusting these proportions when tuning their instruments, a practice they learned through generations of oral transmission.⁵² Li's friend uses this quote to argue that the only 'authentic poetry' in existence are the songs of the illiterate masses, which he again compares to the ancient 'local songs' in *Canon of Songs*. So ashamed did Li become of his own poems, the preface later suggests, that he held off publishing them for more than two decades. Whereas Feng's preface to *Mountain Songs* argues that the singing voices of the

50 Li Mengyang 李夢陽, 'Shiji zixu' 詩集自序, in *Ming wen yu* 明文齋, ed. by Liu Shilin 劉士麟, 20 vols. (Ming Chongzhen keben 明崇禎刻本, between 1628 and 1644), I, ff. 13r–15r (f. 13r).

51 For the earliest documentatio of this phrase, already attributed to Confucius, see Ban Gu 班固, *Qianhan Shu* 前漢書 (111 CE), 120 vols. (WYGSKQS, 1789), XXX, f. 38r.

52 Zhu Zaiyu 朱載堉, *Yuelü quanshu* 樂律全書 (c. 1596), 42 vols. (WYGSKQS, c. 1787), XXI, f. 8v.

modern commoners are as good a route towards restoring an ancient poetic ethos as are ancient texts, Li's preface argues the former to be the only possible route.

Phonographic Revolution

The folksong mania appeared to have subsided after the mid-seventeenth century, as the rise of evidential learning steered scholars away from radical subjectivism towards a renewed commitment to ancient texts. This return to texts also challenged the 'learning of the principle' (*lixue* 理學), the orthodox school of Confucianism since the fourteenth century. Whereas learning of the principle emphasized philosophical meditations on cosmic principles, Qing-era evidential learning emphasized textual evidence for the reconstruction of ancient institutions.⁵³ As a result, philology or *xiaoxue* 小學 'lesser learning' was no longer just a subsidiary to the 'greater learning' of ethics and metaphysics but became the most important discipline. Evidential scholars believed that only a correct understanding of the ancients' language could herald the correct interpretation of their texts and the perfect restoration of their laws and mores.⁵⁴

This philological turn ended up overhauling Chinese philology itself. Previous Chinese philologists resembled early modern European Egyptologists in presuming a largely graphocentric paradigm, deciphering ancient Chinese texts as sequences of pictographs, ideographs, or logographs that represent objects or ideas directly. Yet seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Chinese philology saw three dramatic changes: the discovery of language change, the rise of historical phonology, and a new invention myth whereby writing (*graphē*) arose not to mimic things in nature but to record the sounds of the voice (*phōnē*) — a 'Phonographic Revolution'.

The lack of orthographical changes had long obscured the fact that pronunciations of the same Chinese characters changed over time. What inspired the groundbreaking early-seventeenth-century theories of

53 Elman, 'Early Modern or Late Imperial Philology?', pp. 16–18.

54 Angela Zito, *Of Body and Brush: Grand Sacrifice as Text/Performance in Eighteenth-Century China* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 96–117.

pronunciation change was the same classic Confucian text that encouraged scholar-officials to hark the singing voices of the common folks, ancient and modern: the *Canon of Songs*. Since at least the tenth century, scholars had noticed irreconcilable rhyming anomalies in these ancient lyrics. For example, Figure 7.4 shows two stanzas of a local song from the *Canon* with an *ababb* rhyme scheme. In first stanza, the character 家 must rhyme with 角 *jiao*; in the second stanza, the same character 家 must paradoxically rhyme with 牙 *ya*. Similar rhyming anomalies abound when the *Canon* lyrics are recited in modern pronunciations.

誰謂雀無角	<u>jiào</u>	Who can say that the sparrow has no beak?
何以穿我屋	wu	How else could it have pierced by roof?
誰謂女無家	-?	Who can say that you have no family?
何以速我獄	yu	How else could you bring this [law] suit?
雖速我獄	yu	But though you bring a suit,
室家步足	zu	Not all your friends and family will suffice.
誰謂鼠無牙	<u>yá</u>	Who can say that the rat has no teeth?
何以穿我墉	yong	How else could it have pierced my wall?
誰謂女無家	-?	Who can say that you have no family?
何以速我訟	song	How else could you bring this plaint?
雖速我訟	song	But though you bring this plaint,
亦女不從	cong	All the same I will not marry you.

Fig. 7.4 The second and third stanzas of 'Paths with Dew' (行露), the sixth 'local song' from the 'South of Shao' (召南) region in *Canon of Songs*; English translations from *Book of Songs*, trans. Waley, pp. 16–17. The figure shows the apparent rhyming irregularities if one reads the lyrics in the currently received Mandarin pronunciations — though these irregularities would have also occurred when scholars after the tenth century read this poem in the received pronunciations of their time.

Over the centuries, different solutions were proposed. One, 'vowel harmonization' (*xieyun* 叶韻), posits that the ancients habitually altered their pronunciations for rhyming convenience: they would have pronounced the first 家 in the poem above as *jiao* rhyming with 角 *jiao* and the second 家 as *jia* rhyming with 牙 *ya*.⁵⁵ Another, 'assimilation and transference' (*tongzhuan* 通轉), posits that the ancients simply followed

55 An epitome of this theory is *Collective Commentaries on the canon of Songs* (Shi jizhuan 詩集傳, c. 1186) by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), a progenitor of the 'learning of the principle' school of Confucianism, also known as Neo-Confucianism.

more relaxed rules whereby different vowel endings like *-ia* and *-iao* still rhymed.⁵⁶

A new explanation emerged during the seventeenth century: pronunciations had changed since the *Canon* lyrics were written down, when 家, 角 *jiao*, and 牙 *ya* were actually pronounced to the same vowel ending. This notion of ‘language change’ and a distinct ancient phonology is the foundation of modern linguistics, yet its canonization in early modern Chinese philology was not a straightforward process. Though Chen Di 陳第 (1541–1617)⁵⁷ and Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682)⁵⁸ conjectured systematic differences between ancient and modern pronunciations of the same characters, this ‘correct’ theory did not become consensus until the mid-eighteenth century. Early proponents of the theory used the *Canon* lyrics as their main evidence and data. They used the rhymes of these ancient songs to reconstruct various ancient vowel groups, each comprising characters that would have been read to the same vowel — and would have thus rhymed — regardless of their modern sounds. Yet despite accounting for many of the anomalies, these proposed ancient vowel groups created new irregularities, as characters from different groups could still rhyme, as in some of the *Canon* lyrics. These new irregularities pushed some scholars to find alternative theories that make sense of the *Canon* rhymes without hypothesizing any ancient-modern language change.⁵⁹ Still, because self-consistency was the only arbiter between them, one method of patterning the textually transmitted rhyming data in *Canon* could not invalidate another.

Jiang Yong 江永 (1681–1762) put a decisive end to this centuries-long debate in favor of the theory of pronunciation change. In *Standards of Ancient Rhymes* (Guyun biao zhun 古韻標準, 1771), Jiang laments that earlier attempts to distill a system of ancient phonology from the *Canon* rhymes failed to account for all the apparent rhyming anomalies because they relied only on ‘investigating ancient things’ (*kaogu* 考古)

56 First systematically proposed by Wu Yu 吳棫 (c. 1100–1154) in *Yunbu* 韻補 (1168), the theory remained popular until the mid-eighteenth-century. See Zhang Minquan 張民權, *Qingdai guyinxue yanjiu* 清代古音學研究, 2 vols. (Beijing: Beijing guangbo xueyuan chubanshe, 2002), I, pp. 42–88; II, pp. 135–153.

57 Chen Di 陳第, *Maoshi guyin kao* 毛詩古音攷 (1606), 4 vols. (WYGSKQS, 1777).

58 Gu Yanwu 顧炎武, *Shi benyin* 詩本音 (c. 1667), 6 vols. (WYGSKQS, 1780).

59 Zhang, *Qingdai guyinxue yanjiu*, I, pp. 42–88; II, pp. 135–153.

yet ignored ‘examining the sounds’ (*shenyin* 審音).⁶⁰ Instead of grouping written characters (*graphē*) according to their textually documented instances of rhyming, Jiang introduces the voice (*phōnē*) to the process, specifically through ‘classified rhymes’ (*dengyun* 等韻) or phonetics. Originating in the ninth century, the study of classified rhymes analyzes articulatory differences between phonetic sounds and uses them to ‘classify’ characters according to their pronunciation mechanisms.⁶¹ Notably, classified rhymes functioned in relation to the scholarship of ‘rhyme dictionaries’ (*yunshu* 韻書), which grouped characters into various vowel groups specifically as applicable to rhyming in the Six Dynasties (220–589) and Tang (618–907) poetic traditions. Thus, the study of classified rhymes drew its sonic materials from what is now known as Middle Chinese, which Qing-era scholars unequivocally considered ‘modern’. And yet, Jiang made the anachronistic move of borrowing the models of syllabic structures, tone shifts, and places of articulations developed from studying the modern language to examine the ancient vowel groups distilled from the *Canon of Songs* by earlier proponents of the pronunciation change theory. By thus ‘examining the sounds’, he showed that characters from different ancient vowel groups could rhyme in *Canon of Songs* only under specific conditions of tones, glides, and allophonic codas — conditions consistent with what scholars of classified rhymes had long observed in regard to the modern language. The apparent inconsistencies of the pronunciation change theory and its proposed ancient vowel groups were thus explained away.⁶²

What allowed Jiang to remove this final hurdle was phonocentrism. Where previous scholars struggled to prove that pronunciations had changed, Jiang focused on what he considered unchanging: the sound-producing mechanisms of the voice. Indeed, only by assuming the phonetic principles derived from studying modern pronunciations to be timeless could Jiang apply them to studying the ancient vowel groups derived from the *Canon* lyrics. The sounds produced by the

60 Jiang Yong 江永, *Guyun biao zhun* 古韻標準 (1771), 4 vols. (WYGSKQS, 1781), *liyan*, f. 4v.

61 Wang Li 王力, *Zhongguo yuyanxue shi* 中國語言學史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013), pp. 85–86.

62 *Ibid.*, pp. 148–152. See also Wang Li 王力, *Qingdai guyin xue* 清代古音學 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990/2012), pp. 140–141.

voice reading a character (*graphē*) have changed, in other words, but the voice itself (*phōnē*) has not. The voice thus occupied a privileged, transcendent position from which to resurrect the lost ancient language and thereby lost ancient knowledge.

For philology, Jiang's insertion of a timeless voice into reconstructing the sounds of ancient texts was paradigm-shifting. Yet, as the previous section has shown, the same conceptualization of the perennial voice underpinned sixteenth-century folksong mania. Just as Jiang would use ahistorical sound-producing mechanisms of the voice to re-sound the ancient tongue embedded in the *Canon of Songs*, folksong aficionados such as Feng Menglong posited that the ancient *Canon of Songs* despite the loss of its proper melodies, pronunciations, and meanings had lived on through the singing voices of the modern commoners. And this veneration of the singing voice arguably enabled Jiang's phonocentric reinvention in philology. Although seventeenth-century critiques of radical subjectivism dampened literati enthusiasm for folksongs, Qing-era scholars simply transferred the fantasy of using the voice to 'restore the ancient' to another modern culture of popular singing: opera. Thanks to commercial prosperity and politically-minded patronage from the Qing's Manchu rulers, various traditions of Chinese opera flourished across different regions and social strata during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁶³ Though state ideology continued to disparage opera as morally suspect, scholars influenced by the evidential learning movement began to treat opera as a living thread along which to retrace and reverse the loss of musical perfection since the ancients.⁶⁴ Nowhere is this operatic optimism better exemplified than in one of the several prefaces to *Transmitting the Voice of Ancient Music* (*Yuefu chuansheng* 樂府傳聲, 1748), a treatise on how to sing opera arias by Xu Dachun 徐大椿 (1693–1771):

What perished with ancient music was its melodies and its rhythms, yet the voice had never perished. By the Tang [618–907] era, people could no longer sing *yuefu* folksongs from the Han [206 BCE–220 CE] and Six Dynasties [220–589] eras, yet they sang metered poems. By the Song [960–1279] era, people could no longer sing metered poems from the

63 Andrea S. Goldman, *Opera and the City: The Politics of Culture in Beijing, 1779–1900* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), pp. 63–114.

64 Shi Fang 石芳, 'Qingdai kaojuxue yujing xia de xiqu lilun 清代考據學語境下的戲曲理論' (PhD thesis, Shanghai Theatre Academy, 2016), pp. 57–72.

Tang era, yet they sang lyrical tunes. By the Yuan [1259–1368] era, people could no longer sing lyrical tunes from the Song era, yet they sang opera tunes. Yet the voice that sings opera tunes [today] is the same voice that once sang lyrical tunes, metered poems, and *yuefu* folksongs, and isn't it exactly the same voice that once sang the local songs, elegant songs, and hymns from [the most ancient] *Canon of Songs*? So how can one say that the voice had ever perished? [...] Xu Dachun says: 'The *ur*-sound [元聲] of Heaven and Earth has never ceased for even a single day'.⁶⁵

Like almost every essay on music in the Confucian tradition, the preface narrates its history as one of loss — not just the loss of ancient songs but a series of losses up to the recent past. Yet the preface immediately qualifies these losses with a constant: singing. It quotes Xu Dachun comparing the unchanging singing voice to the cosmic *ur*-sound — the same *yuansheng* evoked by the Qianlong Emperor in praising the sound-recording precision of the Manchu alphabet in his preface to *Rhapsody* quoted above, published in the same year.

Xu Dachun's treatise shares not only Jiang Yong's understanding of the voice as timeless but also his methodology of studying it: applying 'classified rhymes' to model the sound-producing mechanisms of the voice, or what he calls 'methods of the mouth' (*koufa* 口法).⁶⁶ Xu acknowledges that his singing pedagogy borrowed the phonetic analysis of 'the four prenuclear glides' (*sihu* 四呼) and 'the five places of articulations' (*wuyin* 五音) from Pan Lei 潘耒 (1646–1708). The latter studied under Gu Yanwu, the aforementioned pioneer of reconstructing the ancient phonology through the *Canon of Songs*.⁶⁷

Xu Dachun's foray into classified rhymes was but one example of the overlap between opera scholarship and philology. Since many Chinese opera traditions drew their melodic materials from a body of preexisting 'titled tunes' (*qapai* 曲牌), singing (and composing) arias

65 Xu Dachun 徐大椿, *Yuefu chuansheng* 樂府傳聲 (1748), in *Zhongguo gudian xiqu lunzhu jicheng* 中國古典戲曲論著集成, ed. by Zhongguo xiqu yanjiuyuan 中國戲曲研究院 (Beijing: Zhongguo xiqu chubanshe, 1959), VII, pp. 145–188 (pp. 149–150). The author of this particular preface is a certain Hu Yanying 胡彥穎. See also Judith Zeitlin, 'From the Natural to the Instrumental: Chinese Theories of the Sounding Voice before the Modern Era', in *The Voice as Something More: Essays Toward Materiality*, ed. by Martha Feldman and Zeitlin (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2019), pp. 54–74 (pp. 66–70), <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226656427.003.0002>

66 Xu Dachun, *Yuefu chuansheng*, p. 153.

67 Shi, 'Qingdai kaojuxue yujing xia de xiqu lilun', p. 185.

entailed fitting new lyrics to a tune a singer already knew by heart. Because all Sinitic languages feature lexically significant tones, glides, and codas, to make the lyrics comprehensible, a singer must adjust the preexisting tune every time they sing it to a different set of words.⁶⁸ And because each opera tradition was associated with a particular region and dialect, a singer must adjust each tune to different linguistic features. Thus, studies of opera always identified pronunciation as a primary concern. And philologists reciprocated. Some of the most influential ‘rhyme dictionaries’ and treatises on classified rhymes named opera scholars and aficionados as their audience. Major partisans in the debate on pronunciation change and ancient phonology also wrote opera treatises.⁶⁹

Thus, Jiang’s philological breakthrough was predicated on the literati desire to refine opera (particularly *Kunqu* 崑曲 opera) into a form of high entertainment, a desire that sustained classified rhymes as a vibrant field and put the phonocentric conceptualization of the perennial voice into embodied musical action. In turn, Jiang’s phonetic reinterpretation of the rhyming data in the *Canon of Songs* cemented the concept of language change and steered the study of ancient texts in a resolutely phonocentric and phonographic direction. Phonology replaced grammatology as the methodological core of philology. This shift is evident in Wang Niansun’s preface to Duan Yucai’s *Annotations* partly quoted above. As Wang explains, interjecting historical phonology into interpreting ancient texts uncovers a new sonic dimension.

Indeed, many Chinese characters function not as pictographs or logographs representing objects, ideas, or words directly but as phonographs representing units of sound through the principle of ‘homophonous rebus’ (*jiajie* 假借). For example, the character 止 originated as a picture of the foot and meant ‘foot’ or ‘toe’. Later on, the character was increasingly used as a rebus to represent a particular speech sound that, in addition to ‘foot/toe’, may also mean ‘to halt’, which lacked its own pictograph. Over time, the rebus or phonographic usage

68 Liang Mingyue, *Music of the Billion: An Introduction to Chinese Musical Culture* (New York: Heinrichshofen, 1985), pp. 234–243.

69 Shi, ‘Qingdai kaojuxue yujing xia de xiqu lilun’, pp. 177–187; Li Huei-Mian 李惠綿, ‘Cong yinyun xue jiaodu lun Mingdai kunqiang duqulun zhi xingcheng yu goujian’ 從音韻學角度論明代崑腔度曲論之形成與建構, *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan* 中國文哲研究集刊, 31 (2007), 75–119.

of 止 meaning 'to halt' became its only received meaning, to the point that another homophonous character 趾 was used to fulfill the original pictographic 'foot/toe' meaning that 止 no longer signified. Thus, Wang argues, grammatologists confining themselves to the visual shapes and pictographic origins of characters only have a 'shallow' understanding of texts. In contrast, by applying historical phonology, scholars like Duan Yucai demonstrate that many characters in ancient texts actually function as phonographic rebuses representing a particular unit of sound, and their correct meanings are revealed not through the visual iconicity of their shapes but through the homophonous associations of their pronunciations. By reconceptualizing writing as the representation of speech and the latter as the more immediate bearers of meaning, Qing-era philologists made sense of many puzzling passages in the Confucian classics that became crystal clear once their sounds (*phōnē*) were included in the picture (*graphē*).

Therefore, what resulted from the philological turn in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century China was not only new exegeses of ancient texts but also new theories of the relations between language, voice, and writing. More than a century before modern grammatologists such as Ignace Gelb and John DeFrancis defined writing as 'visible speech',⁷⁰ scholars at the height of the evidential learning movement had come to understand writing as nothing else than phonography, or voice-writing. The triumph of this Phonographic Revolution was made plain in Duan's 1795 preface to Wang's *Commentaries and Proofs for Towards Elegance Extended* (Guangya shuzheng 廣雅疏證). Taking a *longue durée* perspective, Duan writes:

When the sages created the characters, first there was meaning and then there was sound, and first there was sound and then there was shape. The historical investigation of characters by scholars employs their shape to acquire their sound, and employs their sound to acquire their meaning.⁷¹


70 I. J. Gelb, *A Study of Writing*, second edition (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 11–20; John DeFrancis, *Visible Speech: The Diverse Oneness of Writing Systems* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1989), pp. 42–56. As I will argue later, the convergence of Duan and Wang with Gelb and DeFrancis does not mean that a phonographic definition of writing is either correct or inevitable.

71 Duan Yucai 段玉裁, preface to Wang Niansun 王念孫, *Guangya shuzheng 廣雅疏證*, 10 vols. (Jiaqing yuannian keben 嘉慶元年刻本, 1795), *xu* (No. 2), f. 1r.

Not only did Duan argue that philologists should treat shapes or written characters as stand-ins — or, to borrow Rousseau’s term, supplements — for spoken words, but he also reversed the order of the invention of language as originally narrated in Xu Shen’s postface to *Explicating Glyphs*, partly quoted before. According to Duan, writing was not invented to visually mimic things in nature independent of spoken language; instead, they were invented after spoken words specifically to record their sounds. The Phonographic Revolution elevating voice over writing and redefining the latter as the former’s trace was thus complete.

Early Modern Phonographs

Nine years after Duan’s *Annotations*, Champollion deciphered the Egyptian hieroglyphs in his *Précis du système hiéroglyphique des anciens égyptiens* (1824). He succeeded precisely by challenging the ingrained European perception of hieroglyphs as pictographs, ideographs, and logographs representing objects or ideas directly, arguing instead that the majority of signs in hieroglyphic texts function as phonographs, specifically rebuses representing speech sounds.⁷²

As it turned out, it was Chinese philology that propelled Champollion towards this epiphany. Although he had already reconstructed the phonetic values of hieroglyphs by collating the bilingual proper names on the Rosetta Stone in his famed *Lettre à M. Dacier* (1822), Champollion remained unsure whether the hieroglyphs were ever used phonographically other than for names or foreign words.⁷³ Encouraged by the *Elémens de la grammaire chinoise* (1822) by Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat, the first chair of sinology at Collège de France, however, Champollion argues in 1824 that, just as Chinese characters are frequently used phonographically to represent units of sound, so were the Egyptian hieroglyphs.⁷⁴ The hieroglyph , for example, most frequently functions not as a pictograph for ‘goose’ — or an ideograph for some metaphysical ‘goose-ness’ — but as a phonograph for the

72 John Ray, *The Rosetta Stone and the Rebirth of Ancient Egypt* (London: Profile Books, 2007), pp. 38–79, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjghx1v>

73 Andrew Robinson, *Cracking the Egyptian Code: The Revolutionary Life of Jean-François Champollion* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 148–150.

74 Jean-François Champollion, *Précis du système hiéroglyphique des anciens égyptiens* (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1824), pp. 304–307.

sound *sa*, which means ‘son or daughter’ as well as ‘goose’. Similarly, the Chinese character 又 most frequently functions not as a pictograph for ‘right hand’, but as a rebus for the sound *you*, which means ‘again’ in addition to ‘right-hand side’ in spoken language.⁷⁵ Discovering this shared phonographic principle allowed Champollion to treat hieroglyphic texts as recordings of spoken words, which in turn allowed him to harness his knowledge of the spoken Coptic language to decipher their meaning.

It appears that the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century dream of using Chinese to unlock the secret writing and knowledge of ancient Egypt did come true — except in exactly the opposite way than was expected. Chinese writing helped decipher Egyptian writing not because they differ from all alphabets and syllabaries of the world in representing ideas or things directly, but because scholars realized both of them to be phonographic after all.⁷⁶ Thus, towards the early nineteenth century, scholarly cultures in both China and France reached the not at all obvious or inevitable conclusion that all writing is a kind of phonograph whereby the voice is recorded and rendered visible.

That a Phonographic Revolution remapped the perceived relation between writing and the voice in both early modern France and China has reverberations beyond the history of linguistics. Since the onset of poststructuralism, critiques of Western phonocentrism have informed much of the scholarly frameworks of subjectivity, alterity, hegemony, and agency in both Eurocentric and postcolonial contexts. Studies on the voice posit that a form of phonocentrism treating writing as mere phonography has defined Western philosophy since Socrates.⁷⁷ A deep-seated alphabetism — maintaining alphabetic writing as superior to all

75 These two examples are mine, as the ones used by Champollion would be too intricate to unpack in just a few lines.

76 It appears that Abel-Rémusat arrived at the phonographic interpretation of Chinese writing more or less independently of Qing-era philologists. See Zhitang Drocourt, ‘Abel-Rémusat et sa pensée linguistique sur le chinois’, *Actes en ligne du V^e Congrès de la Société des études romantiques et dix-neuviémistes*, ‘Le XIX^e siècle et ses langues’, November 2013, http://etudes-romantiques.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/wa_files/Langues-Drocourt.pdf).

77 See, for example, Adriana Cavarero, ‘Appendix: Dedicated to Derrida’, in *For More than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*, trans. by Paul A. Kottman (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 213–241 (p. 224); and Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More* (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 2006), pp. 42–52.

other kinds — may even seem inevitable in Western philosophy, as its entire corpus has been transmitted through alphabetic writing (Arabic, Greek, Hebraic, Latin).⁷⁸

Meanwhile, postcolonial studies have identified alphabetic writing as an instrument of Western colonialism, particularly in post-1492 Americas. Besides reorganizing Indigenous societies around a Eurocentric form of literacy, the narrative goes, European scholars and colonial officers denigrated indigenous cultures by narrating the history of writing as a phonographic evolution from pictographs to alphabets.⁷⁹ This phonographic teleology, first clearly stated by Warburton, necessarily deemed as primitive all forms of indigenous graphic communication. And while Rousseau could still use this teleology to justify his primitivist aspirations in his *Essay*, condescension towards non-alphabetic writings became increasingly unequivocal in the late eighteenth-century, especially in German Romanticism and idealism. Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), who theorized folksongs and language as the singing-speaking embodiment of national character, pointed to the overabundance of signs in Chinese writing as proof for the nation's 'miserable refinement in the trifles' and 'want of invention in the great'.⁸⁰ Johann Nikolaus Forkel (1749–1818), a founding figure of modern musicology, anointed staff musical notation as the epitome of alphabets and interpreted the lack of alphabetic writing in ancient Egypt and China as a sign for the 'disorder and confusion' of their music, forever stuck at the 'stage of childhood'.⁸¹ Finally, in what is often deemed the triumph of phonocentrism, Hegel valued alphabetic writing precisely for its proximity to spoken words, which he considered closest to the immediacy of thought. It is only fitting, he argued, in *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1817), that a 'stationary spiritual culture like

78 See Walter D. Mignolo, 'Afterword: Writing and Recorded Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Situations', in *Writing Without Words*, ed. by Boone and Mignolo, pp. 293–313, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822379263-012>

79 Gary Tomlinson, 'Musicology, Anthropology, History', *Il Saggiatore musicale*, 8 (2001), 21–37; and Tomlinson, *Singing of the New World*, pp. 18–27 and pp. 28–42.

80 Johann Gottfried Herder, *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, trans. by T. Churchill, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London: Luke Hanford, 1803), II, p. 9.

81 Johann Nikolaus Forkel, 'From A General History of Music (1788–1801)', in *Strunks' Source Readings in Music History*, ed. by L. Treitler, rev. ed., V: *The Late Eighteenth Century*, ed. by W. J. Allanbrook (New York: Norton, 1998), pp. 1024–1029 (pp. 1028–1029). See also Tomlinson, 'Musicology, Anthropology, History', pp. 28–29.

the Chinese' should remedy their intellectual deficiency with thousands of written signs representing specific concepts, while streamlined alphabetic letters representing speech sounds should accompany Western philosophical progress.⁸²

Yet the parallel Phonographic Revolutions I have identified render the purported phonocentrism of Western philosophy not so uniquely or perennially 'Western' at all. My point is not to use the rise of phonocentrism under the Qing Empire to absolve Eurocentric alphabetism; the latter has continued to marginalize cultures outside European and Euro-colonialist literacy by defining 'true writing' as 'visible speech'.⁸³ Nor is it to uphold Western Europe as the yardstick of 'modernity' by likening early modern Chinese philology and opera studies to contemporary European discourses. Rather, by showing that a phonographic theory of writing emerged in Chinese literary and song cultures over a century before any serious proposals of 'modernizing' Chinese writing with a European-style alphabet, I argue that neither a deep-seated 'Western metaphysics' overdetermined by the use of alphabets nor the 'shock' of encountering non-alphabetic writing can explain the rise of phonocentrism or alphabetism in European thought at the intersection of (early) modernity and colonialism.⁸⁴ Instead, the parallel Phonographic Revolutions beg the *historical* question of why the so-called early modern period saw a potentially global shift towards a phonographic theory of writing. This question cannot be explained by a timeless, structuralist-essentialist contrast between 'oral' versus 'visual' or 'pictographic' versus 'alphabetic' cultures, or by a teleology from orality to literacy or from pictures to letters,⁸⁵ or by a 'Big History'

82 G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, trans. by W. Wallace and A. V. Miller, rev. by Michael Inwood (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2010), 194–198. See also Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, pp. 24–26.

83 For a critique of DeFrancis's Eurocentric definition of writing as 'visible speech', see Elizabeth Hill Boone, 'Introduction: Writing and Recording Knowledge', in *Writing Without Words*, ed. by Boone and Mignolo, 3–26 (pp. 13–17), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1220k2d.4>

84 The seductive narrative that encounters with 'Others' thoroughly 'shocked' early modern Europe and triggered a dramatic reinvention of scholarly paradigms and worldviews has been refuted in Michael T. Ryan, 'Assimilating New Worlds in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 23 (1981), 519–538, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0010417500013542>

85 The dichotomies between 'oral' versus 'visual' cultures have been thoroughly refuted in Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*

of increasing globalization or interconnectivity.⁸⁶ Instead, the question asks how contingent interstices of power, techne, and identities effected transregional convergences towards theorizing writing as phonography whilst foreclosing on divergent trends pointing otherwise.

In this way, I argue, the question of whether there was something globally (early) modern about phonography offers a new heuristic for studying and critiquing modernity. Probing the phonographic turn of modernity opens a global yet radically relativistic perspective for examining how varying phonographic experiences with the traces of speech and song had been transforming the world, centuries before Thomas Edison's 1878 patent made the phonograph a tangible machine. Indeed, in both the Parisian quarrels and Chinese philology, debates on the relation between writing and the voice implicated not just language but also — and often primarily — songs, be they operas, folk tunes, or ethnographic soundscapes, in both scholarly imaginations and performative practices. Studying these globally dispersed phonographic praxes allows a new dimension for examining the still poorly defined 'early modern era', a sonorous dimension that is not along, not against, yet oblique to the teleology of Western industrial, scientific, and, indeed, phonographic progress.

(Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 10–19, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822384250>. I suggest Sterne's critique should be extended to dichotomies between 'pictographic' versus 'phonographic' cultures.

86 Kenneth Pomeranz, 'Teleology, Discontinuity and World History: Periodization and Some Creation Myths of Modernity', *Asian Review of World Historians*, 1.2 (2013), 189–226 (pp. 206–209 and pp. 213–226), <https://doi.org/10.12773/arwh.2013.1.2.189>

8. ‘La stiava dolente in suono di canto’

War, Slavery, and Difference in a Medici Court Entertainment

Suzanne G. Cusick

In late February 1607, two central Italian courts invited select guests to celebrate Carnival by witnessing an entirely sung dramatic spectacle in one of their ruling families’ palaces. Each spectacle was meant to be ephemeral, yet each had profound consequences both for its composer’s career and for the then-emergent genre we know as opera. One — composed and performed by and for elite men purportedly interested in the story of Orpheus and Euridice as an allegory of Platonist ethics — was published two years later, ensuring both its own and composer Claudio Monteverdi’s canonic status in the historiography of opera’s antecedents.¹ The other, composed by one woman under the indirect supervision of another and intended to offer a heterosocial audience entertaining propaganda, turned on a plot that could have seemed drawn from contemporary life — verbal and physical combat over the fate of a Persian queen captured on the high seas and enslaved. Although praised by the court diarist for having ‘una musica stupenda’ [wonderful music], it was never published, nor

¹ On Monteverdi’s *L’Orfeo*, see John Whenham, ed., *Claudio Monteverdi: L’Orfeo* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986) and Iain Fenlon, ‘Monteverdi’s Mantuan “Orfeo”: Some New Documentation’, *Early Music*, 12.3 (1984), 163–172, <https://doi.org/10.1093/earlyj/12.2.163>

was its music preserved.² Indeed, had the composer not asked her poet, Michelangelo Buonarroti *il giovane*, to send her the words of ‘the festa [...] performed at Pisa called *La stiava*, for which I wrote the music about twenty years ago’, posterity might never have known that nineteen-year-old Francesca Caccini began her career as a theatrical composer with a representation of the Mediterranean slave trade meant to entertain the Medici court’s elite.³ This chapter explores the ways *La stiava*’s sound design produced representations of ethnoreligious difference, activating audience-affective responses in ways that served the Medici court’s interests amid the long Mediterranean war of Christian powers against the Ottoman empire. It ends with a meditation on the implications for the historiography of early modern women’s musical culture and the historiography of opera.

I have written about *La stiava* before. In a 2009 monograph on Caccini, I argued that her production of ‘una musica stupenda’ for an entertainment dear to Medici Grand Duchess Christine de Lorraine’s heart led directly to the composer’s hiring as a salaried musician at the Medici court, a position that provided the necessary condition for her remarkable career, and for her posthumous identity as ‘the first woman to compose opera’.⁴

But I had long meant to come back to *La stiava*, because the title and scenario provoked me to questions that I did not know how to answer when I drafted that chapter of my book. The title character is an otherwise nameless ‘slave woman’ who reveals herself — in song — to be a daughter of the Persian king. These twin facts prompted my U.S.-born sensibility to anxieties about the history of chattel slavery and the tide of Islamophobia that was already rising in the 1990s, all but forcing three questions. What notions about slavery and about Persia might

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- 2 Angelo Solerti, *Musica, ballo e drammatica alla Corte medicea dal 1600 al 1637: Notizie tratte da un diario con appendice di testi inediti e rari* (Bologna: A. Forni, 1989; reprint of Florence, 1905), p. 38. The description is taken from Cesare Tinghi’s official court diary, the manuscript of which is in Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze [hereafter BNCF], MS Gino Capponi 261, I, f. 173.
 - 3 Archivio Buonarroti [hereafter AB] 44, no. 454, letter from Francesca Caccini Signorini to Michelangelo Buonarroti, 21 June 1626. My translation. The full letter in Italian is published in Suzanne G. Cusick, *Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court: Music and the Circulation of Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp. 321–322, <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226338101.001.0001>
 - 4 Cusick, *Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court*, pp. 19–38 (esp. pp. 28–35).

have been available in the sensibilities of a Medici court audience on Carnival night, 1607? How might the young Caccini's 'musica stupenda', or other elements of the show's overall sound design, have activated those available notions in ways that served Christine de Lorraine's political interests in that particular season? And what difference, if any, might even speculative answers to these questions make to either the historiography of women's musical culture in Medicean Tuscany or to the historiography of early modernity's signature musical genre, opera?

I need to explain the hidden assumptions behind these questions, and their relationship to the nature and limitations of my sources. First, I assume that *La stiava* has a place in the pre-history of opera. *La stiava* was one of the many theatrical performances involving sung speech, costume, and the musically organized movements of performing bodies that, in retrospect, most music historians have taken to be among the antecedents of opera. To put that another way, *La stiava* is among the set of texts and practices from which the conventions of fully-formed opera were drawn. Moreover, *La stiava* was conceived, composed, and enacted by some of the very people who participated in the gradual assembly of those antecedents into a relatively stable genre. Christine de Lorraine (1565–1637), who took such detailed interest in *La stiava*'s representations, had been the bride for whose marriage one of the most storied antecedents of opera, the 1589 set of intermedi for *La pellegrina*, was commissioned and performed.⁵ According to Tim Carter, her husband Grand Duke Ferdinando I de' Medici (1549–1609) had assigned her at marriage to oversee the court's performance staff as part of her *governo di casa*.⁶ *La stiava*'s poet, Michelangelo Buonarroti il giovane (1568–1646), had written the official account of the festivities for the marriage of Ferdinando and Christine's niece Maria to King Henri IV of France in 1600, festivities that featured Jacopo Peri's *L'Euridice*, the earliest all-sung musical play in modern style to survive.⁷ Buonarroti would go on

5 On the 1589 intermedi, see James Saslow, *The Medici Wedding of 1589: Florentine Festival as Theatrum Mundi* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996) and Nina Treadwell, *Music and Wonder at the Medici Court: The 1589 Interludes for 'La pellegrina'* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008).

6 On Christine, see Cusick, *Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court*, pp. 39–60, and Tim Carter, *Jacopo Peri (1561–1633): His Life and Works* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989), *passim*.

7 On *L'Euridice*'s historical importance, see Carter, *Jacopo Peri*, and Tim Carter and Francesca Fantappiè, *Staging 'Euridice' (1600): Theatre, Sets and Music in Late*

to be Christine's favorite poet / playwright for many years, writing plays with incidental music for court performance, scenarios for informal musical entertainments at the women's court, and the libretto for the fully sung *Il giudizio di Paride*, staged by Christine and Ferdinando for the wedding of their son, future Grand Duke Cosimo II, to Archduchess Maria Magdalena of Austria in 1608.⁸ Francesca Caccini (1587–post-1641) herself had sung in *L'Euridice* as part of her father's *concerto delle donne*, as had two of the three singers involved in *La stiava*. She would go on to compose music for some or all of at least fourteen court theatricals, including the most nearly 'operatic' such event to survive from Florence before the genre consolidated in Venice, *La liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola d'Alcina*, in 1625.

Second, I have to grapple with the fact that none of Caccini's allegedly 'stupenda' music for *La stiava* survives. One way that music scholars have traditionally dealt with absent music is to imagine how a composer whose work we know well would probably have responded to a given text. In Caccini's case, one can imagine turning to *La liberazione*. But at a tenth the length of *La liberazione*, the eighty lines of *La stiava* offer no comparable opportunities for virtuosic self-display. Moreover, there is no way of knowing what compositional tricks might have been consistent across the eighteen years leading from compositional debut to mastery. Thus I approach the imagining of Caccini's probable music very cautiously.

Despite the absence of Caccini's music and the inappropriateness of the usual way of compensating for that absence, I believe it is possible to think through what does survive — Buonarroti's various texts — to imagine the affective and political effects of *La stiava* on its audience, and the way both its powerful genre reference and its sounds might have interacted with then-commonplace notions of ethnoreligious alterity, with Tuscany's specific interest in an alliance with Persia, and with the imbrication of the Mediterranean slave trade in that region's long war between 'Moors' and Christians. Evoked by sensory means, these

Renaissance Florence, forthcoming. On Buonarroti's account of it, see Carter, "Non occorre nominare tanti musici": Private Patronage and Public Ceremony in Late Sixteenth-Century Florence', *I Tatti Studies: Essays in the Renaissance*, 4 (1991), 89–104, <https://doi.org/10.2307/4603671>

8 On Buonarroti's importance as a poet, dramatist and patronage broker favored by Christine's court, see Janie Cole, *A Muse of Music in Early Baroque Florence: The Poetry of Michelangelo Buonarroti il Giovane* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2007).

notions had the potential to activate fleeting affective responses even in listeners primarily interested in being entertained.

Two inter-related ideas will be at work in my reading: the idea of 'notion' and the idea of 'activation' of affective responses. What do I mean by these words? Something that is less formed in consciousness, and less rational, than an idea or a thought, a 'notion' is for me a loose combination of half-remembered ideas and thoughts, perhaps attached to images, sounds, or bits of language, but always attached to an affective response. That affective response, I posit, can be 'activated' by sensory stimulation (including explicit allusions to previous experience), often without more than a fleeting consciousness of the 'notion' to which it is attached.⁹ Self-aware creators of entertainment, I further posit, work with the 'notions' they believe to circulate in their intended audience's milieu. That is, they work intentionally with what they think members of their audience know, or think they know, to activate affective responses appropriate to the occasion, even as they know full well that individual responses are unpredictable.¹⁰ In what follows, I suggest that the potential for such fleeting affective responses was calculated carefully enough that the sound design of *La stiava* probably tapped and then resolved maurophobic anxieties about Tuscan masculinity and readiness for war, flattering its audience while providing them the opportunity both to savor and to disavow the ethnoreligious enmity on which that war would be based.¹¹

9 This line of thinking is inspired by Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203700372>. Ahmed shows how affective responses 'stick' to persons, categories of person, objects, or to their representations. If repeated often enough, the 'sticking' can produce powerful, embodied, all but automatic emotional responses of fear, disgust, hatred, or love toward categories of persons. I extend Ahmed's idea, proposing that musical and theatrical cues can activate affective responses to stick and unstick, and therefore both be reinforced and disavowed.

10 For example, for me, a European-descended person born in the United States, the word 'slavery' evokes 'notions' of the Atlantic slave trade, the long history of African-descended people's enslavement in my country, civil war, the equation of skin color and race, etc. For me, those notions activate affective responses of grief, guilt, rage, sorrow, shame, acute awareness of my 'white' skin, mixed into an incoherent brew that produces the physical desire to recoil, or weep, or literally look away from an interlocutor. Predictable though they be, both the notions and the affective and somatic responses attached to them are only one of the many sets of simultaneous responses that are possible for a person like me.

11 Maurophobia is fear of Moors — that is, of people who, regardless of ethnicity or religion, hailed from lands ruled by adherents of Islam.

La stiava: Of the Long Mediterranean War, Slavery, and Spectacles of Combat

Michelangelo Buonarroti's papers preserve a detailed record of his close collaboration with Christine de Lorraine in the development of *La stiava*, some of it mediated by her secretary at the time, Curtio Picchena. In addition to their letters, there are two draft scenarios, one with the texts to be sung; a nearly indecipherable page describing the point system to be used in deciding the winner of a staged combat that was to be the centerpiece of the spectacle; and both a draft and two identical fair copies of the *descrizione* that Christine intended to send her father, Duke Charles III of Lorraine. Among Buonarroti's papers, these materials follow a set of scenarios for earlier theatrical ephemera, all involving combat in which the love of the women in the audience was the nominal prize over which knights dressed as Tuscans or Saracens fought.¹²

From the way Buonarroti archived the performance materials, it seems certain that the main entertainment for Carnival night, 1607, was always meant to center on a staged combat in which the Medici princes would publicly display their prowess at arms. Indeed, the many letters between Christine and Picchena in 1606 and 1607 include exchanges about how the military skills of her sons Cosimo and Francesco should be represented in court spectacles.¹³ These letters are scattered among others that make clear just how important those displays were to sustaining support for the Tuscan state's efforts to create a naval and military coalition meant, in words attributed to Grand Duke Ferdinando I, 'to destroy completely the Ottoman Empire'.¹⁴

Historians have long known that Tuscany participated in the long if often low-level war between Mediterranean basin territories under Ottoman control and those by Christian states or their agents. Alessandro Olsaretti traces Tuscan involvement in these wars to Emperor Charles V's disastrous effort to capture Algiers in 1541.¹⁵ Charles's arrogance

12 These are at AB 81, fasc. 14, which begins at f. 251r; the earliest dates from 1591.

13 Picchena's correspondence with Christine in this period is mainly found in Archivio di Stato di Firenze [hereafter ASF], Mediceo del Principato 1325.

14 ASF, Mediceo del Principato 4275, Corrispondenze col Levante, f. 51r.

15 Alessandro Olsaretti, 'Political Dynamics in the Rise of Fakhr al-Din, 1590–1633: Crusade, Trade and State Formation along the Levantine Coast', *International History Review*, 30.4 (2008), 709–740, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2008.10416646>

prompted the Ottomans under Suleiman bin Selim Khan, 'the Magnificent' (1494–1566) to organize piracy in the Western Mediterranean, piracy that aimed to separate the dominant Christian powers in the Ottoman world, Genoa, and Naples. Tuscany's coast lay in between, and was therefore vulnerable to the constant raids by which pirates provisioned themselves for battle. Grand Duke Cosimo I (1519–1574), Ferdinando I's father, had responded to the threat by building a fleet, a port to house and maintain it at Livorno, and a private force of Tuscan noblemen, the Cavalieri di Santo Stefano, who were dedicated before God to the defense of Christianity but who functioned more as pirates. Cosimo's eldest son and first successor, Grand Duke Francesco I (1541–1587), had furthered his father's policies, intending to provoke naval conflict with both the Ottomans and the Habsburgs so as to preserve Tuscan independence from both. Even though Tuscany was never to have more than twelve galleys, another dozen or so sailing ships, and two very powerful, well-armed galleons added in 1606–1607, it succeeded in preserving a naval independence sufficient to support one of the largest and most active slave markets in the Mediterranean, at Livorno. For a time, under Ferdinando I (1549–1609), Christine, and their heirs, Tuscany indulged itself in the belief that it could become as indispensable a naval power in the Mediterranean as it was a banking and trade power. That belief was at one of its apogees in the months leading to *La stiava's* creation and performance.

As Olsaretti, Lebanese historian Paolo Carali, and many others have recounted, in 1606–1607 Ferdinando I sought energetically to transform Tuscany into a world power, exploring the possibility of acquiring control of slave markets in Sierra Leone and Brazil and trading rights in Indian Ocean ports.¹⁶ One manifestation of that expansion was his effort to form a Christian alliance against the Ottomans, to be partly funded by the Papacy as a holy endeavor aimed at recapturing Jerusalem. That alliance was to include at least two Muslim partners — the rebellious Pasha of

16 See especially Paolo Carali (Būlus Qar'alī), *Fakhr ad-Dīn: Il principe de Libano e la Corte di Toscana, 1605–1635*, 2 vols. (Rome: Reale accademia d'Italia, 1936–1938); P. E. H. Hair and Jonathan D. Davis, 'Sierra Leone and the Grand Duke of Tuscany', *History of Africa*, 20 (1998), 61–69, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3171965>; and Vittorio Siri, *Memorie recondite dall'anno 1601 sino al 1640* (Ronco: [n.p.], 1677–1679), especially volume II.

Aleppo, Haya Giambolat, and the leader of the eastern Mediterranean's most successful and ferocious army, King Abbas I of Persia (1571–1629).

Among the most detailed archival documents attesting to Tuscan policy are the official instructions given to one Michelangelo Corai, a Syrian-born courtier at Mantua hired by the Tuscan court to negotiate an alliance with Giambolat and, if he succeeded there, with Abbas.¹⁷ Corai sailed from Livorno on 1 March 1607, exactly a week after *La stiava*; the fact of his excursion and probably some details of his instructions would have been on the minds of the court's elite. He was to recommend that Giambolat rely on the Persian army to keep the Ottomans busy elsewhere. Further, he was to reassure Giambolat and Abbas that 'the principal intention [of the Christian coalition] was to destroy completely the Ottoman Empire'. Each of Tuscany's allies would retain control of his own territory, and of any that they conquered (51r). The Christians wanted only Jerusalem, along with enough land around the city so that the Christian community could plant grain and other crops, and a safe corridor to the port at Jaffa for the free trade of goods (52v). In exchange, Ferdinando promised to send seven new galleys and land troops, and to protect the alliance's supply chain via the ports at Tripoli and Alessandretta (53v).¹⁸ Tuscany and the Christian coalition would guarantee that the market at Tripoli would be open to Syrians and Persians interesting in selling commodities or ransoming slaves (55r).

Slavery had been inextricable from war in the Mediterranean for centuries, functioning as both its byproduct and its fuel.¹⁹ Prisoners taken

17 ASF, Mediceo del Principato 4275, Corrispondenze col Levante, ff. 43r–59r, copy described as having been sent in a package to Anthony Sherly, an English expatriate in Persia who represented Persia's interests in Europe. On Safavid Persia, see Andrew J. Newman, *Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire* (London: I. B. Tauris Ltd, 2008), <https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755610358>. On Abbas I's strategic imposition of Imami Shi'ism as the state religion in order to consolidate Safavid rule, see A. Azfar Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.7312/moin16036>

18 Alessandretta, now known as Iskenderum, is on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey 296 km from Nicosia, Cyprus and 138 km from the interior city of Aleppo, now in Syria.

19 On slavery in the Mediterranean, see Gwyn Campbell and Alessandro Stanziani, eds., *Debt and Slavery in the Mediterranean and Atlantic Worlds* (London: Pickering and Chatoo, 2013) and Jennifer Lefkowitz and Olatunji Ojo, eds., *Ransoming, Captivity and Piracy in Africa and the Mediterranean* (Trenton, NJ, Cape Town, Nairobi, et al: Africa World Press, 2016). Christian and Moorish slave practices were mirror images of each other, each descended from ancient Mediterranean slave practices.

in war were invariably enslaved. Able-bodied captive men were used as galley slaves, literally fueling the ongoing naval excursions of war or piracy, or they were shipped to their captors' homelands to serve as laborers. Less able men and captive women were shipped to slave markets like Livorno, where they would be either sold as domestic workers or, if they were lucky or well-born, ransomed by their kin. Thus, whatever their fate, and whoever their captors, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Mediterranean slaves contributed either their labor or their exchange value to the economic basis for perpetual war. Indeed, slavery was so intrinsic to the war economies of all participants in the long Mediterranean war that by the early seventeenth century raids on coastal towns for the express purpose of capturing slaves had become common.

These slaves' presence in their captors' midst also helped sustain the ethnoreligious enmity on which war's justification depended, both by naturalizing the subjection of one category of person by another and by creating conditions that piqued distrust of the enslaved category. The most powerful of these conditions was the practice of offering unransomed slaves a path to freedom (or such relative freedoms as the right to marry and own property) if they converted to their captors' religion. Because these conversions were often coerced and sometimes forced, the religious sincerity of enslaved converts was perpetually in doubt, leading to doubts about their loyalty and reliability more generally. Mapped onto differences in ethnicity, religion, language, and socioeconomic status, these doubts easily turned into the Muslim assumption that Christians were intrinsically untrustworthy and the Christian assumption that Muslims were intrinsically untrustworthy. These twin assumptions, coupled with the rumors of brutal mistreatment and sexual violation on both sides that circulated in memoirs and romances about the medieval crusades, helped to sustain the mutual distrust and fear that provided the long war's affective fuel.

Christine de Lorraine, the New Crusade for Jerusalem, and *La stiava*

Art historian Massimiliano Rossi may have been the first to discern just how deeply Christine de Lorraine was invested in her husband's fantasy of 'destroying completely the Ottoman empire' under the

banner of a new crusade to recover Christian control of Jerusalem.²⁰ Christine believed herself directly descended from the twelfth-century crusader Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, commander of the final assault on Jerusalem in 1099, builder of the famous assault tower, and first King of Jerusalem. Beginning in 1582, Ferdinando I's personal humanist, Pietro Angèli da Barga, had composed an eleven-book verse romance, the *Syriade*, on Godfrey's exploits, dedicating successive volumes to Henry III of France, and to his mother — Ferdinando's cousin, and Christine's grandmother — Catherine de' Medici Queen of France. A few years later, in 1589, when Ferdinando entrusted Angèli with composing epigraphs for the triumphal arches that would welcome his bride, Angèli seized the opportunity to emphasize the glorious deeds of Christine's ancestors — the first of which was Godfrey. It was not long, Rossi shows, before other apologists, diarists and propagandists for the Medici regime developed the poetic trope that the couple of Ferdinando (patron of the *Syriade*) and Christine (descendant of its hero) was destined to recover Jerusalem and — according to some — transport the Holy Sepulchre itself to Florence for safe-keeping.²¹

It is impossible to know how seriously either Ferdinando or Christine took their own courtiers' propaganda. But the papers of Christine de Lorraine for 1606–1607 reveal her to have been well-informed about Tuscany's plan to recapture Jerusalem, albeit with a perspective slightly different from the one Corai was to represent.²² Actively engaged in the ransom of enslaved French captives, she was just as engaged in financing the construction of a new galleon for the venture, at Marseille. Memos that detail Picchena's role in coaching negotiations for Papal support of the policy, as outlined in Corai's instructions, adjoin memos lamenting the failure of anyone to pay the troops involved, forcing them to lose valuable time pillaging as a way to resupply. In August 1607, months after *La stiava's* performance and

20 Massimiliano Rossi, 'Emuli di Goffredo: Epica Granducale e Propaganda Figurative', in *L'arme e gli amori: La poesia di Ariosto, Tasso e Guarini nell'arte fiorentina del Seicento*, ed. by Elena Fumagalli, Massimiliano Rossi and Riccardo Spinelli (Florence: Sillabe, 2001), pp. 32–42.

21 Among the poets who represented Ferdinando as the hero who could recover Jerusalem was Tasso, in stanzas 116–118 of *Gerusalemme conquistata*.

22 ASF, Mediceo del Principato 5951.

after Pope Paul V had refused to pay the Christian troops, Christine would personally intervene to ensure that the galleys were provided 'sufficient and affordable food'.²³ Picchena's own papers for the period include memos about negotiations and military strategy, including the need to keep the Persian alliance strong against Ottoman persuasion.²⁴ These memos are mixed in with personally signed letters between Christine and Ferdinando about their children, and with the letters between Christine and Picchena about how the two oldest sons' military ability would be represented in court spectacles.

The preliminary scenario that Buonarroti sent Christine on 5 February 1607 — after, he said, consultation with majordomo Vincenzo Giugni — perfectly suited the Grand Duchess's immediate agenda that season. It linked a carefully choreographed display of her sons' combat skills both to the mutually beneficial relationship with Persia that Corai's mission sought and to one of the practices that the long Mediterranean war sustained, the transformation of Muslim captives into slaves. As Buonarroti put it

I decided [...] on the idea of having a woman arrive and appear — that is, a [male] musician who represents a female slave accompanied by some soldiers, themselves musicians, and behind them will come the squad of knights who are to stage the combat. The knights, seeing her to be beautiful, take the opportunity to fight for which among them will be worthy to take her as their booty. She, lamenting in *stile recitativo* [sung words] to her guards, reveals herself to be a daughter of the King of Persia, captured by a Tuscan vessel while traveling to her husband, a king of India. Understanding this, the knights decide to return her to her spouse, changing the reason for their combat to a demonstration that they will be sufficiently valorous champions to conduct her safely to her [husband's] realm. Then they fight, using whatever arms they like, and immediately after there will be a sung dance by the dancers, immediately followed by a dance of the Ladies and the Knights to begin the evening.²⁵

23 Ibid., f. 638.

24 ASF, Mediceo del Principato 1325.

25 ASF, Mediceo del Principato 5992, 307r–v, letter of 5 February 1607 to Christine de Lorraine. My translation. The letter is published in Italian in Janie Cole, *Music, Spectacle and Cultural Brokerage in Early Modern Italy: Michelangelo Buonarroti il giovane*, 2 vols. (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2007), II, 489, no. 69.

Christine approved, asking only one change: she would prefer, Picchena reported to Buonarroti, that the Persian slave's nobility not be conveyed by her physical beauty, but 'by some other means'.²⁶ That means must have been her eloquence, as represented by Buonarroti's words and Caccini's music.

La stiava as moresca, Stylizing War

By assimilating into the staged combat of Medici princes a jumble of references to piracy, Muslims, enslavement, and chivalric contest over a vulnerable woman, Buonarroti evoked the then faded Italian tradition of the *moresca* — and with it centuries of tense interaction between the Muslim and Christian communities in the Mediterranean basin. The genre has a confusing historiography, in large part because variants of *moresca* practice were diffused throughout the land mass of Europe, assimilating local imagery and practices.²⁷ The Italian thread of this historiography refers to theatrical scenes that combined elements of ancient Mediterranean fertility rituals (choreographed dances representing agricultural work) with carefully choreographed battles that some scholars have claimed to derive from Moorish practices in

26 AB 51, no. 1434, letter from Curtio Picchena to Buonarroti, 6 February 1607. Christine commissioned Buonarroti's formal description of the performance as a gift to her father, Duke Charles IV of Lorraine; because he was himself obviously a descendant of Godfrey de Bouillon, he may have been equally invested in the recapturing of Jerusalem.

27 For a cross-section of traditional scholarly thought about the *moresca* in Italy, see Anthony M. Cummings, 'Dance and "the Other": The *moresca*', in *Seventeenth-Century Ballet: A Multi-Art Spectacle*, ed. by Barbara Grammeniatì (Dartford, Kent: Xlibris Corporation, 2011), pp. 39–60; Cecilia Nocilli, 'The Art of Dance in Early Seventeenth-Century Italy: "Prima" or "seconda prattica"', in *Seventeenth-Century Ballet*, ed. Grammeniatì, pp. 61–78; Barbara Sparti, 'Isabella and the Dancing Este Brides, 1473–1514', in *Dance, Dancers and Dance-Masters in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. by Gloria Giordano and Alessandro Pontremoli (Bologna: Piretti, 2015), pp. 21–48; Barbara Sparti, 'Moresca and Mattacino: Where are the Spanish Antecedents? Where are the Moors?', in *Passi, tracce, percorsi: Scritti sulla danza italiana in omaggio a José Sasportes*, ed. by Alessandro Pontremoli and Patrizia Veroli (Rome: Aracne, 2012), pp. 17–32; Lorenzo Tozzi, 'On the *moresca* in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*', in *Affetti musicali: Studi in onore di Sergio Martinotti*, ed. by Maurizio Padoan (Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 2005), pp. 47–55; and Paul Vandebroek, *Volz d'âmes: traditions de transafro-européennes* (Ghent: Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoon, 1997). Although blackface was associated with *moresca* performance north of the Alps, Sparti ('*Moresca* and *Mattacino*') claims that it did not characterize the performance tradition in Italy. See Chapter 9 by Nina Treadwell in this volume for a new interpretation of the *moresca*.

Spain.²⁸ By the turn of the sixteenth century, this kind of *moresca* had become a common entertainment for elite marriages and for Carnival. Transparently suffused with political content, these opulently theatricalized *moresche* began with a choreographed processional of the players, featuring a beautiful young woman for whose safety, favors, or hand in marriage courtiers costumed as Christians and Moors would fight, their movements precisely timed to the accompaniment of pipe and tabor, or drums alone. During the sixteenth century it became increasingly common in Italy for entertainments that, like the *moresca*, combined music, song and choreographed movement to be performed between the acts of plays. Gradually, the elements of this kind of *moresca* disaggregated, informing the *intermedio* and remaining available for recombination in other theatrical cousins and ancestors of opera like *La stiava*.

Buonarroti's description strongly suggests that *La stiava* in performance reaggregated most of the elements of the *moresca*.²⁹ It opened with unseen music that accompanied the entrance and procession of dramatic characters (the enchained slave richly dressed *alla persiana*, with her two guards), who were followed by the combatants, the pages who carried their weapons, and Moors bearing torches. After circling the room to pay respects to the sovereigns, all but the combatants formed a semicircle around the slave, who gave an account of her situation in *stile recitativo* dialogue with her two guards. The combat followed, producing a dramatic contrast in the soundscape that Buonarroti described as giving singular delight. At the end, the combatant's captain led the slave offstage to a five-part dance song, after which the spectators resumed their own social dancing.

Such a strong evocation of the *moresca* cannot have been accidental, for the flowering of the theatrical *moresca* as a court genre in Italy had coincided with the greatest era of the Ottoman empire's expansion — the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566), when the Ottomans conquered Serbia, Kosovo, Rhodes, most of Hungary, Persia and the horn of Africa, established naval dominance as far west as Algiers and warred with Portugal over control of ports on the Indian ocean. The fashion

28 Cummings ('Dance and "the Other"') argues for this interpretation, while Sparti ('*Moresca* and *Mattacino*') dismisses it.

29 The fair copy of Buonarroti's complete description is translated as Appendix B. I am grateful to Lucia Marchi for help with details of the transcription and translation.

at many levels of society for reading aloud or singing romance poetry based on crusade narratives (*Orlando furioso*, *La Gerusalemme liberata*, and Angèli's *Siriade*), the rise of constant piracy and low-level naval war in the Mediterranean, and the fashion for the *moresca* can all be understood as among Italian Christendom's responses to the ongoing expansionary threat of the Ottomans. Thus, when Buonarroti reaggregated *moresca* elements into *La stiava* — with Christine's approval, relayed by a secretary who was deeply involved in war planning — genre alone implies a shared intention to activate whatever feelings the audience had about one of the world's most resilient antagonisms. Genre, that is, was the framing device through which *La stiava*'s theatrical performance and sound design were to produce the audience's feelings — about the Medici princes' stylized combat, the court's preparations for real war, and the role that Persia was meant to play.

'La stiava dolente in suono di canto': Sound Design, Affect, and Difference in the Slave's Scene

The song scene of the slave's exchanges with her guards was the narrative, emotional, and musical centerpiece of *La stiava*. Apparently the ground against which the contrasting sounds of battle produced the audience's singular delight, it was surely what prompted court diarist Cesare Tinghi to pronounce *La stiava*'s a 'musica stupenda'. Buonarroti himself described it as stunning the combatants, stopping them in the very act of drawing their weapons. Indeed, in his account the song scene communicated affect so powerfully that in the fictional world of the performance the singing literally moved the bodies of the combatants to mime 'gestures and poses according to the words and conceits of the singers [...] pride, pity, meekness as the affect required'.³⁰ While no music for the scene is known to survive, it is

30 The power of the slave's song literally to move others' bodies to perform affect was presumably a way of demonstrating her inherent authority as a queen. In a personal communication, Cecilia Nocilli noted that dance historians typically date the choreographed miming of affect to Monteverdi's *Il ballo delle ingrate*, first performed at Mantua a year later; Cardinal Ferdinando Gonzaga, brother of the Mantuan Duke, witnessed *La stiava*. For Nocilli's notion that choreographed affective miming represented a kind of 'second practice' in dance, see Nocilli, 'The Art of Dance in Early Seventeenth-Century Italy'.

possible to imagine something about its sounds, and to imagine what elements of sonic design might have taken advantage of the audience's responses to advance Christine's and the court's political agenda.

One way to imagine the sounds of this scene is by thinking through its reference to what were then two stock theatrical scenes of human distress. The slave's very first words, 'Misero! Ov'e son'io?' immediately evoke both scene types associated with women characters in court entertainments from this era — the lament and what I've come to call the 'bad news messenger' scene.³¹ Textually, both scene types mark a character's movement across a threshold between two categories of human sociality, the lament in the first person and messenger scene in the third. When a female character's transformation was at issue, it usually resulted from the sexual initiation by which women acquired (or lost) a relational location in the world of men.³² In *La stiaiva*, sexual initiation figures in both possible outcomes of the title character's situation: her plunge in social status, from king's daughter to slave, potentially made her the sexual booty of her captors, while her eventual rehabilitation as the bride of an Indian king, arriving under Tuscan escort, would mark her social usefulness as the token of both a Tuscan-Persian and a Persian-Indian alliance.

Lament and bad-news messenger scenes were intended to do what ethnomusicologist Tullia Magrini once called 'the work of pain', because they staged responses to the pain of disruptive change — changes of expectations, perceptions, fate, ontological status.³³ Therefore, however eloquent, even deliciously beautiful, they might seem, they were meant to sound painful (unpredictable, disruptive, non-normative) and to produce in listeners responses on the continuum from sympathy to

31 'Alas, where am I?' See Appendix A for the surviving text, with a full translation. I am grateful to Lucia Marchi for help with details of the translation.

32 On the lament, see the special issue of *Early Music*, 27 (1999) and Susan McClary's classic essay 'Excess and Frame: The Musical Representation of Madwomen', in *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), pp. 80–111.

33 Tullia Magrini, 'Women's "Work of Pain" in Christian Mediterranean Europe', *Music & Anthropology: Journal of Musical Anthropology in the Mediterranean*, 3 (1998), <https://www.umbc.edu/MA/index/number3/magrini/magr0.htm>. Magrini was writing about 'folk' laments in the contemporary Mediterranean world, but many of the practices she describes are startlingly like what we know of real-world lamenting in early modern Italy, especially at funerals. I thank Elizabeth Tolbert for a lively conversation about Magrini's work.

empathy, along with a desire for the painful sounds of lamenting to end.

Buonarroti's text fuses the pained elements common to the first-person lament and third-person messenger scenes into the part of the enslaved Persian woman, while assigning the sympathetic responses that characterize both kinds of scenes to her two guards. The fusion of two well-known scene types into the slave's voice would, I think, have tempted any composer to double down on the dissonance, chromaticism and harmonic juxtapositions that conventionally represented the disorientation and dismay of both lamenters and messengers. Producing a storm of sonic disorder and woe from the mouth of the enslaved but well-dressed Persian woman in chains, that storm would have been in calculatedly sharp contrast to the sympathetic reassurances, probably free of sonic disorder, uttered by her guards. The rapid contrast of affect between slave and guards (Muslim and Christians), emphasized by the combatants' empathetic miming, must have been meant to challenge listeners' emotional responses as much as it did the combatants' physical agility — and to activate a notion of the slave's ethnoreligious alterity. Both were likely to have produced something like an affective battle, an affective staging of war. Caused by the sonically disturbing presence of the Persian slave-queen, that affective war could only have been heightened by the prevailing association of the sounds of pain with effeminacy, weakness, and feminizing danger, all of which were here coded Muslim, and all of which required defeat. That is, the overall sonic design of the scene must have activated multiple levels of anxiety among listeners — anxiety easily linked to notions of Muslim-Christian difference, and of the threat that difference could pose to a listener's masculinity and combat worthiness.³⁴ However 'stupenda' in invention and performance, the song scene was likely to have been so troubling

34 The miming of these affective shifts by the combatants would have emphasized their constant contrasts. Because immasculate gestures may well have been used to convey pride and effeminate ones to convey meekness, the combatants may also have communicated a gender fluidity that, in the twin contexts of imminent war and pervasive maurophobia, would have been disturbing. I use the word 'immasculate' for performances of masculinity independent of a body's apparent biological sex following Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990).

as to provoke the audience's desire for the affectively stressful scene to end — something that would happen first when the cause of the distress, the Persian slave-queen, became the silent object of battle, then when she submitted to Tuscan authority in a style that must have been the opposite of sonic disorder, and finally when she was escorted silently out of sight.

A second way to imagine the scene's sonic effect is to think through the assignment of voice types. When Buonarroti commented to Christine that he had consulted with *maggiordomo* Vincenzo Giugni, he almost certainly meant that he had determined what staff musicians would be available for *La stiava's* cast. They were the three members of the court's *concerto di castrati* — Giovannino Boccherini as the slave, Fabio Fabbri, who played one guard, and their de facto coach, tenor-instrumentalist Giovanni Battista Signorini, who played the principal guard.³⁵ Thus the vocal world available to Caccini as a composer consisted of two trebles, a voice type then taken to signal excitability and the potential for excessive emotionality; and one tenor, a voice type then taken to signal reasoned equilibrium.³⁶ Compositionally, then, it was logical to assign the excitability and emotionality in the slave's part to a castrato, and logical to assign reasoned responses — including the eventual decision to return the enslaved 'woman' to her Indian husband — to the tenor. The political result of that compositional logic was to project the effeminate, alluring but dangerous sonic disorder of the Persian slave-queen's part through a body well known to be that of a sexually unproductive adult man. Seemingly an innocuous, conventional choice, in this particular instance the casting may have activated listeners' memories of the long-circulating maurophobic rumor that Ottoman troops castrated their

35 Boccherini had sung the Prologo to Peri's *L'Euridice* in 1600, while Fabbri sang the roles of Venere and Proserpina. Signorini, an instrumentalist as well as a tenor, succeeded Peri as their musical director in 1603. In November, 1607, he would marry *La stiava's* composer, Francesca Caccini. For biographical sketches of all three men, see Warren Kirkendale, *The Court Musicians in Florence During the Principate of the Medici: With a Reconstruction of the Artistic Establishment* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1993).

36 On the emotional valence of high, intermediate, and low voices, see Barbara Russano Hanning, 'Monteverdi's Three Genera: A Study in Terminology', in *Musical Humanism and its Legacy: Essays in Honor of Claude V. Palisca*, ed. by Barbara Russano Hanning and Nancy K. Baker (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1992), 145–170.

captives.³⁷ Thus, such sympathy as might have been provoked by the dolorous sounds of a lamenting woman might have mingled with male listeners' fears that their own biological masculinity was literally at stake in the coming war.

Caccini assigned the work of responding to the slave's sonic disorder unevenly. One guard, the castrato Fabbri costumed as a very young Tuscan soldier, responds to the slave's disorder only once, by accepting her claim to be a queen and offering as consolation the idea that the combatants' desire to win her as a prize was motivated by love.³⁸ This 'love', communicated in lines whose rhymes emphasize images of penetration, presumably evoked for listeners both the *moresca's* traditional representation of women's sexual vulnerability in Muslim-Christian combat and the aforementioned fears of Muslims' supposed sexual violence against even their male captives. The other guard, sung by the tenor whose voice signaled equilibrium, reason and intact masculinity, responded to the slave three times — first to investigate the reasons for her opening outburst; then to reassure her that her Tuscan captors were too chivalrous to harm her; and finally to resolve her predicament by decreeing that after combat the winning squad would escort her to India. His was the textual as well as registral voice of reason. In both parts, then, voice type and affect matched perfectly.

In fact, the alternating sounds of these exchanges between the Persian queen-slave and her guards had the potential to evoke in listeners' minds a confused set of negative notions about non-Christian masculinity, ideas that circulated in travel literature as well as in the intelligence reports about both Ottoman subjects and Persians that had

37 Guy Poirier, 'Masculinities and Homosexualities in French Renaissance Accounts of Travel to the Middle East and North Africa', in *Desire and Discipline: Sex and Sexuality in the Premodern West*, ed. by Jacqueline Murray and Konrad Eichenbichler (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 155–167, <https://doi.org/10.3138/9781442673854-010>. Poirier cites Pierre Henry's translation of the Munster *Cosmographie universelle*, published in Basel in 1566, as a print source for the claim that 'the most beautiful young men captured by the Turks were castrated and then used to satisfy their masters' voluptuous desires' (p. 158).

38 The 1611 edition of John Florio's dictionary translates the word in Buonarroti's texts, 'preda', as 'bootie' or 'spoile'. See *Queen Anna's New World of Words, or Dictionarie of the Italian and English Tongues* (London: Melch and Bradwood, 1611), p. 386. The dictionary is searchable online at <http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/florio>

informed Michelangelo Corai's instructions. Presumably, these notions also circulated in the conversations of the bankers, merchants, courtiers and Cavalieri di Santo Stefano who were in the audience. Because the castrato guard's voice was equivalent to that of the enslaved Persian woman, his relative emotional vulnerability and focus on 'love' might have brought to mind the intelligence reports' dismissal of the current Sultan, sixteen-year-old Ahmed I, as effeminate, the similar dismissal of his naval commander, described as barely out of the *serraglio*, or the prevailing notion that any man's exaggerated interest in heterosociality was a sign of effeminacy.³⁹ Although both guards were dressed as Tuscans, the sight of Fabbri assisting a soldier twice his age might conceivably have evoked the notion of *köçeks*, the singing-dancing boys kept as the love objects of Janissaries and Ottoman bureaucrats.⁴⁰ And yet, the likelihood that Fabio's castrato voice sounded in the musical language of reassurance, not the slave-queen's musical language of pain, allowed listeners to remember which of the treble bodies was 'truly' effeminate — the one dressed 'alla persiana'.

Conceivably delivered in the rapid, one-note declamation eventually called *stile concitato*, the treble slave-queen's fear that the costumed combatants meant to kill her may have seemed both overwrought and reminiscent of reports attributing Persian military success under Abbas I to his troops' ruthless killing of all inhabitants of the towns they conquered.⁴¹ Vocal register, perhaps coupled with style, might have confirmed for listeners a notion that Persians were capable of both the hysteria of mass murder and the hysteria of unreasonable fear. The tenor guard's reassurance that Tuscan knights would never do such a thing responds to that fear by attaching the sound of reason to the claim that Tuscan masculinity was respectful and chivalrous, in contrast to Ottoman masculinity, which reportedly allowed men to abandon their women and children when they fled their cities in defeat.⁴² It also

39 ASF, Mediceo del Principato 4277, ff. 434 and 440 respectively. Siri, *Memorie recondite*, implies that the young Ahmed may have been a sodomite as well.

40 See Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kaplaci, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005) and Mustava Avci, 'Köçek: A Genealogy of Cross-dressed Belly Dancers (Dancing Boys) from the Ottoman Empire to Contemporary Turkey' (PhD thesis, New York University, 2015).

41 ASF, Mediceo del Principato 4277, f. 427.

42 *Ibid.*, f. 430.

attaches Tuscan reason and chivalry to Tuscan authority to restore order and subject others to its will, for it is the tenor's speech that prompts the treble Persian slave-queen to accept Tuscan superiority in a final speech free of all poetic prompts to sonic disorder and pain. Her acceptance, in turn, prompts the tenor's magnanimous decree that the combat will eventually restore her to her husband. That restoration will, in turn, restore social order, liberating the Persian queen from the worst predation of slavery, sexual violation, and restoring her to her gendered role as a living token of political solidarity. In the fiction of the scene, the political solidarity was that of Persia with India, sealed with a marriage exchange expedited by Tuscan benevolence. In the fiction of Corai's pending mission to Aleppo and Persia, it was also Tuscany's own military alliance with Persia in which, a listener might have inferred, Tuscany would always arrogate to itself the authority to permit (and perhaps facilitate) Persian alliances with other infidel realms. Alliance with Tuscany, then, was figured as more like the subjection of women in marriage than it was like slavery. According to Buonarroti's description, that flattering representation of Tuscan power filled the combatants with good energy (*allegrezza*) and they fought with grace and gusto.

Of Sonic Alterity and 'Race', the Historiography of Women's Musical Culture, and the Historiography of Opera

It is clear that *La stiava's* sound design afforded its audience ample opportunities to experience and attach negative affect to the presence of the Persian slave-queen in their midst, and briefly to re-encounter both specific maurophobic notions that circulated in the Tuscan elite's common culture and the fear, loathing and sense of superiority that those notions could provoke. Indeed, *La stiava's* sound design enabled the irrationality of the audience's own feelings toward Muslims to be projected onto their one representative in the room, and then disavowed as she was led offstage. That mechanism of affordance both reinforced the Tuscan self-flattery on the show's surface and allowed the activated negative feelings towards Muslims to remain unchallenged, fuel for

the very war Ferdinando and Christine proposed. At the same time, while *La stiava's* narrative sustained the Tuscan elite's long-standing normalization of the link between the Mediterranean slave trade and the long war against the Ottomans, its sound design helped in its own small way to naturalize the stickiness of negative affect to Muslim bodies that, thus naturalized, has persisted in Europe and among its diaspora for centuries.

But why should anyone care that this obscure, ephemeral Carnival entertainment — for which neither the music nor any pictorial representations survive — functioned both as effective propaganda supporting the Medici's fantasy of leading a new crusade for Jerusalem and as mechanism for sustaining the ethnoreligious antagonism behind such crusades? Two kinds of scholars might care — scholars of women's musical culture in the early modern period, and scholars of the early history of opera.

Scholars of women's musical culture in early modern Italy could learn from this *pentimento* of my own decades-old work the dangers of too narrowly gynocentric a focus. I still think that Christine de Lorraine was persuaded by the success of *La stiava* to hire Caccini as a *musica* in her own right. And I still think that it was at least partly because Caccini succeeded in conceiving a sounding voice for a woman that was capable of changing that woman's situation by literally moving, and ultimately redirecting, the actions of men. In so doing, she had created in sound a representation of the sovereign authority Christine would soon quietly wield as *de facto* regent for her ailing husband, and subsequently for her ailing son Cosimo II. Now, however, I also see that, in collaboration with Buonarroti under Christine's attentive supervision, Caccini also succeeded in creating a sonic design for *La stiava* that reinforced Christine's maurophobic support of Tuscany's bellicose, expansionist agenda. For the next thirty years, Caccini (and her colleagues on the Medici court's artistic staff) served an agenda that the chronicler and apologist for the Tuscan women's court, Cristoforo Bronzini acknowledged as the fantasy of creating a gynocentric, even proto-feminist Christian peace throughout the world.⁴³ Caccini's remarkable career was thus founded and sustained

43 Cristoforo Bronzini, 'Della dignità e nobiltà delle donne', BNCF, Magl.VIII, 1525/I, 93, as cited in Suzanne G. Cusick, 'Epilogue: Francesca Among Women, a '600

in two exceptional women's complicity in promoting a proto-feminist, Christian supremacist sensibility that often, if inconsistently, stuck negative affect to ethnoreligiously different bodies.

That inconsistency — in the musico-theatrical representations sponsored by the Medici court and in the many other courtly and theatrical representations resonant with the long Mediterranean war that were presented in the early modern period — problematizes the relationship of these works with contemporary notions of 'race'. In the case of *La stiava*, archaic elements of 'race' as we know it are present in the explicit representation of Euro-Christian behavior as rational and benevolent, of the Persian slave-queen as the source of sonic disorder, and of the Persian slave-queen's submission to Euro-Christian authority. Elements of 'race' are present, too, in the various notions of Moorish effeminacy, irrationality, and violence that circulated in its audience's world, ready to be activated by such apparently neutral, incidental decisions as choices about vocal registers. But because they are so particular to a world steeped in the centuries-old but well-remembered ethnoreligious enmity (maurophobia) born of the medieval crusades, that is all they are. They are elements of profound, categorical, de-humanizing enmity assembled in a form we don't quite recognize because the elements had yet to be assembled in a way that seems coherent to us now, over four hundred years later. Still, some important elements of 'race' as we know it and 'slavery' as it would soon be practiced in the Atlantic were present in *La stiava's* text, performance and likely reception — present, normalized, and waiting for inclusion in a cultural process of assemblage that was going on in the same generation.

This point is more interesting if one thinks about it in relation to *La stiava's* place in the immediate pre-history of opera. Like the contemporary, if casual, notions of 'race' and 'slavery' that have circulated in the modern era, 'opera' is a powerful notion of musical theatre that emerged from a set of once-commonplace practices that had made sense separately for centuries, with histories that seem to us now only incoherently related to each other, much less to what we casually expect from 'opera'. Some of those practices have been named in this

Gynocentric View', in *Musical Voices of Early Modern Women*, ed. by Thomasin LaMay (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), pp. 425–444 (p. 442).

chapter — the *moresca*, the practice of reciting in speech or song stanzas from verse romances about the Crusades (*Orlando furioso*, *Gerusalemme liberata*) and, briefly, the *intermedio*. The improvised theatre known as *commedia dell'arte* was another.⁴⁴ Still other obvious antecedents were huge outdoor combats and horse ballets accompanied by vocal and instrumental music, and plotted and sung ballets, from Balthasar de Beaujoyeulx's *Le balet comique de la Reyne* in 1581 to the *ballets de cour* of Louis XIII's and XIV's reigns in France.

Brief and evanescent as it was, *La stiava* occupies an important place among the specifically Medicean practices that were to be assembled into opera as early as the middle of the seventeenth century. It is the first in a series of musical spectacles staged by the Medici court in support of its specific, ongoing aspirations to establish power in the area that the court's apologists called the Holy Land — and beyond. As Emily Wilbourne has pointed out elsewhere, in 1614, Buonarroti and Caccini would collaborate on the finale of the former's gargantuan pastiche *Il passatempo*.⁴⁵ The finale, called 'Il Balletto della Cortesia' by court diarist Cesare Tinghi, opens with the initially fearful disembarkation on Tuscan shores of a group of women said to be Syrian; as soon as one of them comes to understand, in song, that they are in Tuscany, their fears are assuaged because, of course, they know they will be treated courteously there. While the Balletto della Cortesia was clearly aimed (at least in part) at Syrian Emir Fakr-al-Din, then living in exile at the Medici court with an ample retinue, the 1616 *Guerra d'Amore* and 1617 *Guerra di Bellezza* aimed at the much wider audience that could be gathered in Piazza Santa Croce, and represented a wider field of imperial ambition (from India to the Indies). Like *La stiava*, but on a grander scale, both featured combat between Tuscans and 'infidel' troops, the combat preceded by music and song.⁴⁶ Caccini's 1625 quasi-opera *La liberazione di Ruggiero*, to a text by Ferdinando Saracini, featured a plot derived directly from *Orlando furioso*, with

44 Emily Wilbourne, *Seventeenth-Century Opera and the Sound of the Commedia dell'Arte* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226401607.001.0001>

45 Emily Wilbourne, 'Music, Race, Representation: Three Scenes of Performance at the Medici Court (1608–16)', *Il saggiautore musicale*, forthcoming. I am grateful to Professor Wilbourne for letting me read her essay in manuscript.

46 Both featured music by Jacopo Peri to texts of court poet Andrea Salvadori.

updates from one scene in *Gerusalemme liberata*, and culminated in a horse ballet in the courtyard of the palace known as Poggio Imperiale — all to celebrate the Carnival visit of Archduchess Maria Magdalena's nephew, the Polish crown prince who would become Wladislaw IV, who had defeated an Ottoman army in 1621. All these works traffic textually in the maurophobic tropes and self-flattering fantasies of chivalrous crusade assembled in *La stiava*, and all but the Balletto della Cortesia have identifiable imitators elsewhere in Italy.

Yet despite generations of scholarship devoted to complicating it, the conventional narrative about 'opera's' origin is the one promulgated self-servingly by the Medici rulers of Tuscany: that 'opera' was born of the humanist desire to restore the power of classical Greek theatre, which was said to depend on the unified force of sound, word and gesture to represent human and divine experiences of the world. Itself exemplifying the fusion of heterogeneity into homogeneity that Medicean absolutism sought to produce in every possible mode of discourse, that narrative leaps away from Florence early in the seventeenth century, to focus on the published score of the other important antecedent of modern opera that was first performed for Carnival in February, 1607 — the one composed, performed, and witnessed by men; Monteverdi's *Orfeo*. *Orfeo* engages neither Mantua's involvement in the emergent Medici coalition against the Ottomans nor its involvement, if any, in practices related to the slave trade. Traditional histories of opera and its constituent genres remain centered on Monteverdi's participation in the gradual assembly of the genre we know, which emerged in the operas he composed for the public theatres in Venice. The practices of those theatres, and the operas composed for them, were to define the genre for centuries.⁴⁷

This narrative does more than simplify the complex history of early modernity's most enduring musical genre. It distorts the Florentine-origin story by ignoring the through line of opera-like performances sponsored by the court (including ones commissioned and composed

47 See Ellen Rosand, *Opera in Seventeenth Century Venice: The Creation of a Genre* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) and Jonathan Glixon and Beth Glixon, *Inventing the Business of Opera: The Impresario and His World in Seventeenth-Century Venice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

by women) that imbricates the emergence of the modern assemblage that is opera with the emergence of the modern assemblages of race and slavery. It distorts, as well, the Monteverdi-centered part of the story, for the scholarly literature all but ignores the fact that his *Orfeo*'s surviving score, published several years after the 1607 performance, ends with music for a dance called — simply and mystifyingly — *moresca*.⁴⁸ The conventional narrative largely ignores, too, the political valences of the 1624 carnival entertainment published in 1638 as *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*. Textually based on an incident in *Gerusalemme liberata* that took place during Godfrey of Bouillon's final siege of Jerusalem in 1098, and hugely influential on subsequent musical representations of affect, it can be understood to have activated some of the same maurophobic anxieties over competing masculinities that *La stiava* is likely to have engaged.⁴⁹ Operas based on crusade narratives would continue to be produced for centuries to come.

Whether intentionally or not, such distortions in the standard historiography of opera constitute a kind of historiographical whitewashing, such that the relationships of the genre's constitutive elements to non-humanist practices and unsavory aspects of Christian Mediterranean history are obscured. They allow the fantasy of opera's purely humanist origins to become its essence, and the presence of represented, performed and audible alterity on the opera stage to be incidental to that essence, an artifact only of the later, fully modern era that witnessed the zenith of Europe's colonial and imperial power. That distortion allows scholars, opera professionals, and opera lovers to continue valuing 'opera' as one of the rare defining assemblages of modernity that we can rescue from imbrication in modernity's all too obvious sins. 'La stiava dolente in suono di canto' — the sorrowful slave in the sound of singing — asks that we revise that historiography, to investigate the parallel and sometimes mutually constitutive assemblage histories of 'opera', 'race', and 'slavery'.

48 The only serious effort to interpret the appearance of this word in the score is Tozzi, *op cit*.

49 Suzanne G. Cusick, "'Indarno chiedi': Clorinda and the Interpretation of Monteverdi's *Combattimento*", in *Music, Word and Song: Essays in Honor of Ellen Rosand*, ed. by Rebecca Cypess, Beth Glixon, and Nathan Link (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2013), pp. 117–144.

Appendix A: Text and Translation of *La stiava*

Archivio Buonarroto 81, f. 295v–296r

Stiava. Giovannino. Miser ov' son io?	The slave (Giovannino, treble): Alas, where am I?
Di cui son pred'ahime? dove m'ha scorto Nemico empio Nettuno, e destin rio? In qual riva in qual porto Lunge dal patrio ciel del regno mio?	Of whom am I now prey? Where have you taken me Cruel enemy Neptune, and wicked destiny? On what shore, in which port Far from the native sky of my realm?
Soldato custode. Gio. Bat.a Franciosino Fosti dunque Regina Donna infelice tu, che serva or sei E di Re genitore Cadesti ancella di si dura sorte?	Guard 1 (Giovanni Battista Franciosino' Signorini, tenor): Were you therefore a queen? You, troubled woman, who are now a slave? Did you as a king's daughter, Fall victim to such harsh fate?
Stiava. Giovan.no Regina or non più, no. Regina fui Re' i parenti miei, Re' il mio consorte, A cui dolci goder nuov'Imenei Toltami a i lidi Persi Mi conducean le fortunate vele	The slave: A queen no more, no. I was a queen, My parents were kings, and my husband, To whom, for the pleasures of a new marriage, A happy fleet was taking me From Persia's shores

La dove 'l Gange i campi aur'inonda; Quand'importuni avversi Venti, Teti orgoglios'e mar crudele Versar dal seno i tempestosi sdegni. E me dal mio signor divis'e tolta Prigioniera mi scorsi De vostri erranti peregrini legni.	To where the Ganges bathes the golden fields; When sudden hostile winds, Arrogant <i>Teti</i> , ⁵⁰ and a cruel sea Burst into a tempestuous rage, And I found myself far from my husband Taken prisoner By your errant wandering ships.
/296r: Soldato custode. Fabio A si gentil sembianante, Al tuo nobil costume, a gli atti alteri Ben luce 'n te di real donna esempio. Non si tema per te mortale scempio. Non lacci non catene, Illustre serv'a vincitor cortese. Appo guerrier offese D'amanti cavalier preda beata.	/296r: Guard 2: Such an appealing appearance, Such noble manners, and regal attitude, Show the attributes of a royal woman, You need not fear deadly attack, Nor bonds and chains; An illustrious prisoner has a courtly victor; After [suffering] warlike offense, [You are now] the fortunate booty of knights in love.

50 The reference is either to Tethys, the daughter of Uranus and Gaia, who was the Titan goddess of all fresh water on earth, and whose name often substituted poetically for the sea; or to Thetis, a sea nymph abducted by Peleus who became the mother of Achilles. Both names are written "Teti" in Italian.

Stiava. Giovan.no

Ma qual veggio più d'una schiera armata

Quinci, e quindi 'mpugnare gli acuti ferri

A trapassarmi 'l petto aprirm' il core?

A che tanto furore, e tanto strazio?

Non basta un solo strale un colpo solo

Vostro sdegno far sazio

E mi discior di vit' anzi di duolo?

Soldato custode

Gio. Bat.a Franc.no

Non regna 'n cor toscano

Nobil donzella no, si fiera voglia,

Ne desio tanto 'nsano,

Ch' anima si gentil di vita scioglia.

Ma sol desio ne 'nvoglia

Di questi cavalieri pregio, e valore

Venirne a prova in glorioso aringo,

Ove tu preda sij d'amato pegno

Di chi fia che più degno

Mostri ardita la man', e pronto 'l core.

Stiava Gio.no

The slave:

Why, then, do I see an armed troop

All around, ready to pick up sharp swords
to tear my breast, and pierce my heart?

Why so much fury, and so much anguish?

Is not a single dart, a single blow

Enough to satisfy your rage

And end my life, or better, my sorrow?

Guard 1:

O noble lady, in Tuscan hearts

There reigns neither the cruel will

Nor the insane desire

To take the life of such a noble soul,

But only the desire

Of these knights to test their worth and valor

On the jousting field

So that you might be the prize of a lover,

The pledge to the one who shows most worthily

A brave hand and a ready heart.

The slave:

Dunque al Gran Tosco Duce in toscò regno Son giunt' alfin sotto 'l felice 'mpero? O servitu soave. O carcer dolc', e giogo non indegno. E quest' e Rege altero, Che ne lidi del sole	Have I reached, then, the Tuscan realm, Happily ruled by the Grand Duke? Oh gentle servitude, Oh sweet prison and worthy yoke! He is a mighty king, Who prepares for himself a throne in heaven
/296v: S' appresta 'l seggio con le 'nvitt' antenne. Quell' e l' alta sua prole, Per cui tem' Oriente Appo 'l suo calcitar lo spron', e 'l freno. Christiana io miro, entro 'l cui nobil seno Virtu Real vera pieta si serra, Ond' io sper' anco un giorno Lieta 'mpetrar ritorno Lacrimata Regin' all' Inda terra.	/296v: with his victories. There is his noble offspring, Of whom the East fears His kick, his spur and bit. [There] I see Christiana, within whose noble breast Royal virtue and true mercy reside, From which I hope one day Happily to ask a return, As a mourned Queen, to Indian soil.
Soldato. Gio. Bat. a Franc. no Etruschi semidei Accesi nel desio d' opere di gloria Non e minor vittoria Erger chi resto vinto, Che vincer chi superbo ergeo la fronte.	Guard 1: Etruscan demigods, Driven by desire for glorious deeds, It is no less a victory To raise up the defeated Than to conquer the arrogant who rebelled.

Ben e degna costei, Che de suoi genitori, e del suo sposo Affidata da noi riveggia 'l nido; Ne di barbaro 'nfido Sostegna offesa per l'ondoso corso. Abbia da voi soccorso. Servisi il guerreggiar' in sua difesa. E di vostra contesa Ogni fiamma s'estingua, ogni furore. Sol a mostrar valore Cortese in suo favor guerra s'appresti, Pegno di quell'onore, Ond'al grand'uopo suo Marte si desti.	She is worthy To be entrusted by us To see again her parents' and spouse's home; And to not be disturbed by treacherous barbarians On her voyage. She should have your aid. Fight in her defense. Extinguish every flame and fury Of your contest. Only to show courtly valor on her behalf should you fight, In token of that honor For which Mars awakens.
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Appendix B: Text and Translation of Description of *La stiava* (Fair Copy)

Archivio Buonarroti 81, f. 307r–310r

Descrizione del abbattimento e ballo del principe Cosimo fattami fare da Madama dopo il ritorno di Pisa fatto il carnevale di 1606, perche ella volle mandarla al S.r Duca di Lorena suo Padre.

Per dare allegro fine al lungo Carnoval di quest'anno dopo che loro Altezze tornarono di Livorno in Pisa, oltre ai consueti festini, molti trattenimenti si fecero in sollazzo di questi giovani principi tra i quali fu una battaglia del Ponte, gioco antico, solito di farsi almeno una vota l'anno dalla gioventù Pisana, dove per varie divise di sopravvesti vestitesi più, e più squadre armate, dall'una, e dall'altra parte del fiume d'Arno con certe targhe, o palvesi, contendono urtandosi e percotendosi di ributtare la parte avversa, e insignorirsi del ponte. Fecesi appresso dal Sig.r Don Ferdinando Gonzaga recitare una commedietta tutta cantata molto graziosa e piacevole: e corsesi un palio, e fecesi una giostra del saracino, e altri giochi si rappresentarono, e vari. Ma la sera stessa del Carnovale il Ser.mo Sig.r Principe stesso, acciochè più lieta di tutte l'altre passase si compiacque farsi spettacolo di valore a gli occhi di molti gentilhuomini, e dame al festino di quella notte invitate.

Fu adunque pensata et messa in esecuzione da Madama S.ma una tale invenzione. Cioè che otto cavalier Toscani de quali il Sig.r Principe era uno sotto 'l governo d'un Capitano che fu il Sig.r Don Francesco Medici, volendo combattere fra' loro di chi più valoroso dovesse esser la preda di una schiava che essi conducono quivi in campo; scoprono da le parole di quella lei/307v: esser figliuola di un Re di Persia, e quando i legni toscani la presero andarne allora a marito novella sposa a un Re dell'Indie; onde i cavalieri nel riconoscerla donna Reale, mutando cagion di combattere, e convertono 'l furore in festevol contrasto, combattono per dar saggio di lor prontezza; sicchè ella argomenti loro esser sufficienti campioni a scamparla di ogni avversa fortuna, perche liberandola risolvono di ricondurla al suo sposo. Mentre che la sala circondata intorno di gradi era piena di popolo fermandosi il ballar delle Dame, e de Gentilhuomini, e cominciandosi a sonare una sinfonia di diversi stromenti movendosi una Cortina, comparse da una testa della sala

primieramente la schiava assai riccamente vestita accompagnata da più soldati custodi armati con aste in mano e da una schiera di marinari che seguiva quelli con alcuni mori innanzi, e attorno di lei, che portavano le torchiere per dar maggior lume alla stanza in occasione di questa vista, tutti convenevolmente vestiti di abiti a l'invenzione proportionati. Seguendo sempre la sinfonia, mentre che questi girando la sala con la schiava facevano reverenza a SS.mi Padroni collocati appunto nella parte opposta a donde usciva la mostra, gli otto cavalieri comparivano in atto guerriero e in andar feroce e leggiadro insieme, precedendo loro illustrissimo capitano atto grazioso, e ardito quanto si richiedeva a un giovanotto d'animo illustre. Erano armati di certi piastrini a scaglie dorate con loro elmi simili, e gran pennoniere vaghe e ricche per i gioielli, et erano quattro per/308r: Quattro diversi ne colori del lor vestire. Cingevano spade al fianco et erano accompagnati da molti paggi divisati di abiti mezzanamente succinti con lor morione in testa: parte de quali reggenando lumi, e parte erano assegnati uno per uno a portare le rotelle de cavalieri. Tornò la schiava avendo passeggiata in giro tutta la sala la onde era prima venuta, opposta dirittamente in vista di L. Altze alla quale intorno i soldati custodi e i marinari si raccolsero circondandola per modo di una mezza luna: e i cavalieri intanto che nel girar la sala dopo di lei erano comparsi davanti i Principi e s'eran loro inchinati, fermatisi si spartiscono quattro per parte secondo la distinzione de' colori delle lor divise, ponendosi il capitano da uno lato intento a quanto occorreva e dove nel venire avevano seguitata la schiava, le rimansero allor innanzi. Appena fermi i cavalieri subito miser mano alle spade per venir all'abbattimento. Ma movendo in un tratto la voce la schiava dolente in suono di canto, voltisi a lei con cenno del capitano si ritennero, e in atto di meraviglia l'ascoltarono lei, e i soldati fino al fine di questi versi sempre cantati da voci sole.

Schiava. Misera ove son io? ec insino alla linea .A.

Mentre che la schiava, e i soldati cantavano, i cavalieri in atti vari, e in varie posture/308v: movendosi secondo che dalle parole, e da' concetti di chi cantava eran volti, mostravano ora alterezza, et ora pietà, e mansuetudine come richiedeva o questo o quello affetto, che lor conveniva rappresentare maravigliandosi sempre in venire scoprendo la schiava essere stata Regina. Ma all'ultime parole de canto quasi che

distolse dalla prima intenzione di combattere il possesso di lei, parve che con più piacevole modo si accingessero alla battaglia, acconsentendo alla persuasione della speranza, che (pronti ad effettuarla) la schiava aveva avuta nella pietà di Madama, e a quella della sentenza dell'ultimo soldato custode. E avendo già di prima imbracciati gli scudi vennero velocemente alle mani, e fu in un instante diletta molto la varietà del soggetto; poi che dal canto, e dalli strumenti musicali si passo al suon dell'armi, e de tamburi che in un subito furono percossi. Parve a ciascuno graziosissima cosa questo contrasto. Nel quale l'arte esercitata invitò di maniera il vero accidentale, che dale ferrite in poi, che ne vi furono, ne vi dovevano essere, ogni azione si riguardo come vera; mentre che in un medesimo gruppo non mai spartito, cominciatosi l'abbattimento a un per uno; or qua, e or la volgendosi ciascun di loro veniva alla prova ora con questo, et ora quello de' quattro avversari, talora avendone alcuno attorno più d'uno, si faceva nascere il caso a ogni sorte di ardire, e di risoluzione cavalleresca, dandone a credere spesso a chi riguardava, che le finte cadute, /309r: le ritirate, e ogni altro avvenimento fusser portate dall'accidente e non dalla volontà di chi le faceva. I quali avvenimenti furono tra gli altri degnamente essercitati dal Sig.r Principe, vedendosi anche nel gioco in lui fiamma di vero valore, e raggi di eroica gloria. Durò la tenzone fino a che nel girare, e rigirare più per ruote da questa, e da quella parte i combattitori si ritrovarono nel lor primo luogo. E allora il capitano mostrandosi tutto animoso mossosi arditamente si mise in mezzo con molta destrezza, e cautela spartendoli. Onde essi ritirati si sterono fermi sin che la schiava, che anch'essa per frenarli con le parole si preparava, durò cantando così.

Schiava. *Deh che di vostro ardire: ec insino alla linea .B.*⁵¹

Finito il canto della schiava e reverendo lei i cav.ri come Regina, liberata ora mai da loro nel tacito consenso dato alle precedenti parole del soldato custode, il coro de' soldati, e de' marinari incontanente cominciò a cantare la canzonetta infrascritta accompagnati da più strumenti. E voltandosi per bella maniera, e passeggiando in forma di una ruota i cavalieri, destramente assegnarono l'armi in mano a lor paggi e finita la prima stanza della canzone dieron principio a un ballo veramente

⁵¹ A full text with this incipit does not survive among Buonarroti's papers.

leggiadrissimo, e molto grazioso, e allegro levato da cavrivole, e intrecciato per varie guise. Ne meno s'avvenn a i cavalieri/309v: il ballar gentile, che il nobile abbattimento di poco innanzi. Nel quale prendendo riposo con un semplice passeggio davan tempo a cantanti per il canto della seconda stanza. Che tosto finita ripigliandosi di nuovo il ballo tutto diverso dal primo, ma non meno piacevole, essendo questo più tosto di stile francese, e quello italiano, lasciarono nel finire un gran desiderio ne gli spettatori di più lunghezza. Ma già fornito, e il coro ricominciato a cantare le tre ultime stanze della canzonetta, ripresero i cavalieri da i paggi le arme loro; e il capitano venendo per lo mezzo di essi, inchinandosi alla schiava si come fecero quelli, la prese per mano. E da i cavalieri amendue messi in mezzo in una bella fila aprendosi comparsero di nuovo davanti di L. Alt.ze e mostrando atti di ossequio, e di reverenza inverso di quelle, quasi prend'esser comiato per ricondurla liberata Regina al suo sposo, si rivoltarono indietro: e sempre cantando il coro, andarono infra di quell che si aperse in due parti, a rientraro ove erano da prima usciti. E il coro riunendosi gli segui insieme con tutti quelli che vi intervennero finendosi col canto, e con l'armonia dilettoza la grata vista, e la piaciuta apparenza di tanti abiti, e vari, che avevano illustrato tutta la sala. E ripigliandosi il ballo delle dame tralasciato nel comparer della schiava, si trapasso insensibilmente dal carnevale/310r: alla quaresima vegliando in festa.

La canzonetta del coro de soldati, e de marinari fu questa.

Real donna prigioniera, ec insino al fine.

Description of Prince Cosimo's combat and dance, which Madama commissioned from me after returning from Pisa, performed Carnival 1606 (1607), because she wanted to send it to her father, the Duke of Lorraine.

To bring a merry end to the long Carnival this year, after Their Highnesses returned from Livorno to Pisa, many entertainments for the amusement of these young princes were organized in addition to the most common ones. Among these were a 'battaglia del Ponte', an ancient game played once a year by local youth, in which they dressed in various uniforms as armed teams, one on each side of the Arno river with large rectangular shields, and competed with each other, shoving

and hitting to repel the opposing side and take control of the bridge. After that, Don Ferdinando Gonzaga presented a very enjoyable all-sung comedy; and [the court] ran a race, produced a *giostra del saraceno*,⁵² and did other games. But for Carnival night itself, the Prince himself was pleased to produce a spectacle that would be worthy in the eyes of the many gentlemen and ladies invited for that evening.

Madama conceived and organized the scenario.

There were eight Tuscan knights — one of whom was the Prince himself, under the direction of a captain, who was Don Francesco Medici — wanting to fight among themselves for who would win a woman slave that they brought onto the field. They discovered from her words that she was the daughter of a king of Persia, and had been captured by Tuscan ships on her way to be the bride of a king of India. Understanding from this that she was a royal woman, they change their rage to a festive combat, and they fight [only] to prove their battle-readiness; then she tells them that valorous knights would be enough to rescue her from adverse fortune, since they have decided to free her and escort her safely to her groom.

When the bleachers that ran all around the hallway were full of people, the dancing of ladies and gentlemen ended, and an instrumental ensemble began to play, the slave appeared from behind a curtain at one side of the hallway, quite richly dressed and accompanied by both lance-equipped soldier-guards, and a group of sailors who followed them with a few Moors before and around her, carrying torches to give more light to the room for the occasion of this appearance. Everyone was costumed in a way appropriate to the scenario. The music continued as all rounded the room, the slave bowing to Their Highnesses who were at the opposite [end of the room from where she entered]. The eight knights moved with a warlike attitude, both fierce and graceful, led by the graceful and bold acts of their illustrious captain, as befit a young man of such distinguished spirit. They wore gilded armor plates and helmets, with beautiful standards rich with jewels, and swords at their sides, and were divided into groups of four by the color of their clothing. Many pages dressed in short-length clothes and helmets accompanied them, some holding lights, others the knights' shields.

52 In a *giostra del saraceno*, men costumed as knights galloped with lances aimed at a puppet made to look like a Moor.

Having processed around the entire room, the slave returned to the place where she had entered, directly opposite Their Highnesses, and was surrounded by the guards and sailors in a half moon. The knights, having followed her around the room, bowed to Their Highnesses, then stopped in front of the slave, dividing in two groups according to their colors with the captain — attentive to what was happening — on one side.

As soon as they stopped, the knights put their hands on their swords to fight. But hearing in that instant the sound of the sorrowful slave in song, they turned to her, and at the signal of the captain held back and listened as if marveling to her and the guards until these verses were sung by the soloists. (*Misera ove son io? etc to line A*).

While the slave and the guards sang, the knights' bearing and gestures followed the words and conceits of the singers, manifesting pride, pity and meekness as befit each affect, always representing themselves as marveling at the discovery that the slave had been a queen. But at the last word of the singing they seemed to distance themselves from the first intention of their combat, and chose another, more pleasing one, persuaded by the hope that the slave had in Madama's pity (and ready to make it happen), and by the words of the last guard to sing. And having their shields already on their arms, they began to fight. It was a moment made delightful by the change of subject, and because song and instrumental music changed instantly to the sound of weapons and drums. The contrast seemed elegant to everyone.

The acting was so good that the 'accidental/fake truth' became very evident; starting with the wounds (that never were, and should have never been), the action seemed real. The groups remained close together in combat. Each knight had to confront all four of the other group, each of them turning this way and that, sometimes with more than one adversary around him, giving occasion for every sort of knightly daring and resolution, making those who watched believe the feigned falls, the retreats, and every other thing as what could happen accidentally rather than by the will of the players. The Prince himself played his part excellently, and revealed that even in play he had the fire of true valor, and heroic glory. The knights turned around in their combat many times, finally ending in their original positions. The captain, swift and confident, got into the middle of the fight and artfully separated the

warriors. They stayed still while the slave sang to stop them with the words *Deh che di vostro ardire* (to line B).⁵³

When the slave finished singing, the knights bowed to her as if to a Queen who was now already liberated by their tacit agreement with the earlier words of the guard. The chorus of soldiers and sailors immediately started the *canzonetta* written below, accompanied by many instruments. Turning and processing in the form of a wheel the knights gave their weapons to their pages, and when the first stanza was done there began a truly delicate and graceful dance, with cabriole leaps and entwining patterns of various sorts. The knights were admired for their dance no less than for their previous combat. When the chorus started the second stanza, they started processing to the music to rest. After that, they started a new dance, completely different from the first but no less pleasant, in French style instead of Italian, leaving the spectators with great desire for it to last longer. Once finished, when the chorus began the last three stanzas, the knights took their weapons back from their pages. The captain came to the middle, led them in bowing to the slave, and took her by the hand. And the two [captain and slave] — put in the middle of a beautiful row opened by the knights — moved toward Their Highnesses, with bows and proper gestures; almost as if they were taking leave to escort the liberated queen to her bridegroom. They turned and passed through the now divided but still-singing chorus to exit where they had come in. Reuniting, the chorus followed them with everyone else who had participated, ending with song, and with the delightful harmony the spectacle and the pleasing appearance of so many varied costumes. As the ladies reprised the dance that they had stopped at the slave's entrance, everyone passed festively — without realizing it — from Carnival to Lent.

53 Buonarroti seems not to have preserved a copy of the slave's final words when he created his archive.

9. 'Now Despised, a Servant, Abandoned' Wounded Italy, the *Moresca*, and the Performance of Alterity *Nina Treadwell*

For one of the interludes in the said comedy [*Eutichia*] of Nicola [Grasso], Italy appeared, all lacerated by barbarians, and wishing to say some lamenting verses. Two times, as if in extreme pain, she stopped reciting and, as if lost, left the stage, leaving the spectators to think she had lost her ability to speak. But on presenting [Guidubaldo] Rugiero's comedy on the other days, the same interlude was staged again; and when she [Italy] called to Francesco Maria [della Rovere, the Duke of Urbino] for help, with a beautiful presentation of a *moresca*, an armed person appeared with a drawn sword in hand, who with thrusts and other strokes, drove away all the barbarians that encircled Italy and had ransacked her. And returning to her in time with the music with a beautiful *moresca*, put a crown on her head, and dressing her again with a regal golden cloak, he accompanied her off the stage with the same [movements] in time to the music, which was a beautiful thing to see.¹

1 All translations are my own. I am indebted to Giulio Ongaro for his generous assistance with several translations in this study. An Italian transcription can be found online, in Augusto Vernarecci, 'Di alcune rappresentazioni drammatiche alla corte d'Urbino nel 1513', in *Archivio storico per le Marche e per l'Umbria*, ed. by M. Faloci Pulignani, M. Santoni, and G. Mazzatinti (Foligno: Direzione, 1886), III, pp. 181–191 (p. 189), <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=hu7Owx9YTBQC&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA189>

With this short description, the Duke of Urbino's secretary, Urbano Urbani, compressed a series of complex musico-theatrical performances that occurred across the span of several days at the small city-state of Urbino during Carnival in 1513. Only briefly mentioned is the opening comedy *Eutichia*, which nevertheless addressed a subject close to the hearts of the Urbinate audience: the sacking of their city some ten years previously.² The related thread governing Urbani's account is the *intermedii* (interludes) inserted between the acts of the two comedies, foregrounding the theme of political distress through the personification of a ransacked Italy.

It was unusual for interludes to straddle performances of two separate comedies in this way. Italia's first appearance evidently left a sense of irresolution, a temporal burden of apprehension, perhaps, that may have tapped into political uncertainties experienced by the Urbinate audience and those on the Italian peninsula in general at this time. Urbani is quick to indicate that a (potentially) restorative re-appearance by Italia occurred, and the second half of his account is dominated by a blow-by-blow account of military expertise in the form of a soloist dancing a *moresca*.

In the second part of this chapter, I analyze the significance of the *moresca* as a response to Italia's call for help. In so doing, I re-think the *moresca* as a set of performative possibilities, and show how the Urbinate *moresca* was crafted to instantiate valorous action as an antidote to Italia's (and the peninsula's) frail constitution. I go on to interrogate the performance of martial prowess through the dance's enactment of performative closure, noting the cultural and political uncertainties that undergirded the Urbinate festivities as a whole.

To begin, I provide a context for the wounds that the Duke of Urbino's proxy — the *morescante* (*moresca* dancer) — attempts to eliminate by deftly covering Italia with a regal cloak and crown in an effort to (re)constitute her noble integrity. What does Italy's lacerated flesh represent, and how would the Urbinate audience have understood her disheveled appearance? Further, upon her reappearance several days

2 What little is known of the second play, Guidubaldo Rugiero's comedy, is restricted to a brief aside in a letter by Castiglione to his friend Ludovico di Canossa. *Baldassarre Castiglione: Lettere famigliari e diplomatiche*, ed. by Guido La Rocca, Angelo Stella, and Umberto Morando, 3 vols. (Turin: Einaudi, 2016), I, p. 265.

later in another play, Italia (re)gains her vocality; although Urbani's description only hints at the sonic dimension of her reappearance, Italy recited seven stanzas attributed to Baldassarre Castiglione (1478–1529).³ What does Italy articulate sonically to explain her pain, first projected visibly to the audience through her lacerated flesh?

Close attention to aspects of Urbani's description and Italia's recitation go part way towards answering these questions, as can an informed re-imagining of the language of gesture and vocal expression that Italia may have employed. But the spectacle of ransacked Italy can be further understood through an explanation of what were, in other media, ubiquitous tropes, and the context and/or lived experience that accounted for the ubiquity of these tropes in the first place. The continued threat and realization of a divided and enslaved Italy — 'Ahi serva Italia' [Ah, servile Italy], as Dante Alighieri famously proclaimed in *La commedia* (c. 1308–1321) — was no mere literary trope, but for centuries plagued all those who called the Italian peninsula home, particularly during the decades that flanked either side of the 1513 performances.

Divided Italy

Consistently conceived as a female body, 'Italy' was intrinsically divided: a conglomeration of contiguous geographical regions and entities but with differing social, linguistic, cultural, and economic configurations. So too, the internal political structures of communes, city-states, republics, and kingdoms that made up the Italian peninsula were frequently in flux, as were the political alliances and/or antagonisms between them. Humanist poets such as Dante (c. 1265–1321) and Francesco Petrarch (c. 1304–1374) lamented the internecine strife that characterized the Italian peninsula during their day, but the fear of foreign domination became particularly acute after the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453.⁴ Coinciding with the invention of printing, the loss of the eastern Christian Empire was a shock wave that rippled throughout Western

3 Castiglione is best known today for *The Book of the Courtier* (henceforth *Cortegiano*), first published in 1528. The attribution of the stanzas to Castiglione is tentative. See Luigina Stefani, 'Le "Ottave d'Italia" del Castiglione e le feste urbinati del 1513', *Panorama* (1977), 67–83 (pp. 70–71 and 79 n. 5).

4 On the impact of Constantinople's fall to both the east and west, see Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanism and the Ottoman Turks*

Europe; on the Italian peninsula the news was circulated through both the publication and recitation of improvised *lamenti* (laments) from street to court to piazza. When disasters involved the sacking of an independent city, laments invariably personified the city as a violated woman. So too, in differing circumstances, the inverse was true: rich Venice, for example, could be personified as a queen in resplendent dress. The underpinnings of such reification articulated the patriarchal understanding of ‘woman’ in relation to the family, the household, and as the property of men. And as Lauro Martines notes, ‘[n]othing disgraced women, and hence the household, more than their [sullied] sexuality’.⁵ It was thus easy for the figure of a disgraced woman to stand for disgraced households, including macro-households like a sacked city or peninsula.

The production of laments increased dramatically during the period of the so-called Italian Wars (1494–1559). Though internal strife and sackings had preceded the period of the Wars, by 1494 colonization by external forces was not just a fear but also a reality. From this time, nearly every European entity had some political involvement on the peninsula, especially the superpowers of France and Spain.⁶ The date 1494 represents the descent of the French army (with Swiss mercenaries) led by King Charles VIII through Milan, Genoa, Florence, and other cities in a campaign to overthrow Naples. But both the French and Spanish crowns had hereditary claims to Naples; in fact, these two powerful and competing dynasties had claims to many Italian states and entities. Why? Because, to quote Martines again: ‘Italy was not cast into crisis in the autumn of 1494: it was already there. [...] No other reasoning can account for the fact that the invader was often greeted with outright — not to say clamorous — approval’.⁷ In other words, various Italian entities had already established complex alliances outside of the peninsula to manage rivalries and divisions among themselves.

(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), pp. 60–63, <https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812201291>

5 Lauro Martines, *Strong Words: Writing and Social Strain in the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), p. 242.

6 For an overview of the Italian Wars see Michael Mallett and Christine Shaw, *The Italian Wars, 1494–1559* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012).

7 Martines, *Strong Words*, pp. 249–250.

Divisions were such that even a person from a nearby town might be regarded as a *forestiero* (foreigner).⁸

Urbino's fate during the Italian Wars was integrally tied to both external and Papal intervention, in part because the entire Duchy occupied a strategic position within the Papal States. With the backing of his father the Borgia Pope Alexander VI and French King Louis XII, Cesare Borgia (newly minted as Duke Valentino by Louis), waged three major campaigns from 1499–1502 with the aim of subjugating central Italy. The Duke of Urbino, Guidobaldo da Montefeltro, remained loyal to Cesare and the Pope as they lay claim to regions and cities flanking his Duchy. In 1502 a request for safe passage for papal artillery through his domain ended in deception when Cesare unexpectedly ordered his troops to converge on Urbino. Unprepared, Duke Guidobaldo escaped on horseback disguised as a peasant, with Borgia troops in hot pursuit, first to Ferrara, then finding refuge with his Gonzaga in-laws in Mantua. Several months later the Duke reclaimed his city, but only temporarily, before Cesare regained control. For the residents of the Duchy this tumultuous period affected every aspect of their lives. Cesare sacked the ducal palace and commandeered church property (including the bishop's palace) for his operations. With farming communities pillaged or completely destroyed, and general loss of life, property, and livestock, those who survived were in the hands of a colonizer well known for cruel and duplicitous behavior. Many at higher ranks were forced to actively cooperate or to seek refuge in other territories.

It is to this political moment that Grasso's comedy *Eutichia* gestures, performed some ten years later for Francesco Maria I della Rovere (1490–1538). Francesco became Duke of Urbino in 1508, a feat engineered by Julius II (a Della Rovere pope), when it became evident that Guidobaldo would produce no heir. Many in the audience would have experienced the previous attacks perpetrated by Cesare's troops first hand. A good number of local and nearby nobility and people from the mercantile class were present at the Carnival performances, including women. Indeed, Grasso spends considerable time in his prologue specifically addressing women in the audience;⁹ many women from the Duchy

8 Mallet and Shaw, *Italian Wars*, pp. 2–3.

9 *Nicola Grasso: Eutichia*, ed. by Luigina Stefani (Messina and Florence: D'Anna, 1978), pp. 54–55.

would have likely witnessed or experienced sexual violation themselves when the city was sacked.

Set in the recent past, *Eutichia* revolves around the conventions of mistaken identity, which, when revealed, lead to the 'natural' pairing of the appropriate partners in marriage. The *argomento* (argument or plot set-up) tells us that: 'Ocheutico, a nobleman from Urbino, fled his homeland after losing his two children, a boy and a girl [*Eutichia*], due to the invasion of Cesare Valentino [Borgia]'.¹⁰ The *argomento* is not part of the comedy proper, but, in the prologue that appears to have been recited by Grasso himself, he suggests that the audience had prior access to its contents, thus underscoring their knowledge of the play's background.¹¹ Also, during the play the audience is continually informed that the action takes place eleven years previously, which corresponded with the exact time of Cesare's invasions of Urbino (1502–1503). Further, the noble Ocheutico flees from Urbino to Ferrara, and then on to Mantua where he settles, paralleling exactly the route that Duke Guidobaldo took when fleeing Urbino.¹² These temporal and geographical correspondences in *Eutichia* would have also resonated with the appearance of a ransacked Italy in one of the interludes, reminding the audience of the sacking of their own Urbino.

The Sight and Sound of Suffering

Castiglione was responsible for all aspects of staging the comedies during Carnival including the subject matter and hands-on technical expertise required to produce the *intermedii*.¹³ Castiglione's decision to stage a personification of a debilitated Italy rather than the city of

10 Grasso, *Eutichia*, p. 53: 'Ocheutico, nobilissimo cittadino urbinato, per gli assalti di Cesare Valentino perduti doi figliuoli, un maschio e una femmina, fuggesi della patria'.

11 Grasso, *Eutichia*, p. 54.

12 On these and other related points see Stefani's introduction to Grasso's *Eutichia*, pp. 8–9.

13 Typically, a five-act comedy during this period would include four *intermedii*, one between each of the acts. There is little evidence about the nature of the other interludes performed for Grasso's *Eutichia* and the comedy by Rugiero that followed. The only clue comes from Castiglione's letter to Canossa which implies that other interludes were *intermedio non apparente*, meaning that only 'invisible' music would have been heard as the stage remained empty to mark off the acts of each play. Such a scenario would certainly explain the prominence given to Italia

Urbino was perhaps to make a broader point about strife on the Italian peninsula. It is likely, however, that many in the audience would have identified with their own experience of the previous sacking of their city, and most would have also been familiar with the *lamenti* trope of sacked cities figured as ransacked women. So too, audience members may have witnessed personifications of Italy or cities bound and captive on floats or in pageants in the course of other festivities, usually followed by Italia represented as free and triumphant.¹⁴ But here, on the Urbinate stage, was an Italia that was both visible and audible. What might those in attendance have experienced somatically — through sight and sound — when confronted with Italy's in-the-flesh alterity?

Castiglione's representation seems calculated to elicit the audience's intense, bodily identification with Italia. When she first appeared onstage, the cue to her identity was her state of undress exposing her lacerated skin. Early modern Italians believed that skin was a complex sense organ communicating varied stimuli to the interior body.¹⁵ Compromised skin (from flaying, for example) was an indication of extreme violation that put the coherence of the subject into question. A lacerated Italia both questioned the integrity of a unified Italy and foregrounded the pain wrought by its warring parts. Such excoriation raised the specter of the wounds of war generally, gesturing towards damaged bodies. But both the bodies engaged in battle and those commonly depicted as flayed were male; sacked cities (and ravaged Italy) were invariably gendered female, marking them as subject to ownership by men. Through witnessing Italia's ravaged skin on the stage, both male and female spectators (in differing ways) likely felt a bodily, sensorial impression of violated skin reminiscent of their own experiences. Daniela Bohde has argued that Cinquecento viewers experienced paintings such as Titian's *Flaying of Marsyas* in just this way, on the skin. She argues that

by Urbani, as Italia's would have been the only in-person appearances. Castiglione, *Lettere*, I, p. 265.

- 14 On the representation of bound Italia at pageants see Julia Maria Cartwright, *Baldassarre Castiglione, the Perfect Courtier: His Life and Letters, 1478–1529*, 2 vols. (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1908), I, pp. 329–330.
- 15 Daniela Bohde, 'Skin and the Search for the Interior: The Representation of Flaying in the Art and Anatomy of the Cinquecento', in *Bodily Extremities: Preoccupations with the Human Body in Early Modern European Culture*, ed. by Florike Egmond and Robert Zwijnenberg (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 10–47 (p. 11).

the visceral experience of the viewer must have been one of extreme shock, and that in this manner 'Titian addresses the spectator as body'.¹⁶

Like Titian, Castiglione displayed excruciating identificatory pain, but Italia's pain was also expressed through sounds, her faltering words. Her trauma was such that: 'Two times, as if in extreme pain, she stopped reciting and, as if lost, left the stage, leaving the spectators to think she had lost her ability to speak'. A common theme in laments was the inadequacy of words to capture the experiential horror of sackings; perhaps the start-and-stop quality of Italia's attempts to speak called attention to spectator-auditors' own speech organs. Upon the subsequent re-staging of the *intermedio* Italia informs us herself that she could not form words, and could only emit sighs, although Urbani implies that incomplete words or phrases were spoken *through* her pain.¹⁷ What was the sound of the 'extreme pain' of which Urbani writes? It is difficult to know, but following the lead of poet and playwright Leone De' Sommi, one of few to write of such matters, sound emanated from 'the eloquence of the body'; as such the actor was expected to produce effects that '*give life to the performance [italics mine]*'.¹⁸ Grief, for example, 'must be expressed in a vital manner'. For De' Sommi emotive flexibility of a *natural* voice was key; he states unequivocally that he would never give the role of a woman to someone with a deep voice.¹⁹ (The implication is that in general men played women's roles, something with which those in the Urbinate audience were completely familiar.) The sounds and gestures of Italia's pain, then, would have almost certainly emanated from a cross-dressed male body with a naturally high voice. Continuing with a De' Sommiian reading, Italia would have incorporated gestures in accordance with her nuanced emotions, thus representing the state of

16 Bohde, 'Skin', pp. 45–46.

17 Recent studies on the effects of trauma are strikingly similar to Urbani's account, including the fragmentary nature of memory. Foundational to Elaine Scarry's study is pain's inexpressibility and its ability to deprive the victim of language. Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

18 For an understanding of sound emanating from gesture in theatrical performance see Emily Wilbourne, 'Lo Schiavetto (1612): Travestied Sound, Ethnic Performance, and the Eloquence of the Body', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 63.1 (2010), 1–43, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jams.2010.63.1.1>

19 Leone de' Sommi: *Quattro dialoghi in materia di rappresentazioni sceniche*, ed. by Ferruccio Marotti (Milan: Il Polifilo, 1968), p. 39.

her character at any given moment. One might imagine, for example, that with loss of speech came distraught facial expressions and attempts to connect with the audience through means other than speech, such as outstretched arms. Defeated by her attempts to communicate verbally, she finally abandoned the public stage, leaving auditor-spectators with the specter of a corporally violated woman, whose violation brought shame to the patriarchal household.

It was only during an interlude in the second comedy that Italia was able to galvanize her vocality and give full voice to the circumstances of her trauma. Her recitation consists of seven stanzas in *ottava rima*.²⁰ She begins by explaining the reason for her previous silence mentioning her inability to 'form words' because 'grief prevented [her] tongue from moving'.²¹ In the first stanza's final couplet she depicts herself as a stunned, silent suffering lamb, as 'prey to wolves'.

Italia's tone changes dramatically in the second stanza from personal suffering to bitterness; she emphasizes the fleeting nature of all worldly endeavors, including efficacious sovereignty, as suggested by her reference to the transience of 'scepters, treasures, triumph and royal pomp'. A prior regal state — one associated with an idealized classical past — is fully articulated in stanza three, however, when the audience is instructed to imagine her (despite her dejected appearance) as a former queen who may rise again. One might imagine a gesturally bold Italia, confident in her vocality. She presents herself as an all-powerful queen of an expansionist Roman Empire subjugating 'others': strangers, itinerants, pilgrims and 'many [other] peoples and [foreign] kings'. These themes are reprised in stanzas five and six, but juxtaposed with a defeated Italy, suggesting the alterity embedded in fleeting triumphs.

First, however, stanza four embodies the flip side of Italia-imagined-as-queen by returning to her physical vulnerability: 'Now despised, a servant, abandoned'. The shift from an idealized position of strength to extreme vulnerability surely influenced the rendering of emotive declarations such as 'piango' (I weep). So, too, she may have gestured

20 A stanza in *ottava rima* consists of eight eleven-syllable lines with an ABABABCC rhyme scheme.

21 A reliable transcription of Italia's stanzas is published in Stefani, 'Le "Ottave d'Italia"', 67–69; see also Vernarecci, 'Di alcune rappresentazioni drammatiche', pp. 190–191. The translation given in Appendix A is my own.

to her mutilated body in the following verse ('I was lacerated by barbarians'), and in so doing bring past suffering into the present performance moment. For the first time, Italia directly addresses the past treatment that has resulted in her lacerated body. In the context of the Urbinate performance, and specifically the city's sacking ten years earlier, the *barbare* (barbarians) mentioned referred to Cesare's army, consisting of Louis XII's French troops and members of Alexander VI's papal guard.²² In the context of the Italian Wars, the implications of having been ransacked (from Urbani's description) and the term *rapina* in stanza four (rape, or forcible abduction) indicated not just the theft of territory but a brutal rape, a frequent occurrence during the Wars in general.²³ In fact, Italia's sexual violation would have been in the forefront of the minds of audience members during her first *intermedio*, because her lacerations and state of undress evoked both the widely circulating *lamenti* written during the Italian Wars and Petrarch's poem 'Italia mia'. As Margaret Brose so eloquently demonstrates, 'Italia mia' is 'the founding text of a complex Italian poetico-political history of female *sparagmos*, in which figurations of a wounded and scattered female body sanction the construction of both poetic and political [male] subjectivity'.²⁴ Specifically, 'Italia mia' presents images of the sexual violation of a maternal body; Castiglione does likewise in his penultimate stanza when Italia declaims: 'Look there, alas, at your mother and nourisher / With torn hair and without clothes'. The reference to *nutrice* refers to the one who nourishes, the wet nurse, while the reference to lack of clothing and dishevelled hair iterates the theme of sexual violence.

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- 22 The Turks were commonly referred to as *barbare* in humanist discourse, increasingly after the sack of Constantinople (see Bisaha, *Creating East and West*, pp. 70–73). However, the rhetoric of barbarism was just as commonly used to refer to French, Spanish, and German invaders, all of whom colonized the Italian peninsula during the Wars.
- 23 I thank Jessica Goethals for confirming that *saccheggiata* (ransacked) be interpreted as sexual violence in the context of the Italian Wars. The term *violata* was more commonly used. The definitions for *rapina* are drawn from John Florio, *Queen Anna's New World of Words* (London: Melch. Bradwood, 1611), p. 421.
- 24 Margaret Brose, 'Petrarch's Beloved Body: "Italia mia"', in *Feminist Approaches to the Body in Medieval Literature*, ed. by Linda Somperis and Sarah Stanbury (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), pp. 1–20 (pp. 1–2). For the continued prevalence of these Petrarchan tropes, see Natalia Costa-Zalesow, 'Italy as Victim: A Historical Appraisal of a Literary Theme', *Italica*, 45.2 (1968), 216–240, <https://doi.org/10.2307/478303>

The opening of stanza five introduces an emotive soundscape of grief and bitterness. Italia's repeated 'o' is a vocalization of wishful grief for the loss of successful Roman commanders. Castiglione was drawing on the type of sonic interjections commonly (and more profusely) used in *lamenti* to plead in defense of Italian liberties, and to invest listeners with a sense of involvement.²⁵ After 'foreign nations' have regained their autonomy, a glorious past is rendered almost irretrievably lost. Italia questions once-victorious leaders with an accusatory tone: 'Where are you now?' and the concluding quatrain takes a bitter turn by declaring that even the names of great commanders are barely remembered, they are 'naked shadows'.

The penultimate stanza is dominated by imperatives that demand attention and action: 'wake up', 'look there', 'take up again now those noble swords'. The urgency of Italia's injunctions are enhanced by the repetition of 'ormai' (now). (Creating a sense of urgency was also typical of laments.) Italia's demands are juxtaposed against her dejection: her 'horrendous and sorrowful weeping' is actualized in verse five with the interjection of 'ahimè' which breaks up the narrative flow. The 'ahimè' of *lamenti* derive from similar terms that mark Greek tragedy, and, as Nicole Loraux remarks, the vocalization 'opens to a world where it has no other sense than the sound itself'.²⁶ Put another way, Italia's vocalization of 'ahimè' was a sonic embodiment of her pain where sound, not sense, was prioritized. In the final couplet, Italia's reference to conflict is deflected elsewhere (to 'distant countries') as it was in stanza four (to 'foreign nations'). While the call to take up 'noble swords' might be interpreted as rekindled expansionism, I suggest that the deflection of the place of warfare *away* from ancient Rome (and its hoped-for corollary, the Italian peninsula) enables the Empire to maintain its idealized integrity, with Italia-as-woman-defiled metaphorically carrying the burden of the peninsula's colonization. As such, alterity is only deflected, never entirely suppressed.

25 Florence Alazard, 'Ahimé, ah, o, deh: Interjections and Orality in *Lamenti* during the Italian Wars', in *Interactions between Orality and Writing in Early Modern Italian Culture*, ed. by Luca Degl'Innocenti, Brian Richardson, and Chiara Sbordoni (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 67–80 (pp. 76–78), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315589190-5>

26 Cited in Alazard, 'Ahimé', pp. 72–73.

Hearing the Call: The *Moresca* and Performative Valor

The final stanza that Italia recited also follows the trajectory of the lament, which typically concluded by imploring Italian princes or states to come to the victim's defense.²⁷ Italia's call to action is specifically directed to the attendant Duke: 'And you beloved son, Duke of Urbino, / In whom I feel true valor reborn / Avenge my Latin blood [Roman heritage]'. Her delivery in earlier stanzas, perhaps anguished or tentative, may now have embodied the strength and certainty that would ultimately be attributed to the Duke himself through bodily enactment. The final quatrain takes the tone of an apotheosis with references to his divinity and immortality — creating a 'space' that is off-limits from the actual brutality and physical violence of war — and concludes with a call to secure her freedom.²⁸

While performative *lamenti* did not allow for an immediate response to cries for help, the musico-theatrical context at Urbino facilitated a response in the form of a *moresca*. Coming hard on the heels of Italia's final apotheotic quatrain, both Castiglione's stanza and Urbino's description leave no doubt that the 'armed person' who appeared on the stage was intended to personify the Duke of Urbino. The young Duke Francesco — at the time only twenty-one years of age — already had a distinguished military career of which Castiglione had first-hand knowledge. Francesco had proved his military prowess from an early age. At sixteen he was leading men-at-arms for his father-in-law Francesco Gonzaga (1466–1519) in military action against Bologna, and after becoming Duke of Urbino in 1508, he and Castiglione were involved in active warfare together against Venice.²⁹ Thus, the call to a valorous Duke was not only fitting within the theatrical circumstance, but also resonated with the reputation he had already established as a noble warrior.³⁰

27 Ibid., pp. 76–78.

28 The reference to the 'divine bird' in this stanza would usually indicate the eagle, which could signal both the standards carried by Roman legions with the conquering eagle as well as the eagle in the Duke of Urbino's coat of arms. I thank Giulio Ongaro for suggesting this interpretation to me.

29 See Cartwright, *Baldassare Castiglione*, I, pp. 265–271.

30 The terms nobility and honor were almost interchangeable in the Cinquecento. See Richard Wistreich, "'Real Bases, Real Men": *Virtù* and Virtuosity in the

How did the performance of valor on the Urbinate stage intersect with the designation *moresca* in Urbani's account? Before answering this question, a brief re-thinking of the *moresca* is needed, especially in light of recent literature contesting aspects of the genre.³¹ I circumscribe my approach by relying on sources from the early- to mid-Cinquecento, although I hope my general approach may provide a useful template for understanding aspects of the genre in different socio-political and geographical contexts.³² Most scholars seem to agree that in a musico-theatrical context, a *moresca* was a costumed dance requiring considerable agility, with a focus on individual action (almost always performed by men, as soloists or in a group), which distinguished the dance from (partnered) court dance. Beyond this general definition, individual *moresche* can be most productively understood by asking, as John Forrest has already done in relation to the English Morris dance: who is dancing and for whom?³³ If *moresca* performances are considered contextually, as a response to the environments in which they were staged, then any contention over their signifying capacity falls away, as

Construction of Noble Male Identity in Late Sixteenth-Century Italy', *Trossinger Jahrbuch für Renaissancemusik*, 2 (2002), 59–80 (pp. 61–62).

- 31 For example, see Barbara Sparti, 'The Danced *Moresca* (and *mattaccino*): Multiformity of a Genre. From the Palaces of Cardinals and Popes to Enactments by Artisans in the Streets of 17th-Century Rome', in *Early Modern Rome 1341–1667*, ed. by Portia Prebys ([Ferrara]: Edisai, 2011), pp. 324–330 and Barbara Sparti, '*Moresca* and *Mattaccino*. Where are the Spanish Antecedents? Where are the Moors?', in *Passi, tracce, percorsi: Scritti sulla danza italiana in omaggio a José Sasportes*, ed. by Alessandro Pontremoli and Patrizia Veroli (Rome: Aracne, 2012), pp. 17–31. These articles are a response to the work of Anthony Cummings who suggests that a Roman entertainment from 1521 symbolically evoked the threat of the Turks. He later modifies this assertion somewhat to non-European 'others' to encompass metaphoric readings of *moresche* in general. See, in this order, Anthony M. Cummings, 'Leo X and Roman Carnival (1521)', *Studi musicali*, 36.2 (2007), 289–341; 'Music and the "Islamic Other": Public Festivals and Triumphal Entries', in *The Lion's Ear: Pope Leo X, the Renaissance Papacy, and Music* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), pp. 13–44; and 'Dance and "The Other": The *Moresca*', in *Seventeenth-Century Ballet: A Multi-Art Spectacle*, ed. by Barbara Grammeniat. (USA: Xlibris, 2011), pp. 39–60. During the Italian Wars, the 'other' cannot automatically be assumed to be an 'Islamic other'. The term *barbare* was frequently used by Italians to refer to the brutality of French, Spanish, or German soldiers that invaded the peninsula.
- 32 In light of the scope and purpose of this chapter, it would take me too far afield to cite the numerous sources I have consulted. However, I thank Suzanne Cusick for pushing me to think deeply about the function and purpose of Italian *moresche*.
- 33 John Forrest, *The History of Morris Dancing, 1458–1750* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), pp. 25–26, <https://doi.org/10.3138/9781442681453>

does Barbara Sparti's repeated contention that the *moresca* is ultimately 'elusive'.³⁴ Quite simply, I suggest that the dance is inherently labile, from its movements and accoutrements — which consisted of a set of possibilities, some more commonly employed than others — to its signifying capacities, both of which facilitated the *moresca's* utility in a number of contexts, including in a performance designed to create a perception of valorous action.

A relationship between valorous action and a *moresca* may seem surprising in light of more commonly cited references to *moresche* as fierce and furious or exotic, but this is exactly my point. Different types of *moresche* were deployed to present the differing status and affective qualities of particular character types that could even co-exist within the course of a single entertainment such as an *intermedio*, as I will later show. Although a demonstration of efficacious swordsmanship was sometimes incorporated as part of a *moresca* (as in our example), with groups of *morescanti*, quite commonly swords or other implements were simply but deftly wielded in time to the music, although sometimes no implements were incorporated at all. Movement in time to the music by a dancer or dancers appears to be the prime determinant of *moresche* performed during the early decades of the sixteenth century, whether through (unspecified) bodily movement in general (as the Urbino example illustrates), footwork (which is very rarely specifically mentioned, but may have been assumed), and/or the wielding of implements, often weapons (but not exclusively). Other features such as circle formations or entering the stage in single file (when groups of dancers were involved) were not essential features, but were selectively employed for specific purposes related to the overarching conception of individual *moresche*.³⁵

The relationship of *moresche* to sound is complex. Sources do not always mention musical instruments; when mentioned the *tamburino* (pipe and tabor) is most commonly cited, but practices varied widely. The percussive dimension of the *tamburino*, performed by a 'one-man

34 Sparti, 'The Danced *Moresca*', p. 325 and Sparti, '*Moresca* and *Mattaccino*', pp. 17 and 29.

35 I am indebted to dance scholar Jennifer Nevile for her timely responses to my queries, and helping me to think through a number of quagmires related to the early- to mid-Cinquecento *moresca*.

band', supported tempo maintenance, a crucial aspect of the dance. But in light of the inherent athleticism and other frequent components of the dance, it seems important to relate embodied action to sound. In some *moresche*, implements were used to beat time, adding to the overall sonic effect. Also, some performances incorporated the clash of real weapons; De' Sommi comments upon the magnificence of a show due to the use of *real* weapons in the *moresca*, but we cannot assume that 'fake' weapons (without sound capacity?) were most commonly used. (For example, in a letter of 1502, Duchess Isabella d'Este comments on the use of 'fake armor and implements' in a *moresca* she witnessed in Ferrara.³⁶) It is also notable that while fencing, striking the small shield (buckler) with one's weapon was a common gesture, so it is possible that when 'real' shields were employed they may have been utilized for percussive effects.³⁷

No Italian dance treatises discuss the *moresca's* footwork, and only a few eyewitness accounts mention footwork specifically. A lengthy description of an entertainment designed by Giulio Romano in 1542 notes that '[a]s they [the *morescant*i] all entered, they gathered in a circle going around the hall with certain steps which I can neither explain nor do', suggesting the complexity of the footwork.³⁸ He also summarizes the compelling parts of the entertainment as a whole, with reference to *agilità* (agility) and *destrezza* (dexterity) coming in for special mention. Another source from 1524 mentions that when '*limiting themselves* to the characteristics of *moresche*, they jumped up with many beautiful leaps [*italics mine*].'³⁹ These are relatively rare examples; what they perhaps

36 See *Isabella d'Este: Selected Letters*, trans. by Deanna Shemek (Toronto: Iter Press; Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2017), p. 183.

37 Regarding striking the buckler with one's weapon during fencing, see Dori Coblenz, "'Maister of al artificiall force and sleight'": Tempo and Dissimulation in Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*', *Italian Studies*, 73.1 (2018), 53–65 (p. 58), <https://doi.org/10.1080/00751634.2018.1411091>

38 'Poichè tutti furono usciti, et si hebbero radunati in cerchio girando intorno alla sala con certi lor contrapassi, ch'io non so discernere nè far'. Cited in Forrest, *Morris Dancing*, p. 85. The term *contrapasso* appears in fifteenth-century dance treatises and refers to a specific type of step, related to, but not the same as a double step, as it required a special type of timing. The term could have had various possible meanings within the context of a *moresca* from 1542 (which are beyond the scope of this paper to amplify), so I have simply translated the term as steps.

39 '[P]oi stringendosi su alcuni punti moreschi, butorono molti belli salti'. Marino Sanuto, *Diarii*, 58 vols. (Venice: Visentini, 1879–1903), IIIVI, p. 119, <http://asa.archiviodiastudiadriatici.it/islandora/object/libria:84206#page/72/mode/2up>

reinforce is the agility and skill required to dance a *moresca*. However we cannot deduce from the latter excerpt that leaping was characteristic of all Cinquecento *moresche*; in fact, reference to leaps and contorted body movements in both written and iconographical sources is more characteristic of northern European sources, as Barbara Sparti has already noted.⁴⁰ Yet given the evidence presented, it is more likely than not that the early Cinquecento *moresca* incorporated sound that was produced by the dancers in at least one or more of the ways suggested above. This would be in stark contrast, for example, to the courtly *bassadanza* (low dance), a graceful, opposite-sex partner dance, with gliding movements that were low to the ground, presumably producing little, if any, sound. In the context of the Urbinate performance, the sounds of the *moresca*, including its music, would nevertheless have provided a sonically gendered demarcation between Italia's lament (a genre long associated with women's voices) and the non-vocalic display of the masculine body, synced in time to the music.

Returning now to Urbani's brief account, he provides us with several clues regarding the enactment of graceful valor through the *moresca*.⁴¹ Urbani uses the adjective *bellissimo* three times to describe the dance. Although a catch-all term, the repetition of the word is significant. Throughout, the *morescante* needed to demonstrably evoke Duke Francesco's noble status — exhibited by the actual Duke through on-going valor on the battlefield — by distinguishing himself from the barbarians who had previously ransacked Italy, and now encircled her on the stage.

40 Sparti, 'Moresca and Mattaccino', pp. 19 and 23. So, too, the use of bells attached to dancers' legs (and blackface) was relatively rare in Cinquecento Italian sources by comparison with English and French descriptions.

41 The *moresca* as a demonstration of valor can be found in other descriptions, including those described, though not devised, by Castiglione (*Lettere*, I, pp. 556–557). For example, during Carnival at Rome in 1521, Castiglione writes of several *moresche* danced within the course of one entertainment. In two instances an (unnamed) lady requested that eight well-dressed youths demonstrate their valor, suggesting a chivalric connotation. In the first instance she wished 'to determine if they were worthy of her love [... whereupon] they began to dance the *moresca* again'. She then 'asked that they demonstrate how valiant they were at arms. And thus each took a two-handed sword and with it danced a beautiful *moresca*'. When asked for a specific demonstration of valor at arms, the dancers complied by using a longer and heavier sword in their *moresca*, which needed to be maneuvered with two hands. I thank Giulio Ongaro for alerting me to this differentiation in the second dance.

Urbani's account indicates that the *morescante's* assault was both forceful and expeditious. On one level, the 'thrusts and other strokes' the dancer employed would have been necessarily forceful because he was outnumbered by his opponents. (While we might tend to assume that Urbani's words were visually motivated, we cannot completely rule out a sonic component.) The fencing master Pietro Monte who, it has been argued, is a relatively silent but influential figure in Castiglione's *Cortegiano*, is mentioned as embodying the highest qualities of his craft through both *forza e leggierezza* (force and sleight).⁴² The latter term intersects with the former by suggesting the dissimulation required for effective fencing. Urbani seems to have noticed variety in the *morescante's* swordsmanship by mentioning 'thrusts and other strokes' and possibly the necessary deceptive qualities (not just brute force) suggested by the word *colpo*.⁴³ The *morescante* also demonstrated mastery of the spatial field, another trait associated with artful fencing: Urbani's description notes how the dancer first proceeded to encircle Italia, then 'drove away all the barbarians' (thus indicating his own move away from Italia), and then his subsequent return to her. The dancer returned 'in time with the music' indicating the characteristic synchrony between the dancer's movements and the music frequently noted in early-Cinquecento *moresca* descriptions. Indeed, the ability to maintain tempo was a key aspect of both efficacious fencing and the *moresca* — De' Sommi even refers to a specific *tempo di moresca* — and keeping tempo is arguably a key aspect of Castiglione's conception of *sprezzatura* enacted through timely, and at times, antagonistic, dissimulatory interpersonal interactions in his *Cortegiano*.⁴⁴ On the stage, the solo *morescante* representing the Duke must have had the ability to delicately modulate between the combative skills necessary to represent the expulsion of numerous adversaries and *sprezzatura* to ensure the entire dance event appeared effortless.⁴⁵

42 Coblenz, 'Tempo and Dissimulation', 61.

43 In addition to *colpo* meaning 'a blow, a stroke, [or] a hit', Florio also states 'a trick' or 'a prank'. John Florio, *World of Words* (London: Arnold Hatfield, 1598), p. 77 and Florio, *Queen Anna's New World of Words*, p. 110.

44 De' Sommi, *Quattro dialoghi*, pp. 70–71. Coblenz brings the importance of tempo to the fore in both fencing and her reading of *Cortegiano* in 'Tempo and Dissimulation'.

45 *Sprezzatura* is a dense term suggesting a complex set of behaviors that cannot be satisfactorily translated as effortless. Nevertheless, the implication of showing no labor or effort in a dance context that required considerable physical agility, including swordsmanship, is relevant here.

For *sprezzatura* to have meaning it must involve (seemingly effortless) *difficoltà* (difficulty) and risk, as the singular *morescante's* confrontation with a group of barbarians appears to suggest. Further, as Richard Wistreich has shown, as far as noble soldiering was concerned, 'regular and continuous repetitions of deeds of valour' *that were witnessed* was essential to maintaining the ontological status of the courtier as valorous warrior.⁴⁶ Similarly, through her reading of *Cortegiano*, Dori Coblenz has foregrounded the temporal dimensions of both artful conversation and fencing; regarding the latter, for example, an action *fuori di tempo* (out of time) denoted a failed action, 'one that misse[d] the opportune moment' by failing to parry a thrust. What the practice-informed research of Wistreich and Coblenz shares, then, is the ability to convey (historical) understandings of actions that are grounded in temporality; as such, actions understood to take place through time are always contingent, and therefore involved risk. So, too, as a representation of valor enacted through time and *in time* on the Urbinate stage, the *moresca* must signal *difficoltà* and therefore risk for its efficacy.

After driving away the barbarians, the task before the Duke of Urbino's *morescante*-proxy was to reinstate Italia as queen. The dancer thus placed a crown on Italia's head and re-attired her violated body with 'a regal golden cloak'.⁴⁷ Did this rapid metamorphosis enact performative closure by literally removing from the audience's view the signs of distress inscribed on her body? Put another way, did this momentary action eviscerate the memory of ransacked Italy who alone had dominated the first *intermedio*? The temporal stretch between Italia's two appearances is important here. Urbani indicates that she first left the stage (alone) unable to fulfil her objective (speaking), leaving spectators invested in her performance in a state of irresolution, perhaps even with a sense of foreboding. Castiglione seems to have orchestrated Italia's appearances so that the spectre of her lacerated body would have remained with the spectator until her (unexpected) reappearance several days later, dishevelled as before, to recite her lament. Though now envoiced, themes of contingency and alterity were infused into her multi-stanza recitation, which oscillated between complete dejection and the glimmer of hope offered by a triumphant past. When her male

46 Wistreich, 'Virtù and Virtuosity', 59–60.

47 Urbani uses the term *revestita* [*rivestita*] suggesting the act of re-clothing Italia.

rescuer finally accompanied her off the stage, expertly syncing his *moresca* to the music, was her transformation complete? The damage inflicted on the Italian peninsula by the so-called Italian Wars, including the collective sexual assault of Italian women by French and Spanish soldiers, continued for another forty-five years.⁴⁸ But Castiglione was acutely aware not only of foreign domination, but of warring Italian constituents inculcated in these struggles, which he made a point of communicating to the audience at the conclusion of the third and final play he supervised during Carnival.

Coda: Performing Alterity

The final comedy that Castiglione oversaw during the Urbinate Carnival was Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena's *La Calandria*.⁴⁹ Though not mentioned by Urbani, Castiglione discussed the play's staging and its *intermedii* in a private letter to his friend, Bishop Ludovico Canossa. He described the first *intermedio* as follows:

The first [interlude] was a *moresca* of Jason, who appeared on the stage from the side, dancing, armed in the ancient style, beautiful, with a sword and a very beautiful shield. From the other side two bulls were suddenly seen, so lifelike, that many people thought they were real: they were shooting fire from their mouths, etc. The good Jason approached them and made them plow, by placing the yoke of the plow on them. And then he sowed the teeth of the dragon, and little by little men armed in the ancient style were born on the stage, so cleverly, as much as is possible, I believe. And they danced a fierce *moresca* in order to kill Jason; and then, when they were at the entrance they killed each other, one by one, but one couldn't see them dying [on the stage]. Jason entered from behind them, and he immediately exited with the veil of gold [the Golden Fleece] on his shoulders, dancing most excellently. And this [dancer] was [nicknamed] the Moor, and this was the first interlude.⁵⁰

48 On the sexual violence perpetrated by foreign troops, see Yael Even, 'On the Art and Life of Collective Sexual Violence in Renaissance Italy', *Notes in the History of Art*, 23.4 (2004), 7–14, <https://doi.org/10.1086/sou.23.4.23207989>

49 Bibbiena's play has garnered considerable critical attention due to its innovations as a trend-setting comedy.

50 'La prima [intrinseca] fu una *moresca* di Iason, il quale compare nella scena da un capo ballando, armato all'antica, bello, con la spada et una targa bellissima. Dall'altro furono visti in un tratto due tori, tanto simili al vero, che alcuni pensorno che fosser veri: che gittavano fuoco della bocca, etc. A questi s'accostò il buon Iason,

As the heroic figure that acquired the Golden Fleece, Jason is a symbol of authority and kingship. Castiglione's description emphasizes the dancing Jason with all the accoutrements of a fine warrior, using the term *bello* and its derivatives as descriptors, very much like Urbani's account of the *moresca* performed by the Duke of Urbino's proxy. Jason's harnessing of the fearsome bulls is accomplished with valorous ease. Conversely, the men who appear, though also 'armed in the ancient style', dance 'a fierce *moresca* in order to kill Jason', but instead end up killing each other. As mentioned earlier, the *moresca* was commonly deployed to convey differing affective states, and a dancer's comportment could easily reflect those attributes — from gracious and valorous to furious but ultimately inept — while also engaging in recognizably *moresca*-esque movements and, in this case, swordsmanship.⁵¹

Castiglione's description is a standard representation of the Jason myth, down to minor details that mimic the classical tradition, such as not having the 'armed men' actually die on the stage. It may come as a surprise, then, that Castiglione had the troubled state of the Italian peninsula on his mind when he conceived these *intermedii*, which he communicated to the Urbinate audience directly:

After the comedy [*La Calandria*] ended, one of the little Cupids that we had seen before [in the second *intermedio*], in the same costume, suddenly appeared on the stage and explained the meaning of the *intermedii* with a few stanzas, explaining that they were all tied together [thematically] and separate from the comedy. And this was: that the first [*intermedio*] was the battle of those worldly [i.e. not mythological] brothers, as now we see that the wars are a reality, and between neighbors, and between

et feceli arare, posto loro il giogo e l'aratro. E poi seminò i denti del dracone: e nacquero a poco a poco del palco huomini armati all'antica, tanto bene, quanto credo io che si possa. Et questi ballorno una fiera *moresca*, per ammazzar Iason: e poi, quando furno all'entrare, s'ammazzavano ad uno ad uno, ma non si vedeano morire. Dietro ad essi se n'entrò Iason: e subito uscì col vello d'oro alle spalle, ballando eccellentissimamente. Et questo era il Moro, et questa fu la prima intromessa'. Castiglione, *Lettere*, I, p. 265.

51 A notable example of a dancer separating himself out through his bodily demeanor (and costume) occurred in a *moresca* performed in Rome for the wedding celebrations of Alfonso d'Este I and Lucrezia Borgia. Hosted by her father, Pope Alexander VI, the *moresca* included Lucrezia's brother, Cesare Borgia. Duchess Isabella d'Este was informed that Cesare Borgia was easily recognized and distinguished from his fellow dancers 'because both *his manner* and his gold and velvet brocade attire were more pompous [*italics mine*]'. Barbara Sparti, 'Isabella and the Dancing Este Brides, 1473–1514', in *Women's Work: Making Dance in Europe Before 1800*, ed. by Lynn Brooks (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2007), pp. 19–48 (p. 34).

those who should make peace. And to represent this the fable of Jason was used. Then came Love [in the second *intermedio*], whose holy fire first kindled humankind and the earth, then the sea [in *intermedio* three] and the air [in *intermedio* four], to drive away war and discord, and to unite the world in harmony. This [representation] was rather a hope and a conjecture: but that of the wars was unfortunately true, which is to our misfortune.⁵²

Castiglione emphasizes the thematic continuity of the *intermedii* and their collective relationship to the on-going Italian Wars by explicitly stating that all four were linked together by the theme of the Wars, constituting a separate 'plot' from Bibbiena's comedy. By redeploing one of the Amorini from the second *intermedio* to communicate to the audience, Castiglione essentially breaks the frame between a world of mythic possibility and the current fractious and bloody circumstances on the Italian peninsula. It is difficult to know whether the audience would have interpreted the *intermedii* in this way had Castiglione not insisted on clarifying their meaning at the end of the show. Yet through this gesture, Castiglione brought a reality check to the final play of the festivities, which he had also overtly signalled by way of Italia's ransacked appearance over the course of the first two comedies. In this way, Castiglione projected a kind of temporal arch of alterity across all three Carnival plays, never entirely allowing the audience to forget past and current uncertainties.

Though Castiglione (through the Amorino) appears to confine his remarks to internecine strife, both Castiglione and his audience were aware of the interlocking nature of internal rivalries and foreign domination on the peninsula. The Dukes of city-states such as Urbino did not have absolute power; by de jure they were papal fiefs, which complicated their autonomy. A change in papal rule would invariably lead to instability. Throughout the Urbinate Carnival, news of the Della Rovere Pope Julius II's rapidly deteriorating health would have cast a

52 'Finita poi la Comedia, nacque sul palco all'improvviso un Amorino di quelli primi, e nel medesimo habito, il quale dichiarò con alcune poche stanze la significatione delle intromesse, che era una cosa continuata e separata dalla Comedia. E questa era: che prima fu la battaglia di quelli fratelli terrigeni, come hor veggiamo che le guerre sono in essere, e tra li propinqui, e quelli che dovriano far pace. Et in questo si valse della favola di Iason. Dipoi venne Amore, il quale del suo santo foco accese prima gli huomini e la terra, poi il mare e l'aria, per cacciare la guerra e la discordia, et unire il mondo di concordia. Questo fu più presto speranza et augurio: ma quello delle guerre, fu pur troppo vero, per nostra disgratia'. Castiglione, *Lettere*, I, p. 266.

shadow over the festivities; Julius himself, the so-called warrior pope, had engineered the installation of Francesco della Rovere I as Duke of Urbino in 1508. While Francesco's proxy rescued Italia by performing a valorous *moresca* and covering her wounds, outside of the theatrical context no such efficacious remedy was forthcoming. With Julius' impending death, and (non-Della Rovere) cardinals in Rome jockeying for the papacy, the writing was already on the wall: the Duchy of Urbino would once again find itself in precarious circumstances. Julius II died shortly after Carnival during the night of 20–21 February 1513, and within less than a month a Medici pope was installed, Pope Leo X, a development that ultimately cost Francesco his dukedom.⁵³

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An almost mandatory gesture in historiographical work on early modern Italian festival has required tipping our hats to the magnificence and *meraviglia* (wonder) of court spectacles designed as manifestations of cultural prestige and political power. But the ways in which Castiglione allowed current political realities and anxieties to filter through into the 1513 Urbinate Carnival may give us pause for thought. The Italian Wars are not commonly foregrounded in musico-theatrical events but, as literary scholars have begun to teach us, the trauma and displacement produced by events such as the Sack of Rome in 1527 inevitably found their way into cultural production, even if today we have to look a little harder to find materials that engage with these unpleasant realities.⁵⁴ At the risk of sounding sententious, when considering the realities of colonization, slavery, or racial profiling, early modern Italy is not the first place that generally comes to mind, at least in the fields of musicology and literary studies. But for those of us who have found an historiographical home there over the years, it seems important to continue the work in our own back yards, and in so doing create a space for other voices to be heard.

53 Francesco Maria lost his jurisdiction over Pesaro as a result of Leo X's installment and was ultimately excommunicated and ousted as Duke of Urbino in 1516.

54 See, for example, Jessica Goethals, 'Vanquished Bodies, Weaponized Words: Pietro Aretino's Conflicting Portraits of the Sexes and the Sack of Rome', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 17.1 (2014), 55–78, <https://doi.org/10.1086/675763> and Laurie Shepard, 'Siena 1531: Genesis of a European Heroine', *Quaderni d'italianistica*, 26.1 (2005), 3–19.

Appendix A

- [1] Tanto dal duol oppresso ho 'l cor nel petto
 Che dil mio mal non so formar parole
 E muta sino qui per questo effetto
 Son stata, come il cielo e 'l destin vuole.
 Sospiri sol mandava il cor astretto,
 Ché la lingua il dolor impedir suole,
 Come preda di lupi agno innocente
 Senza lamento al mal fui paziente.
- [2] Ben false son queste speranze umane
 Che la Fortuna sì spesso interrompe,
 Passan come ombre le glorie mondane
 Scettri, tesor, trionfi e rege pompe,
 L'opre nostre qua giù debole e vane
 L'edace morso dil tempo corrompe
 Tal che ogni cosa è alfin caduca e frale,
 E ciò che è sotto il ciel tutt'è mortale.
- [3] Dil mondo fui regina e mio pensiero
 Fu stabil regno aver e senza fine,
 I was queen of the world and my intention
 Was to have a stable reign without end.
- The heart in my chest is so oppressed,
 In such pain, that I cannot form words.
 It is also for this reason
 That I have been silent, as the heavens and destiny wish.
 My constricted heart emitted only sighs,
 Because grief prevented my tongue from moving.
 As an innocent lamb, prey to wolves,
 Without lamenting, I suffered.
- These human hopes are false
 That Fortune so often interrupts,
 Worldly glories pass as shadows
 Scepters, treasures, triumphs and royal pomp,
 Our labors down here are feeble and vain
 The greedy bite of time corrupts
 So that everything in the end is fallen and frail,
 And all that is under heaven is mortal.

- A tante forze e a sì eccelso impero
 La terra reputai stretto confine,
 Tutti obedian al mio scettro altero
 Populi strani e genti peregrine
 E stavano a' miei piedi ingenuchiati
 Populi molti e regi incatenati.
- [4] Or vilipesa, serva, abbandonata
 Mi truovo afflitta, misera e mischina,
 Poverella, mendica e sconsolata
 Piango la mia crudel alta ruina,
 Barbare genti m'hanno lacerata
 E fatto d'i mei membri aspra rappina
 E quei che mi dovean, or chi mil crede,
 Deffender, m'han tradita e data in prede.
- [5] O Cesari, mei Fabii, o Scipioni
 Che tante palme già mi riportasti
 Dove sete or che esterne nazioni
 M'han tolto quel che voi già mi donasti?
 Ormai non è chi più di voi ragioni
- With so many forces, and such a distinguished Empire
 I deemed the border of my country too limited.
 All obeyed my almighty scepter
 Strangers and pilgrims
 And kneeling at my feet there were
 Many peoples and kings in chains.
- Now despised, a servant, abandoned
 I find myself an afflicted, wretched and poor servant girl,
 Wretched, begging, and disconsolate
 I weep for my cruel, profound ruin.
 I was lacerated by barbarians
 And they robbed all they could of my parts
 And those who ought to have defended me (who can
 believe this now?)
 Betrayed me, and gave me in prey.
- O Caesars, my Fabii, o Scipioni
 That already brought me back many victories
 Where are you now that foreign nations
 Took away from me what you already gave me?
 By now nobody talks about you any more

Ch'i nomi vostri a pena son remasti. Ahi lassa, altro non sete che ombre ignude E poca cener che vil urna chiude.	And your names alone are barely left. Alas, you are only naked shadows And the little ash that the vile urn encloses.
[6] Anime chiare, si qualche radice Dill'eterno valor al mondo resta, Resvegliatevi ormai all'infelice Voce dil pianto mio, orrenda e mesta, Movavi vostra, ahimè, matre e nutrice Cum le chiome stracciate e senza vesta, Repiagliate ormai quelle alte spade Ch'in paesi lontan vi fier le strade.	Bright souls, if some foundation Of eternal valor remains in the world, Wake up, now, to the unhappy Sound of my horrendous and sorrowful weeping Look there, alas, at your mother and nourisher With torn hair and without clothes, Take up again now those noble swords That in distant countries burned a path for you.
[7] E tu amato figliol, duca d'Urbino, In cui vero valor rinascere sento Fa' vendetta dil mio sangue latino E dil nome che è quasi in tutto spento, Rinnova l'ali dil tuo ucel divino, L'insegna triunfal spiegando al vento, Ch'acquistarai in giovenile etate Cum tua gloria immortal mia libertate.	And you beloved son, Duke of Urbino, In whom I feel true valor reborn. Avenge my Latin blood And my name that is almost completely extinguished. Renew the wings of your divine bird Spreading to the wind the triumphal sign So that in your youth you will acquire Immortal glory, by securing my freedom.

10. ‘Non basta il suono, e la voce’ Listening for Tasso’s Clorinda¹

Jane Tylus

Claudio Monteverdi famously ends his *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* with the last words of the dying Clorinda: ‘S’apre il cielo, vado in pace’ [The heavens open, I go in peace].² Slain by the Crusader who has loved her since he first saw her at a fountain, Clorinda has just been baptized with water from another fountain. Tancredi recites the sacred words of the baptismal rite, and she turns her eyes to heaven to sing the final line. As musicologists have long pointed out, however, this is not quite what happens in Torquato Tasso’s *Gerusalemme liberata*, from which the narrative is taken — a point remarkable in itself given Monteverdi’s fidelity to the original text. Monteverdi retains the narrator’s brief phrase introducing Clorinda’s line, ‘Dir pareva’ — she *seemed* to say. But in having Clorinda sing the line herself, Monteverdi replaces what seemed to be, with what *is*, confirming the effectiveness of the baptism Clorinda has just received.³ He thus allows us to hear what

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- 1 This essay has benefited enormously from the input of our two editors, Suzanne Cusick and Emily Wilbourne, as well as from extremely helpful comments by Kate Driscoll and Nina Treadwell.
 - 2 Claudio Monteverdi, *Il combattimento di Tancredi et Clorinda*, in *Madrigali guerrieri et amorosi* (Venice: Ricciardo Amadino, 1638), available online from the Choral Public Domain Library, [http://www0.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/Combattimento_di_Tancredi_e_Clorinda_\(Claudio_Monteverdi\)](http://www0.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/Combattimento_di_Tancredi_e_Clorinda_(Claudio_Monteverdi))
 - 3 Suzanne Cusick argues, ‘Monteverdi undermines Tasso’s choice to portray the dead Clorinda as reduced to the object of Tancredi’s fantasy. Monteverdi’s Clorinda is never only the woman of masculine dreams’; Cusick, ‘“Indarno chiedi”: Clorinda and the Interpretation of Monteverdi’s *Combattimento*’, in *Word, Image, and Song: Essays on Early Modern Italy*, ed. Rebecca Cypess, Beth L. Glixon, and Nathan Lik (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2013), pp. 117–144 (p. 134).

Tasso's Tancredi only appeared to hear, words now embodied onstage by a female singer's voice. Such embodiment, as Antonio Cascelli has argued, also accentuates Clorinda's autonomy with respect to the character of the narrator or 'Testo', who has sung the vast majority of the *Il combattimento*.⁴ So does Monteverdi liberate Clorinda from Tasso's text.

Yet while Monteverdi may indeed rescue Clorinda's voice, the *Combattimento* represents only a small sampling of that voice as Tasso depicts it. Monteverdi chose not to give us the stanza of Clorinda's actual death from an ottava later, where she reaches out in silence for Tancredi's hand as token of their reconciliation. Nor, technically, does he give us Clorinda's final words; for death does not, necessarily, bring her peace. These final words are (perhaps) only spoken in Canto 13 when her voice, if not Clorinda herself, comes back to haunt Tancredi in the woods that the sorcerer Ismeno — once a Christian, now a Muslim, so reversing Clorinda's own trajectory — has enchanted with the 'spirits' of the dead. Whether it belongs to Clorinda is the question. Tancredi is uncertain enough so as not to destroy the tree in which Clorinda claims to be trapped. Whereas earlier in the poem he failed to identify the voice of the woman he claims to love, here he wavers because he thinks he recognizes it. Clorinda's last sonic traces in the poem thus retroactively introduce a destabilization that may have been there all along, the disjunction between sound and body, between voice and *anima* — the very soul Tancredi thinks must be in heaven, but might not be.

How difficult is it to recognize what one hears, particularly if it is, or seems to be, the voice of the enemy become friend — the shifting terrain which Clorinda inhabits until the very end? What are the sounds of the voice of the other: a woman who remains forever the 'pellegrina' or exotic stranger as she appears to Tancredi on a mountain top in Canto 6 and who utters to him only a single word before their midnight duel, or a language Tasso was accused of making strange and incomprehensible to many of his readers? For Tasso — itinerant that he was, born in Sorrento, raised in Bergamo, resident in Ferrara, Mantova, and

4 Antonio Cascelli suggests that we identify 'completely with Clorinda, who establishes her presence over the lack of the leading note'; Cascelli, 'Place, Performance and Identity in Monteverdi's *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 29.2 (2018), 152–188 (p. 186),

elsewhere — saw his mastery of language as an embrace of the peninsula's past and present, rather than an exercise in establishing a single privileged dialect as Italian, a dialect to which Tasso was largely foreign: Tuscan.⁵ Florence's hegemony in the second half of the sixteenth century may not have been political. But it was certainly cultural, articulated through the Accademia della Crusca, an academy that had Medici support as it undertook to compile the first dictionary of the Italian language. Still in operation today in its splendid villa several miles north of Florence, the Crusca was officially formed in 1582, and its members quickly plunged into the midst of what had just begun to rage as the newest literary debate: whether the great romance of Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando furioso* (1532), had found a serious contender for literary excellence in the *Gerusalemme liberata*, published without Tasso's consent in 1581.⁶

And it was a member of the Crusca, Lionardo Salviati, who, annoyed by a treatise lionizing Tasso's poem, was the first in a long line of critics to attack the *Liberata*, using the phrase cited in this essay's title as one of his main charges: 'Non basta il suono, e la voce': 'the sound and the voice are not enough'.⁷ The *Gerusalemme liberata*, in short, was impossible to understand when one simply heard it recited out loud. Only if read and studied could it be understood, given the complexity of its lexicon,

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- 5 On Tasso's life and works, see Margaret Ferguson, *Trials of Desire: Renaissance Defenses of Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), C. P. Brand, *Torquato Tasso: A Study of the Poet and his Contribution to English Literature* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1966), and more recently, three introductory texts to Tasso's life and works in Italian, Matteo Residori, *L'idea del Poema* (Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, 2004), Claudio Gigante, *Tasso* (Rome: Salerno, 2007), and Emilio Russo, *Guida alla lettura della Gerusalemme liberata* (Rome: Laterza, 2014).
- 6 See, among other texts, Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), II, pp. 942–973; Claudio Marazzini, *La Lingua italiana: Profilo storico* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002), pp. 293–298; and Mario Sansone, *Da Bembo a Galiani: Il Dibattito sulla lingua in Italia* (Bari: Adriatico, 1999).
- 7 Lionardo Salviati, discussed below; the citation is from Salviati's response to Tasso's *Apologia, Risposta all'Apologia del Tasso dell'Infarinato* (Florence: [n.p.] 1585); cited in Maurizio Vitale's exhaustive study, *L'officina linguistica del Tasso epico: La Gerusalemme liberata* (Milan: LED, 2007), I, 43n. The full phrase is 'udendole recitare ad altrui, rade volte s'intende, e ci bisogna prendere il libro in mano, e leggerle da per noi: essendo elle tali, che non basta il suono, e la voce' [When you hear the text read out loud by others, you rarely understand it, and you have to take the book in your hand and read it for yourself. The words are such that the mere sound of them, and their vocalization, doesn't suffice].

its diction, and its style. According to Salviati, Tasso had violated all of the norms that dignified Tuscan, qualities Ariosto had embraced: *schiettezza, dolcezza, chiarezza* (precision, sweetness, clarity). Moreover, Ariosto honored the rules of Tuscan literature laid out in *Prose della volgar lingua*, composed by Pietro Bembo in the 1520's, and which held up Petrarch and Boccaccio as models for all writers of Italian poetry and prose. Ariosto's willingness to respect Petrarch's stylistic qualities while purging his poem of his Ferrarese dialect was a testament to the poet's conviction that the future of Italian lay in its past: more precisely, its Florentine past. In using a vocabulary free of linguistic impurities as well as borrowings from Latin, Provençal, and Italy's many dialects, Ariosto prepared the way for the Italian poetry of the Renaissance — and wrote a poem that could be easily understood through hearing its 'voce'.

But Tasso refused to follow. In taking on the epic topic of the First Crusade and largely resisting the romance adventures of Ariosto's playful knights, Tasso chose a very different genre, and a very different path. Eager to revive the sublime epic style of Homer and especially Virgil, Tasso attempted to demonstrate Tuscan's foreignness to itself, and therefore to make it, if anything, stronger — rooted as it was in the great languages of classical epic, and companion rather than antagonist to a host of other dialects that characterized the Italian peninsula.⁸ As Tasso himself would say in a sonnet to the Florentine ambassador to Ferrara in the late 1570's, his was a 'stile peregrino': a foreign style, assembled from all of the places in Italy where Tasso had sojourned, as well as from the Latin language from which Italian was principally derived.⁹

8 On Tasso's theory of style see the classic work of Fredi Chiappelli, *Studi sul linguaggio del Tasso epico* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1957), and more recently, S. Bozzola, *Purità ed ornamento di parole* (Florence: Accademia della Crusca, 1999).

9 Tasso closes the sonnet: 'May not your clear intellect find displeasing this pilgrim style with which I write, in solitude, the virtues of magnanimous dukes' [O pur non spiaccia al tuo purgato ingegno/ il peregrino stile onde solingo/ di magnanimi duci i pregi io scrivo]; *Rime di Torquato Tasso*, #828, ed. by Bruno Basile (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2007), I, p. 822. On the *peregrino* in medieval and early modern literature more generally, see Georg Weise, *Il rinascimento e la sua eredità*, ed. by P. Antonio and F. Pugliese-Carratelli (Naples: Ligouri, 1969), pp. 397–487, Charles Klopp, "'Peregrino" and "Errante" in the *Gerusalemme liberata*', *MLN*, 94 (1979), 61–76, and Jane Tylus, 'Parole pellegrine: L'ospitalità linguistica nel Rinascimento', in *L'ospite del libro: Sguardi sull'ospitalità*, ed. by Nicola Catelli and Giovanna Rizzarelli (Pisa: Pacini, 2015), pp. 13–26.

This is a style that announces itself in the very opening of the *Liberata*. In 1:4, Tasso addresses his patron Alfonso II d'Este with these lines:

Tu, magnanimo Alfonso, il qual ritogli
al furor di fortuna e guidi in porto
me peregrino errante, e fra gli scogli
e fra l'onde agitato e quasi absorto,
queste mie carte in lieta fronte accogli,
che quasi in voto a te sacrate i'porto.
Forse un di fia che la presaga penna
osi scriver di te quel ch'or n'accenna.¹⁰

You, magnanimous Alfonso, who from the furor of fortune gather and guide into harbor me, a wandering pilgrim/stranger, tossed about, almost submerged by the waves, amid the reefs — accept these, my pages, with happy mien, which I bear consecrated to you as though in votive offering. Perhaps someday my prophetic pen may dare to write of you what I now can only hint at.

The trope of the sea-faring poet eager to end his journey is hardly new to Tasso. It was already used in antiquity by Virgil, and much more recently in the Italian tradition by Dante and Ariosto. The latter sails serenely into port in the final canto of *Orlando furioso*, to be met by the smiling faces of Italy's most celebrated figures. Tasso chooses to *begin* his epic poem with an allusion to his journey — and a journey that is hardly calm. Serenity is replaced by tempestuous tossing on the waves, a man sure of his craft by a shipwrecked figure. The poet, in short, styles himself a foreigner, a wanderer without a home — the original, Latin meaning of *peregrinus*. Playing on the notion of the 'voto' or offering that is the *Liberata* itself, he is a pilgrim who is finally arriving, albeit in distressed circumstances, at the sacred shrine.

And Tasso is a pilgrim who pointedly uses words differently from his Tuscan contemporaries as a single word in this stanza reflects: 'absorto'. In modern, which is to say, late sixteenth-century Italian, the correct spelling of the word would be 'assorto', from 'assorbire' or swallowed up, absorbed. While Italian orthography was hardly standardized when Tasso was composing the *Liberata* in the 1570s, his

10 All citations from the *Gerusalemme liberata* are taken from the edition by Fredi Chiappelli (Milan: Rusconi, 1982); translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

choice of spelling here is notable, as he deliberately calls attention to the Latin root of *assorbire*: *absorbere* [*ab* + *sorbire*]. Tasso replaces the smooth, soft double *ss* sound of typical Tuscan with the more labile *ab*, forcing the reader to stop on the first syllable, and, as it were, to notice the difference — making the sound not only more difficult, but harsher. At the same time, his poetic choices were not simply lexical. Ariosto or his predecessors would usually have introduced a natural caesura at the end of the fourth line. Tasso forces this pause upon us three syllables early, interrupting the flow to the second half of the stanza, and thus impeding effortless listening and comprehension. Unlike Ariosto, Tasso has us stop in places where we shouldn't, forcing us to think twice about words that cannot be easily pronounced or quickly understood.

'Non basta il suon': such was the perceived illegibility of Tasso's sounds to those used to hearing Ariosto's exuberant poem sung by *cantastorie* and madrigalists. Yet it would be wrong to argue that Tasso regarded orality *per se* as detrimental to his project, as Anthony Welch has recently hypothesized.¹¹ Rather, he uses the dynamics of sound to ask whether we can ever be at home in our own language; whether our voice can ever be construed as entirely our own. Such questions had special meaning in the contexts of Florence's domination of Italian and the success of Petrarchism as the poetic paradigm of the peninsula. Hence in *La Cavaletta: Dialogo della Poesia toscana*, written shortly after Salviati's objections, Tasso's persona observes why it is so difficult to use 'la nostra lingua Toscana' to write an epic poem: 'while it fails to fill our ears with the appropriate sounds of the description of war, it nonetheless uses its great sweetness to delude us in its treatment of romantic passion'.¹² Tuscan, that is, is good for love, but not for war. Asked about his apparent dismissal of sweetness, he responds that he wishes for

11 Andrew Welch, *The Renaissance Epic and the Oral Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 45.

12 See Richard Freedman, 'Marenzio's Madrigali a Quattro, cinque et sei voci of 1588: A Newly-Revealed Madrigal Cycle and Its Intellectual Context', *The Journal of Musicology*, 13.3 (1995), 318–354; the citations are from 354. This was hardly, however, Tasso's first attempt to classify Tuscan as good only for amorous verse. In his youthful (late 1560s) *Discorsi dell'arte poetica*, he observes that each language has particular characteristics. 'La toscana favella' is good at expressing things of love ('accidenti amorosi') with its many vowels and the natural harmony of its rhyme, while Latin is better for addressing war given the predominance of consonants and its long hexameter lines; *Scritti sull'arte poetica*, ed. by Ettore Mazzali, 2 vols. (Turin: Einaudi, 1977), I, p. 34.

moderation (*il temperamento*), adding that poetry, like all the other 'noble arts', needs to protect itself against the lascivious. In this same dialogue, Tasso challenges composers to do for music what he claims to have done for poetics, and to take up their own version of the epic lyre, the 'modo grave' that Aristotle associated with the Dorian, 'il quale è magnifico, costante e grave'. Tasso asks his contemporaries to move from an orality that consists only of 'dolcezza' to something else more sonorous and more appropriate to a literature that went beyond Petrarchism, and to a culture with origins in multiple languages and styles. Sound was essential to creating what he would elsewhere call 'heroic illustriousness [...] based on undertakings of exalted martial valor and on deeds of courtesy, generosity, piety, and religion' and reflective of virtues such as might, prudence, loyalty, and constancy.¹³ These are deeds that emerge out of, and despite, the pressures of war — defining the heroic human being under duress.

Monteverdi took up Tasso's challenge, and he used Tasso's poem to do so. Clearly he heard in the fiery, passionate sounds of Tasso's midnight duel the agitation or 'stile concitato' that he argued was central to the *Combattimento* — a *Combattimento* and an episode nonetheless tempered by the sudden 'dolcezza' of Clorinda's request for conversion.¹⁴ Like many composers, Monteverdi's primary engagement with Tasso had been through the madrigal form. But the *Combattimento* was different, composed some thirty years after his first madrigals based on Tasso's poems. Seething with what Gary Tomlinson has called gestural energy as well as sonic energy,¹⁵ it is clearly inspired by Tasso's own elaboration of how the harsh and uncertain sounds of battle emerge from the nocturnal darkness outside Jerusalem. Hence the clanking of Tancredi's armor and weapons ['suon d'armi'] that make Clorinda pause in flight, a phrase Monteverdi considered important enough to repeat four times in his opening stanza; and such 'suoni', surely unpleasant to Salviati and

13 From Tasso's early *Discorsi sull'arte poetica*; cited and translated in Lawrence Rhu, *The Genesis of Tasso's Narrative Theory* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993), pp. 107–108.

14 On which see Clemens Risi, 'Claudio Monteverdi's *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* (1624 or 1625): A Christian-Muslim Encounter in Music?', in *Early Modern Encounters with the Islamic East: Performing Cultures*, ed. by Sabine Schülting, Sabine Lucia Müller, and Ralf Hertel (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 153–166 (p. 153).

15 Gary Tomlinson, *Monteverdi and the End of the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. 203.

his Florentine associates in the Accademia, makes the reader pause as well. Monteverdi's interest in such sounds, and pauses, is itself indicative of the ultimate success of Tasso's *Liberata*, *pace* Salviati. To what extent, though, do the sounds of Monteverdi's Clorinda differ from those of Tasso's Clorinda? — a complex figure whom Tasso may have used to stage his own protests against the norms of a Tuscan language and literature he opposed? And as Monteverdi 'liberates' Clorinda into the fullness of a female voice, what exactly is he liberating her from, and at what cost?

'Fra l'onde agitato': twelve cantos after his invocation of himself as a *peregrino errante* at sea, in the midst of the midnight duel between Tancredi and Clorinda, Tasso returned to those waves. But now he writes not of a poet who is 'agitated' and tossed about in their midst, but of the waves themselves, 'agitate e grosse'. In a simile so arresting that Michel de Montaigne thought to cite it in his *Essais* — although Monteverdi curiously omits it from the *Combattimento* — Tasso reflects on what happens to the ocean when the wind stops hammering it. It does not immediately quiet down but remains charged with motion and sound despite the absence of an external force. Or as he puts it in 12:63, in a blatant reference to Homeric epic:

Qual l'alto Egeo, perché Aquilone o Noto
cessi, che tutto prima il volse e scosse,
non s'accheta ei però, ma 'l suono e 'l moto
ritien de l'onde anco agitate e grosse

just as the deep Aegean Sea battered by north or south winds is not quiet once the winds have ceased, but their movement and sound still reside in its powerful, turbulent waves

Similarly, in Tasso's account, the two warriors retain their original vigor even though — now some ten *ottave* into the fight — their loss of blood has sapped their energy. Propelled by the winds of wrath and disdain, they continue adding blow to blow, rocking in combat through a motion over which they have no control. What has become the force of rhythm — a sound left in reserve — results in the final, mortal blow to Clorinda: 'Spinge egli il ferro nel bel sen di punta/ che vi s'immerge

e 'l sangue avido beve' [He presses the sword into her lovely breast so that it's submerged there, and it greedily drinks her blood; 12:65]. The liquidity of the sea returns as Clorinda herself becomes a dark mass from which the sword can drink, and as Clorinda falls, 'la voce afflitta/movendo' [moving her afflicted voice], such motion takes us back to the rhythm of the waves. But the words that arise from that motion are 'parole ch'a lei novo un spirto ditta,/ spirto di fé, di carità, di speme' [words that a new spirit dictates to her, the spirit of faith, hope, and charity], an explicit reference to the Christian virtues. The 'afflicted voice' goes on to say, 'Amico, hai vinto — io ti perdon, perdona — / tu ancora, al corpo no, che nulla pave, a l'alma sì!' [Friend, you have won — I forgive you, may you forgive — not my body, which fears nothing, but my soul, yes!] (12:66). Her request for baptism, and hence her immersion into a new body of water ('Dona/ battesimo a me, ch'ogni mia colpa lave') moves her startled listener, as 'un non so che di flebile e soave' [something indescribable, at once faint and sweet] resonates in her languid words, and quickly extinguishes his wrath. This is sound that offers, and effects, something new, especially as the final word, 'perdona', trespasses beyond the normal verse length to break through the artificial barrier of the narrator's standard hendecasyllabic line.¹⁶

The haunting nocturnal duel between Tancredi and Clorinda stages an emergence into sound: or more precisely, into the sounds of war and its aftermath that Tasso deemed foreign to the Tuscan language. My use of the word 'stages' is not incidental. Tasso declares the episode worthy of a 'pieno teatro, opre sarian sì memorande' [full theatre, so memorable are its works] (12:54). This observation opens a stanza that invokes a new muse: Night, who within her deep, dark bosom has enclosed this powerful and moving story ('fatto sì grande'). And night is an appropriate object of invocation for a duel that will unfold in complete darkness, when one's vision is compromised by all but the silent burning of the Christians' siege tower sitting ominously outside of Jerusalem's walls, set afire by two of the Muslims' most formidable warriors, Argante and Clorinda. At Clorinda's instigation they set out to

16 On Agricane's similar request to Orlando in Boiardo's *Orlando innamorato* — albeit in radically different circumstances — see Jo Ann Cavallo, 'Talking Religion: The Conversion of Agricane in Boiardo's *Orlando innamorato*', *MLN*, 127.1S (2012), S178–S188,

destroy the means whereby the Christians planned to scale Jerusalem's high walls, and one can see — 'vedi' — the flame. But darkness descends again as soon as the fire has ceased. Clorinda is locked out of Jerusalem's gate, which accidentally shuts before she can re-enter, thus 'esclusa' — a word Tasso repeats (12:48; 12:49). She feigns to be among the horde of Christians pressing against the walls, and then takes off to seek another entrance but Tancredi singles her out, impetuously chasing her as his armor clanks and attracts her attention, forcing her to stop and turn around to ask, 'O tu che porte/ Che corri sì?' [Oh you, what are you bringing me, you who run so fast?] (12:52). This will thus be a theatre without sight lines, in which the actors depend almost wholly on sound, such as that of the armor that becomes the catalyst of Clorinda's death. For had she not turned and cried out ('si volge e grida'), she might have found her way back into the city walls.

The thrust of Tancredi's sword into Clorinda's breast, in addition to alluding to the sexual fulfillment he had always desired, parallels the poet's desire to penetrate the deep, dark breast ('profondo oscuro seno') (12:54) of the night so that he might draw forth the worthy works concealed within and promise the two warriors eternal fame and glory. That the female bodies of Clorinda and the *Notte* might be analogous is suggested by Tancredi's own, Tasso-like request that Clorinda divulge her name during a moment when, both wearied by their combat, they rest. He observes, as the narrator has already done, that their valor is covered in silence (*silenzio*) and that evil fate denies them a witness worthy of their work; he begs her to reveal her name and her state, so that at least he alone would know (12:60). The courteous request inspires Clorinda's noted refusal: 'Indarno chiedi/ quel c'ho per uso di non far palese' [you ask in vain for something I rarely reveal] (12:61). But she does inform Tancredi that he sees before him 'one of those two who burnt down the great tower', prompting Tancredi to burn with disdain, and to respond that both Clorinda's words *and* her silence — 'il tuo dir e 'l tacer' — hasten him to take vengeance. Yet what has really provoked him is her line, 'Ma chiunque io mi sia' [whoever I might be]: Clorinda's refusal to name herself.

Such resistance goes against the courtly code of honor, as Tancredi accuses her of being an uncivil barbarian or 'barbaro scortese'. But it also originates in two earlier moments in Canto 12 of which Tancredi

is unaware — as well as in the dynamic of Tancredi's and Clorinda's encounters prior to Canto 12. In the course of those earlier encounters, Tancredi revealed his love for Clorinda three times, while she spoke merely a single word, and never uttered her name. Canto 1 recounts his first glimpse of her at a fountain, where he sought water for his parched tongue following a skirmish with the Persians, when 'a lui d'improvviso una donzella/ tutta, fuor che la fronte, armata apparse:/ era pagana' [all of a sudden a young woman appeared to him, completely armed except for her face: she was a pagan] (1:45) He immediately burned with love, even as this unnamed *donzella* put on her helmet and left, in flight from other Christians who have suddenly arrived on the scene; only her image stays with him ('ma l'immagine sua bella e guerriera/ tale ei serbó nel cor'; 1:48). In Canto 3, he knocks off her helmet in combat and is shocked to see standing before him his beloved: 'le chiome dorate al vento sparse,/ giovane donna in mezzo 'l campo apparse' [her golden hair spread to the wind, a young woman appeared in the midst of battle] (3:21); he then invites her to a private duel off the battlefield, so he can declare his love. And in Canto 6, about to engage in a duel with Argante, Tancredi chances to look up to a nearby hill, where 'in leggiadro aspetto e pellegrino/ s'offerse a gli occhi suoi l'alta guerriera' [in her lovely, foreign bearing, the stately warrior woman offered herself to his eyes] (6:26). Once again he is immobilized, unable to engage in battle, turned to stone by a Medusa unaware of her power ('pare un sasso:/ gelido tutto fuor, ma dentro bolle' [he seems a stone: all ice without, but within he boils]). If Tancredi managed to share with Clorinda his 'disperato amor' on at least one of these occasions, Clorinda herself has uttered but a single word: 'Volgi', the turn that wins him several moments alone with her off the battlefield in Canto 3 before others arrive.

Clorinda is thus an object of sight, the Laura of golden hair spread to the wind, the tall and beautiful warrior who as long as she remains without her helmet reduces Tancredi to forgetfulness and immobility. In none of these instances does she reveal her identity to a Tancredi oblivious to a poetics of 'sound' and hence to the nature of the beloved's voice, or of anything that might detract from the vision of beauty. This silent Clorinda, the fantasized woman of Petrarchan discourse who is the product of the eye and not the ear, is not, however, the Clorinda

the *reader* knows.¹⁷ For Clorinda does have a voice, and one that easily renders her one of the most complex female characters of any early modern poem. Claudio Scarpati's observation that she constantly opposes herself to the 'comun sentenza', or the common norm, is borne out by her first sustained appearance in the *Liberata*.¹⁸ The confident figure rides into Jerusalem in Canto 2 where two Christians are being burnt at the stake, having (falsely) claimed to have stolen an image of Mary from the mosque in order to protect the rest of the Christian community from harm. Clorinda sees through their 'magnanimous lie' and confronts the King of Jerusalem to ask for their release, beginning her appeal with the words 'Io son Clorinda' [I am Clorinda] (2:46). Even though, she courteously notes, it is 'comun sentenza' that the two are guilty, she disagrees: 'ma discordo io da voi', with particular rhetorical emphasis on the *io*: I disagree with all of you. Clorinda's exceptionality reveals itself in battle as well, where in addition to slaughtering dozens of Crusaders, she will be credited as having wounded the Christians' captain, Goffredo, as the narrator addresses Clorinda directly: 'Che di tua man, Clorinda, il colpo uscisse;/ la fama il canta, e tuo l'onor n'è solo;/ se questo dì servaggio e morte schiva/ la tua gente pagana, a te s'ascriva' [Fame has it, Clorinda, that that blow came from your hand, and that this is your honor alone; if this day your pagan people have avoided servitude and death, it is to your credit] (11:54). Elsewhere she rouses others to battle and talks with the refugee princess Erminia into the night in the bed they share within Jerusalem's walls.

But this self-assured Clorinda who acts and speaks will come under attack — not only from Tancredi, who has no need of her voice to fall in love with her, but from the narrative scheme of her own life, as revealed in two separate moments in Book 12. Tasso devotes a significant number of *ottave* to the back story of Clorinda's marvelous birth (a white woman from two Christian black African parents), tragic separation

17 There is a long literature on Laura's silence in the *Canzoniere*, much influenced by Nancy Vickers' seminal essay, 'Diana Described: Scattered Women and Scattered Rhyme', *Critical Inquiry*, 8.2 (1981), 265–279; more recently taken up by Bonnie Gordon in relationship to the figure of the 'ingrata' or ungrateful women in Monteverdi's music: Gordon, *Monteverdi's Unruly Women: The Power of Song in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), esp. pp. 62–66.

18 Claudio Scarpati, 'Geometrie Petrarchesche nella *Gerusalemme liberata*', *Aevum*, 67 (1993), 533–570 (p. 542).

from her mother (who fears her husband's jealous reaction to seeing a white child), and upbringing by the Muslim eunuch Arsete who never baptizes her or apprizes her of her Christian origins until, as it turns out, the night before her death. Moments before she departs with Argante to burn down the tower, Arsete tells her, 'saprai cosa/ di tua condizione che t'era oscura' [you'll now know something of your life that has been hidden from you] (12:20), and divulges the story in tears, ending with the suggestive line that perhaps Christianity *is* the true faith ('Forse [Christianity] é la vera fede'; 12:40).¹⁹ Having just learned of her Christian identity, however, Clorinda seems quick to dispense with it, claiming that she will follow 'Quella fede... che vera or parmi' [that faith that now seems true to me] (12:41). She will not be afraid, she claims, since hers is the work, and the mission, of a constant and magnanimous heart. But the story that Arsete tells of Clorinda's birth into a Christian family gives new meaning to Clorinda's 'feigning' to be one of the enemy ('di lor gente'), as does the phrase Tasso used in his apostrophe to Clorinda in Canto 11 after she wounds Goffredo: 'la tua gente pagana'. Indeed, who are Clorinda's people? Despite her assertions, even Clorinda has a moment of self-doubt while listening to Arsete's story. His account is prompted by a dream he had of a vengeful Saint George threatening Arsete for having ignored the command that Clorinda be baptized; and after he finishes, in tears, 'ella pensa e teme,/ ch'un altro simil sogno il cor le preme' [she thinks, and fears, for another, similar dream burdens her heart] (12:40).

Tasso thus moves from the assured 'Io son Clorinda' of Canto 2 to Clorinda's uncharacteristic fear of Canto 12 — and to the question of who she really is: 'chiunque io mi sia'. But something else has intervened with respect to Clorinda's voice. This is its appropriation by two other characters in the poem, suggesting another way of thinking about who she might or might not be. In Canto 6, the timid Erminia has overcome her doubts, exiting the city of Jerusalem in the heart of night in order to go to heal Tancredi, with whom she is secretly in love, and who has been

19 For a compelling reading of Clorinda's African origins and the argument that her family was the wrong kind of Christians, see David Quint, *Epic and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1989), esp. pp. 234–247. His comments on Clorinda as inhabiting a 'grey area of identity and ideology', one of 'internal division, rebellion, and potential heresy', have been vital for this essay (p. 246).

wounded in battle; and she does so wearing Clorinda's armor. At the gate of the city, she must speak: and she says, reciting the same phrase: 'io son Clorinda — disse — apri la porta' [I am Clorinda: open the door] (6:95). And the ruse works, in no small part because 'La voce feminil [era] semblante a quella/ de la guerriera' [her female voice was similar to that of the warrior]. In Canto 7, in the thick of Christian warriors surrounding a seemingly doomed Argante, the demon Beelzebub takes on the likeness of the imposing Clorinda: 'diegli il parlare e senza mente il noto/ suon de la voce, e 'l portamento e 'l moto' [he took on her speech and the well-known sound of her voice (albeit without thought); and her comportment and her moves] (7:99), so that he can rally her colleagues to help the beleaguered Argante. 'Senza mente' — lacking intelligence or understanding — is an echo from Virgil's *Aeneid*, when Juno creates a phantom of Aeneas, 'dat inania verba, /dat sine mente sonum' [giving it unreal words, a voice without thought] (10:639–640).²⁰ This may be sound 'without thought' but it is sound that is efficacious, capable of convincing others of its authenticity: from the guard at Jerusalem's gate to Clorinda's fellow warriors, just as Juno's phantom convinces Turnus to follow the spectral vision of Aeneas outside the fray of battle.

Stolen by others, Clorinda's voice progressively becomes foreign to her. Alternately, more provocatively, she herself becomes progressively foreign to the 'sound' of her voice. The continuous marginalization of that voice, moreover, in the course of the duel is enabled through Tasso's attentiveness to the sounds of war. Once the two throw themselves into battle, Tasso invites us to hear not words but the horrible clashing of their blades: 'Odi le spade orribilmente urtarsi/ a mezzo il ferro' [you hear the terrible collision of swords, iron against iron] (12:55). The verb Tasso chooses to depict the crashing together of helmets and shields — 'cozzare', or to strike against — is an impressive earful of sound that fully propels us into this world of violent, clashing noise. Tasso's phrasing is remarkable for its staccato-like insistence on repetitive consonants, both harsh (g's and t's) and soft (sibilant s's) — phrasing that, as Fredi Chiappelli notes, forces us to pause and consider its

20 All citations from the *Aeneid* are in Virgil, *Works*, trans. by H. R. Fairclough, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986).

syntagmatic difficulties.²¹ Throughout the episode, too, Tasso moves beyond the lexical as he reflects his awareness of the ebb and flow of human voice and vigor in war, and in a struggle between male and female that is far from the 'lascivious' languor of the sensual scenes in Canto 16, where Rinaldo lingers with Armida on the island. And yet this scene could well have been like that of Canto 16, given Tancredi's adoration of the woman he fights. Tasso thus taunts us, as well as the characters, when he calls up the image of the two embracing, albeit in battle: 'Tre volte il cavalier la donna stringe con le robuste braccia' [Three times the knight hugs the lady with his/her forceful arms] (12:57). As the night progresses, Tasso will punctuate the slim number of stanzas with rhythms appropriate to growing fatigue. This is especially apparent when the warriors wearily pause in their confrontation, driven home by lines such as 'e dopo lungo faticar respira' with the deliberate pause after 'faticar' (12:57). The *ottava* continues with the almost immobilizing lines 'L'un l'altro guarda, e del suo corpo essangue/ su 'l pomo de la spada appoggia il peso' [the one looks at the other, and balances the weight of his bleeding body on the handle of his sword] (12:58). The emphasis on 'weight' (*peso*) at the end leads directly into the even heavier weight of Tancredi's question: what is your name?

This is a duel constituted by sonic clashes, in short, that have nothing to do with the voice per se. But it has everything to do with creating impediments to vocal comprehension. Thus does Tasso's poem not merely *narrate* 'arms and war, but also provid[e] a suitable language that captures the *sound* of those very things', as Christopher Geekie has recently put it.²² Given that 'an appropriately sonorous style [is] potentially alien to the vernacular', in Geekie's phrase, it also complicates our reception — and the characters' reception — of those words that *are* spoken. The voices that speak are strained and fatigued, rendered deformed and difficult through the trauma of combat and the range of intense emotion that it provokes: disdain, anger, pride, hostility, and finally, anguish and forgiveness, as we move from the poetics of war to

21 See Chiappelli's notes through the episode, *Gerusalemme liberata*, pp. 504–511, regarding what he considers the many 'peculiarità sintattic[he]' of the scene (p. 509n).

22 Christopher Geekie, "'Cangiar la lira in tromba": Metaphors for Poetic Form in Torquato Tasso', *Italian Studies*, 72.3 (2018), 256–270 (p. 270).

the poetics of war's aftermath. In the sensorially limited world of a forest at night, outside the walls of Jerusalem, listening is perforce at its highest pitch, and yet the ear can be fooled. The phrase 'Dir pareo' before Clorinda's last line can only accentuate such destabilization. We are beyond knowing what Clorinda, whoever she is, 'truly' says, foreign as she is to herself and to her listener.

The only clarity Tasso allows us is the moment when Tancredi removes the helmet. The end of the battle has coincided with the end of darkness, and in the light from the new dawn, Tancredi can finally see the woman who is dying before him. 'Ahi vista! Ahi conoscenza!' (12:67), declares the narrator, suggesting that only sight conveys knowledge. Yet as though to undermine the revelation, or perhaps to reinforce it, Tasso precedes the Italian words for sight and understanding with a sound that has no semantic meaning at all, a sound with origins not in Tuscan — or Latin — but Greek: 'Ahi!' This moment is seconded by another highly visual moment, that of Clorinda's death when 'la bella donna' offers her hand to Tancredi in a tacit pledge of friendship. The *combattimento* proper ends not with the words Clorinda 'seems to say', but with her silent gesture. It is the only verifiable, because visualized, prelude to her death.

The episode ends as it began, in the same silence in which Clorinda feigned herself a Christian when locked out of her city's gates: 'Di lor gente s'infinge, e fra gli ignoti/ cheta s'avolge; e non è chi la noti' [She pretends to be of their people, and quietly mixes in among the lesser known, and no one notices her] (12:50). Once again, to which *gente* does Clorinda belong? But her fate is sealed when she chooses to stop feigning, becoming like the silent wolf who 'si desvia' — who deviates or takes a different path — when she *will* be noted, if only by a single figure, Tancredi: 'Poi, come lupo tacito s'imbosca/ dopo occulto misfatto, e si desvia, / da la confusion, da l'aura fosca/ favorita e nascosa, ella se 'n gía' [Then, just as a silent wolf heads into the woods after some hidden misdeed, and thus departs from the main road, so hidden and favored by the confusion and the dark, thick air, she takes off] (12:51). Like so much else in this episode, the lines are from that foreign epic poem, the *Aeneid*, and they refer to one Arruns, an Etruscan who hurls his spear at the warrior Camilla and then flees in fright: 'Even as the wolf, when he has slain a shepherd or a great steer, ere hostile

darts can pursue him, straightway plunges by pathless ways among the high mountains, conscious of a reckless deed, and slackening his tail claps it quivering beneath his belly, and seeks the woods: even so does Arruns, in confusion, steal away from sight...' (11:809–814). But if Arruns plunges anonymously into the armed throng ('se immiscuit armis'), Clorinda departs from the crowd; and if Virgil's wolf takes pathless ways among the mountains — 'in montis sese avius abdidit altos' — Tasso's takes a different way, off the main path. Thus does Tasso accentuate her character as one who opposes herself yet again to 'comun sentenza'. But there is something especially poignant about the simile and the Virgilian figure to whom it points. The Trojan Arruns is in flight because he has just killed the woman warrior Camilla, on whom Tasso based his own magnificent character.²³ In suggesting that Clorinda is like the silent wolf who is Arruns, Tasso has us entertain the thought, if for just a moment, that Clorinda's death is a suicide.

Here is where the second passage referenced earlier from Canto 12 becomes, finally, significant. The exploit of the tower is initiated from a single factor: Clorinda's impatience with the restraints imposed on her gender in a world of men, no matter how hard she has tried to behave like a man in that world. The canto opens with the very figure of the night that will dominate it: 'Era la notte' (12:1). While others are at rest, Clorinda is awake, agonizing about having spent the day on the sidelines as an archer while Argante and Soliamano were in the thick of battle. (She has, as an archer, nonetheless wounded Goffredo, a fact of which she is unaware.) She chafes at her inability to do what the men have done and perform marvelous and unusual deeds ('fer meraviglie inusitate e strane'), and laments that wherever 'masculine valor is revealed', she must 'mostrarmi qui tra cavalier donzella!' [reveal herself as a young woman among knights] (12:4). Thus does 'she speak to herself', turning next to Argante who is also awake, to explain that for some time, something indescribably unusual, and bold ('un non so che d'insolito e d'audace') has been working in her unquiet mind, 'la mia mente inquieta' (12:5). This spirit has incited her to the radical plan

23 On Virgil's use of Camilla as an example of the sublime style, see Erich Auerbach's influential chapter, 'Camilla, The Rebirth of the Sublime', in *Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 183–233 (esp. pp. 183–186).

to burn down the Christians' siege tower and save Jerusalem. Again, Virgil's Latin text intrudes into Tasso's poem, infiltrating itself here into Clorinda's very words, as the story of Nisus and Euryalus from Book IX returns with the line 'aut pugna aut aliquid iamdudum invadere magnum/ mens agitat mihi, nec placida contenta quiete est' [long has my heart been astir to dare battle or some great deed, and peaceful quiet contents it not] (9:186–187). In this noted episode, the Trojan Nisus boldly plans to go out among the Rutulians' camp while they are sleeping, and slaughter as many as he can, a feat in which he is joined by the young boy Euryalus, and a feat which will lead to their deaths. In Clorinda's case, however, as similar as the sentiment is, it is not her heart that is astir — literally, 'agitated', like Tasso's waves and Tasso himself — but a 'non so che' that stirs up that heart and unsettles her mind. Whether, she muses, this is 'God' who inspires her, or whether 'l'uom del suo voler suo Dio si face' [men fashion their own god from their own longing] (12:5) is unclear — translating Nisus's musing in the *Aeneid*: 'Do the gods put this fire in our hearts, or does his own wild longing become to each man a god?' (9:184–185). But whereas Nisus begins his account with this rhetorical question, Clorinda utters it only after she has already spoken of her frustrations of being a woman, and her desire to be fully a part of a world of men. The 'non so che' in this episode will return in the 'non so che' that makes her voice faint and soft some fifty stanzas later, driving Tancredi to perform baptism. Yet whether it is her own desire or that of a god to defy her gender and perform magnificent deeds, it is a desire that Tasso will grant, even as it takes her, like Nisus, to her death; and a death in which she is arguably complicit as she refuses to reveal herself as a woman ['mostrarsi donzella'] and say her name.

This monologue, of course, has no place in Monteverdi's text. Nor does the simile of the wolf or that of the restless waves. He begins his *Combattimento* a stanza after Clorinda steals away from the Christian crowd, with the ottava that presents the clanking of Tancredi's armor — the phrase he repeats four times. And he will close his work a stanza before Clorinda's death, suicide or homicide as it may be, with Clorinda's reference to *pace*. And rightly so: in the performance that was the *Combattimento*, as in the later book of Madrigals in which the piece

was published, his focus is on the *voce*: *Madrigali guerrieri, et amorosi. Con alcuni opuscoli in genere rappresentativo*. As musicologists have argued, the preface and this book as a whole can be seen as the culmination of Monteverdi's attempts to elevate Italian music from its engaging but limited emphasis on *dolcezza*. His efforts, it can be argued, are comparable to Tasso's work elevating the Italian language in the confrontation with the strange, the new, the unfamiliar. Monteverdi perhaps achieved this through mingling the effects of love and war to which the title of his madrigal book alludes.²⁴

On the surface, the *Combattimento* is so generically innovative as to present an encounter *with* the strange, meant not only to be sung — by the two combatants and a Narrator or Testo who has the lion's share of Tasso's stanzas — but to be physically enacted. But it is the episode's sonic energy that clearly caught Monteverdi's ear as he developed what was truly innovative about the piece: its existence as a 'genere concitato' — a tense or agitated style, that takes us back to the agitated waves, and the contrast between that agitation of war and the calm of the ending in death. The title of the book in which the *Combattimento* featured, with its promise of amorous and bellicose songs, also poses a question that hovers about the entire composition: how might this song had sounded had Tancredi known Clorinda's identity, and what might he have brought her if she had revealed her name midway into the duel? In the ebbs and flows of sound that is the *Combattimento*, Monteverdi plays with dynamics, as well as rhythm and pace, moving back and forth between the intense agitations of the duel and the suggestions that something else might have happened instead. It culminates in the moment when the voice of Clorinda *does* speak in a way that provokes an emotion other than wrath in her opponent — and as she embraces friendship, if not love.

24 See, among other texts, Tim Carter's careful analysis of the work and its place within the madrigal setting; Carter, *Monteverdi's Musical Theatre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), chapter 7, pp. 167–196. For the possible influence of the well-known genre of the *moresca*, I am indebted to Suzanne Cusick's comments and to Nina Treadwell's chapter in this volume, in which she discusses the 'inherently labile' qualities of the *moresca* dance, where Christian and Muslim soldiers engaged in a battle set to music with especially percussive effects — the very percussive sounds that can be identified in Monteverdi's music as well as in Tasso's lexical choices.

And so, to return to the *Combattimento's* final line: 'dir para: "S'apre il cielo; io vado in pace"'. Like the line Clorinda sang after she was wounded — 'Amico, hai vinto' — it is metrically transgressive, making the reader or singer slow down and articulate the extra three syllables that close the stanza. Monteverdi deliberately draws out the entire final two measures, accompanied by the dying of the string sound on A and D, which appropriately ceases when Clorinda's voice ceases. As noted above, Monteverdi omits Clorinda's death itself, along with the final gesture that unites the lovers, as though the absence of speech signals the absence of life. Monteverdi thus closes with Clorinda rather than the Testo, who would have recited this: 'In questa forma/ passa la bella donna, e par che dorma' [So dies the beautiful woman, and she seems to sleep] (12:69) — another use of *parere*, once again filtering the dramatic moment through Tancredi's perspective. The male gaze — and ear — through which Clorinda *appeared* to say something, is thus replaced, as Cusick and Cascelli argue, by Clorinda's actual song, and hence her resistance to both the Testo's and Tancredi's uncertain appraisal of her words.²⁵ Monteverdi resists Tancredi's Petrarchan dynamics, in which the woman is a silent if rapturous presence. At the same time, he confirms the event Tancredi has just enabled: Clorinda's peaceful baptism into a religion that it is now too late for her to enjoy on earth. Though 'esclusa' from the gates of Jerusalem, she is not excluded from the Catholic framework of Tasso's poem.²⁶

Monteverdi's powerful assertion of an authentic female voice dramatically realizes Clorinda's capacity to shatter boundaries, as she has done throughout the *Liberata* — of heaven, as well as of metrical line. And he does so by unambiguously enabling Clorinda to 'mostrarsi

25 See Cusick, "'Indarno chiedi'", and Cascelli, 'Place, Performance and Identity'.

26 Monteverdi's unambiguous release of Clorinda into heaven may derive from his careful reading of Tasso's *Gerusalemme conquistata*, in which the poet devotes a significant amount of space to the foreboding dream Clorinda has the night before her death: one in which a great figure (Christ, as Tasso explains in his *Giudicio sovra la sua Gerusalemme da lui medesimo riformato*) comes to her on a chariot. Such elaboration suggests concern on Tasso's part that the *Liberata* was indeed ambiguous about Clorinda's fate; see Arnaldo di Benedetto, 'Un esempio di poesia Tassiana', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 169 (1992), 510–529 (526). For a different interpretation of Monteverdi's ending and the hypothesis that Clorinda's unexpected tonalities 'hint to a foreign world that cannot be contained by the rules of Christian music', see Risi, 'Claudio Monteverdi's *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*', p. 166.

donzella'. But arguably this is possible because Clorinda's has been a dangerous voice all along, and one that must not be allowed to have a future, as Adriana Cavarero has suggested with respect to the necessary deaths of the transgressive, melodramatic heroines of nineteenth-century Italian opera, whose lives Clorinda's interestingly anticipates.²⁷ Rendered a Christian, Clorinda can pass from the poem and allow Tancredi to fight as, and whom, he should. Monteverdi's refocusing and retelling of Clorinda's story solves the crucial problems of her multiple, indeterminate identities, as her voice is located securely in the body of the woman who takes her role onstage. Both included within and excluded from Tasso's poem, the foreigner is no longer a foreigner, even as she will be foreign to the future of the story. This may account for Monteverdi's description of his audience's reaction to his work when originally performed in the palace of Girolamo Mozzenigo in 1624. As he claims, 'tutta la Nobiltà restò mossa dal affetto di compassione in maniera, che quasi fu per gettar lacrime: & ne diede applauso per essere stato canto di genere non più visto né udito' [All the members of the nobility were so moved by the emotion of compassion that they were almost about to cry, and they applauded because it had been sung in a manner no longer seen or heard].²⁸ Had Monteverdi recited the actual death of Clorinda, followed by Tancredi's despair, we might be tempted to think that such compassion was for the warrior. But because the *Combattimento* ends where it does, Clorinda must have been its object, the stranger who remains strange even to herself, who realizes too late whom she should have been.²⁹

27 Adriana Cavarero, *For More than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*, trans. by Paul A. Kottman (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), especially chapter 2.3, 'Melodramatic Voices', which ends with the assertion that 'the supremacy of the feminine voice [is the] quintessence of the femininity of the vocal' (p. 130).

28 Monteverdi, *Combattimento*, p. 1.

29 On the role of the 'Pellegrino' or the foreign in inspiring marvel, see an important moment from Tasso's *Discorso sopra l'arte poetica* from 1587, borrowed in part from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*: 'le parole disusate la fanno più venerabile, perché sono come forestieri tra cittadini; laonde paiono peregrine e producono meraviglia; ma la meraviglia sempre porta seco diletto, perché il dilettevole è meraviglioso' [In particular, infrequently-used words will make elocution more venerable, because they are like foreigners mingling with citizens: they seem all the more rare and thus they incite marvel, but a marvel that brings with its delight, because what is delightful is also marvelous]. From *Apologia della Gerusalemme liberata*, in Tasso, *Scritti sull'arte poetica*, ed. Mazzali, I, p. 119.

Tasso's world is not quite as straightforward. If Clorinda only seems to say to an exhausted and emotional Tancredi that the heavens are opening, it may well be that they are not. Tancredi may have failed in his generous act. His 'sacri detti' [holy words], which Tasso does not record, may not have been enough; and Clorinda may have been denied entrance to the heavenly gates. This would be a terrifyingly harsh but viable resolution to the story, leaving Clorinda forever outside the narrative. While much in the poem might militate against this reading, her final appearance in the *Liberata* — or at least the last time we hear her voice — suggests that the possibility remains open.

This is in the spooky forest of Canto 13, a dark, perverse, epic theatre of distorting and discombobulating sights and sounds, although perhaps no less distorted than the space of Clorinda's duel. Still wounded by what he has done, Tancredi goes to attack the demons who have frightened off other Crusaders from cutting down the trees so they can build a new war tower to replace the one Clorinda and Argante destroyed. In the midst of the forest, he sees a tall cypress, with words written in Egyptian that warn him not to commit violence in this sacred site. He nonetheless takes out his sword to cut down the tree, source of the forest's magic. No sooner does he strike it, than it pours forth blood, and then, 'as though from a tomb', 'uscir ne sente/ un indistinto gemito dolento, // che poi distinto in voci: — Ahi! Troppo — disse/ — m'hai tu, Tancredi, offeso; or tanto basti' [he hears an indistinct, mournful noise come forth, that then distinguished itself in words: "Ahh! Too much", it said, "you have offended me, Tancredi: now please, enough!"] (13:41–42). And the voice explains: having been separated from her body at death, her soul has had to take refuge in the tree, along with many others, 'franco o pagano' (both Christian and Muslim), who 'left their bodies at the base of those high walls' (13:43). Each branch and trunk of the forest's trees is animated by their spirits, and thus Tancredi will be a murderer if he attacks the wood. Even though he does not fully believe the false illusions, he resigns himself to defeat, and flees.

"Ahi! Troppo" — again the foreign word that is not a proper word but a sound, and the same sound that accompanied 'Ahi vista! Ahi conoscenza!' For the first time, that voice has spoken Tancredi's name; and for the first time, before Tancredi, its own name — 'Clorinda fui' (12:43) — even as the use of the *passato remoto* suggests that the voice is

no longer Clorinda's.³⁰ This is moreover a voice that forces its narrator to break through stanzaic lines in a relatively rare example of enjambment in Tasso's poetics. Thus does Tasso insist on the return of this foreign voice without a true home, a voice which only appeared to speak about heaven, and a voice which continues to transgress the boundaries of the orderly *ottave* of Tuscan verse and use words that are not part of that language. We saw similar instances of metric alterity in the verses that preceded and followed the rite of Clorinda's baptism — lines deviant like the sounds of a foreign language that reminds us of Italian's origins, a flow of sound that refuses to be constrained within the 'normal' metrics of a stanza. Such has been Clorinda in her resistance, provoking Tancredi's marvel and compassion and perhaps our own. In this instance it is compassion not for Clorinda's belated recognition of herself as a Christian, but for her commitment to taking the less common path, relying on the precariousness of silence and sound that returns us to the true opening of the duel: her fatal but characteristic choice to 'desviare' — deviate — and separate herself from the Christians outside the walls — possibly for a short time, possibly forever.

Desviare deviates from the characteristic Tuscan spelling ('disviare'). Perhaps more than any other term, it describes a Clorinda who has constantly chosen to do things differently, giving her that heroic illustriousness which the youthful Tasso praised in his *Discorsi* as essential to an epic poem. She pays for that difference with her death, in a world that is unable to accept the extent of her otherness or the alterities she forces it to recognize in itself. The traumatic world of war which Clorinda chose to make her own would ideally be alien to anyone's vernacular. But it is a world Tasso's Italy knew well, and one whose sonic and experiential discomforts Tasso expertly probed using Italian's foreign tongues to produce his disturbing masterpiece. And while Tasso arguably makes Clorinda a sacrifice to the success of that poem, he is also closer to Clorinda than one might think — a Tasso whose style, and life,

30 Had Tancredi read Dante, he would know that Dante's purgatorial souls regularly distance themselves from their earthly bodies using the same remote tense, yet they are still recognized as the beings they were on earth. Is this a voice 'senza mente', taken over by another, diabolical creature? Or does it have continuity with Clorinda's self, like the *anime* in that temporary holding place called Purgatory? Once again Tasso leaves open the possibility of Clorinda's conversion if only through an echo to his most important predecessor in the vernacular.

could be equally defined by the word 'desviare'.³¹ As the opening of the *Liberata* reminds us, he is a *peregrino errante* who feels himself excluded from port, while nonetheless seeking, and perhaps only appearing to find, salvation from above.

31 See Sansone regarding Tasso's stylistic individuality: he wrote 'fuori da ogni dimensione comune' [outside common usage], in order to provoke the marvelous; *Da Bembo a Galiani: Il Dibattito sulla lingua in Italia*, p. 24.

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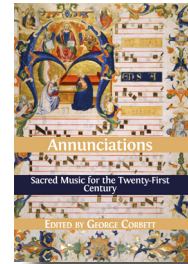
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<https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0172>

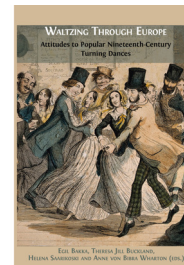


Waltzing Through Europe

**Attitudes towards Couple Dances in the Long
Nineteenth Century**

*Egil Bakka, Theresa Jill Buckland, Helena Saarikoski and Anne
von Bibra Wharton (eds)*

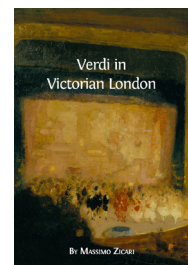
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Verdi in Victorian London

Massimo Zicari

<https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0090>



Acoustemologies in Contact

Sounding Subjects and Modes of Listening in Early Modernity

EDITED BY EMILY WILBOURNE AND SUZANNE G. CUSICK

In this fascinating collection of essays, an international group of scholars explores the sonic consequences of transcultural contact in the early modern period. They examine how cultural configurations of sound impacted communication, comprehension, and the categorisation of people. Addressing questions of identity, difference, sound, and subjectivity in global early modernity, these authors share the conviction that the body itself is the most intimate of contact zones, and that the culturally contingent systems by which sounds made sense could be foreign to early modern listeners and to present day scholars.

Drawing on a global range of archival evidence—from New France and New Spain, to the slave ships of the Middle Passage, to China, Europe, and the Mediterranean court environment—this collection challenges the privileged position of European acoustical practices within the discipline of global-historical musicology. The discussion of Black and non-European experiences demonstrates how the production of ‘the canon’ in the cosmopolitan centres of colonial empires was underpinned by processes of human exploitation and extraction of resources. As such, this text is a timely response to calls within the discipline to decolonise music history and to contextualise the canonical works of the European past.

This volume is accessible to a wide and interdisciplinary audience, not only within musicology, but also to those interested in early modern global history, sound studies, race, and slavery.

As with all Open Book publications, this entire book is available to read for free on the publisher’s website. Printed and digital editions, together with supplementary digital material, can also be found at www.openbookpublishers.com

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