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Encounters with Music in Rudolf II's Prague

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Abstract

This article uses three well-known members of Rudolf II's imperial court—the astronomer Johannes Kepler, the composer Philippe de Monte, and the adventurer Kryštof Harant—to delineate some ways music helped Europeans understand identity and difference in the early modern period. For Kepler, the unfamiliar intervals of a Muslim prayer he heard during the visit of an Ottoman delegation offered empirical support for his larger arguments about the harmonious properties of Christian song and its resonances in a divinely ordered universe. For Harant, listening and singing were a means of sounding out commonalities and differences with the Christians and Muslims he encountered on his travels through the Holy Land. Monte sent his music across Europe to the English recusant William Byrd, initiating a compositional exchange that imagined beleaguered Bohemian and English Catholics as Israelites in exile, yearning for Jerusalem. Collectively, these three case studies suggest that musical thinking in RudolFINE Prague did not revolve around or descend from the court or sovereign; rather, Rudolf II's most erudite subjects listened, sang, and composed to understand themselves in relation to others.

Keywords: Rudolf II; music; music of the spheres; Ottoman music; cultural encounter; Johannes Kepler

One of the initial disappointments that comes with studying music connected to the court of Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia Rudolf II (1552–1612) is the realization that there was no such thing as a “Rudolfine” musical style. That a distinctive visual aesthetic was cultivated by the Habsburg ruler's painters and printmakers has been amply demonstrated by art historians Thomas DaCosta Kauffmann and Eliška Fučíková, among others.¹ Yet while we might productively think of such diverse artists as Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Bartolomäus Spranger, Josef Heintz the Elder, and Hans von Aachen as belonging to a Rudolfine “school,” the same cannot be said of the many musicians who made Rudolf II's court in Prague their home between 1583 and 1612.

There is no shortage of music connected to Rudolf II's chapelmaster, Philippe de Monte, his erudite organist, Carolus Luython, or any others of the dozen or so composing musicians employed in the imperial music chapel. This music, which circulated both in print and in manuscript, ranges from weighty polyphonic settings of Latin liturgical and devotional texts (Masses and motets) to fashionable settings of serious Italian poetry (madrigals) to such light fare as the French chanson and German Lied—straightforward enough to be sung among friends around a table, partbooks in hand. It proves challenging, however, to isolate practices or compositional choices that might meaningfully be thought of as characteristic of a Rudolfine sound.²

¹See among others Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *The School of Prague: Painting at the Court of Rudolph II* (Chicago, 1988); Mungo Campbell et al., eds., *The Stylish Image: Printmakers to the Court of Rudolf II* (Edinburgh, 1991); Eliška Fučíková et al., eds., *Rudolf II and Prague: The Court and the City* (Prague, 1997); Sally Metzler, *Bartolomeus Spranger: Splendor and Eroticism in Imperial Prague* (New York, 2014); Eliška Fučíková, *Prague in the Reign of Rudolf II* (Prague, 2015).

²On the possibility of a retrospectively defined “Mannerist” style in RudolFINE music, see Walter Pass, “Die originelle Ansicht des Unendlichen: Die *madrigali spirituali* von Philipp de Monte und der Manierismus,” in *Colloquium Musica Bohemica et Europaea Brno 1970*, ed. Rudolf Pečman (Brno, 1972), 145–57; Hartmut Krones, “Manieristische Tendenzen im musikalischen Umfeld Rudolfs II.,” in *Die Wiener Hofmusikkapelle II: Krisenzeiten der Hofmusikkapellen*, ed. Elisabeth Theresia Fritz-Hilscher, Theophil Antonicek, and Hartmut Krones (Vienna, 2006), 33–60. A more historically grounded effort to identify a common

Some of the difficulty lies with the compositional rules that still constrained what was musically possible: rules whose violation, as we shall see, came with metaphysical consequences. But Rudolf II is also partly to blame. Famous for preferring the company of his painters and artisans to audiences with diplomats and courtiers, he does not seem to have harbored similar enthusiasms for his musicians. The growing body of scholarship on musical activities at his court and in Prague during his reign has only confirmed that the emperor's engagement with his musicians and with musical matters was at best perfunctory.³ Put plainly, Rudolf employed musicians not because of any special love for music theory or practice but because it was expected of him.⁴ Music performance was essential to court ceremonial and religious ritual, and by the sixteenth century a skilled ensemble of singers, along with an organist or two, was a customary component of a princely court. As symbols of a ruler's munificence and power, these members of the court music chapel, along with the mounted trumpeters and drummers employed in the royal stables, played an essential role in princely representation.⁵

On acceding to the imperial throne in 1576, Rudolf was content to maintain what he had inherited in personnel and practice from his father Maximilian II (r. 1564–76).⁶ Enconced in Prague by 1583, he supplemented and replaced musicians as necessary to maintain a suitably impressive chapel, but without the intensity of purpose that accompanied his pursuit of artists. The notoriously unhappy dedications of the five-voice madrigal prints by Monte, issued in 1580 and 1581, do suggest the emperor on occasion weighed in on matters of musical style.⁷ Still, he does not seem to have kept up with the learned discussions about ancient and modern music that were unfolding in Italy, nor to have been inclined to tell his composers what to write. To borrow a helpful distinction made by the Italian musicologist Claudio Annibaldi, Rudolf II's musical patronage was "institutional" or "conventional" rather

tendency among Rudolfinian composers is Christian Leitmeir, "Da pacem Domine: The Desire for Peace in Rudolfinian Music," in *Renaissance Music in the Slavic World*, ed. Marco Gurrieri and Vasco Zara (Turnhout, 2019), 205–78.

³On the careers of specific musicians, see the many articles by Robert Lindell, among them "Music and Patronage at the Court of Rudolf II," in *Music in the German Renaissance: Sources, Styles, and Contexts*, ed. John Kmetz (Cambridge, 2006), 254–71; and "Stefano Rossetti at the Imperial Court," *Musicaologia Humana: Studies in Honor of Warren and Ursula Kirkendale*, ed. Siegfried Gmeinwieser, David Hiley, and Jörg Riedlbauer (Florence, 1994), 158–81. The sole monograph on the imperial chapel, Carmelo Comberiat's *Late Renaissance Music at the Habsburg Court: Polyphonic Settings of the Mass Ordinary at the Court of Rudolf II, 1576–1612* (New York, 1987), should be read in conjunction with the review by Horst Leuchtman; see *Music and Letters* 70 (1989): 84–87.

⁴Indifferent to music and increasingly reluctant to attend formal religious services, Rudolf II stands in contrast to such contemporaries as Guglielmo Gonzaga (also his relative), who actively shaped musical and religious life at his Mantuan court, and to Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria, who delighted in the work of his celebrated chapelmaster Orlande de Lassus—to the point of withholding some of it from publication. See James Haar "Orlando di Lasso: Composer and Print Entrepreneur," in *Music and the Cultures of Print*, ed. Kate Van Orden (New York, 2000), 125–62. A good overview of Rudolf in comparison to the Habsburg emperors immediately preceding and following him is Jonas Pfohl, "The Court Chapels of the Austrian Line (I): From Emperor Ferdinand I to Emperor Matthias," in *A Companion to Music at Habsburg Courts in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Andrew Weaver (Leiden, 2020), 131–76.

⁵The court music chapel played a similar representative role in Spain and France; on the former, see especially Luis Robledo Estaire, "The Form and Function of the Music Chapel at the Court of Philip II," in *The Royal Chapel in the Time of the Habsburgs: Music and Ceremony in the Early Modern European Court*, ed. Juan José Carreras, Bernardo Garcia Garcia, and Tess Knighton (Woodbridge, 2005), 135–43, at 141. On the development of the court chapel as an institution, see Juan José Carreras, "The Court Chapel: A Musical Profile and the Historic Context of an Institution," in *The Royal Chapel*, 8–20. On the institution of trumpeters and drummers in early modern European court ceremonial, see Caldwell Titcomb, "Baroque Court and Military Trumpets and Kettledrums: Technique and Music," *The Galpin Society Journal* 9 (1956): 56–81.

⁶The personnel lists were first summarized in Ludwig Ritter von Köchel, *Die kaiserliche Hof-Musikkapelle in Wien von 1543 bis 1867 nach urkundlichen Forschungen* (Vienna, 1869); and Albert Smijers, "Die kaiserliche Hofmusik-Kapelle von 1543 bis 1619," *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft* 6 (1919): 139–86; 7 (1920): 102–42; 8 (1921): 176–206; and 9 (1922): 43–81. Michaela Začková-Rossi has compiled the most comprehensive list to date; see *The Musicians at the Court of Rudolf II: The Musical Entourage of Rudolf II (1576–1612) Reconstructed from the Imperial Accounting Ledgers* (Prague, 2017).

⁷The defensive posture Monte takes in the dedications to the emperor of *L'ottavo libro delli madrigali a cinque voci* (Venice, 1580) and *Il decimo libro delli madrigali a cinque voci* (Venice, 1581) suggests a general dissatisfaction on Rudolf II's part with music whose primary role was to provide pleasant diversion, rather than a specific critique on stylistic, technical, or music-theoretical grounds. See Robert Lindell, "Filippo di Montes Widmungen an Kaiser Rudolf II.: Dokumente einer Krise?," in *Festschrift Othmar Wessely zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Manfred Angerer et al. (Tutzing, 1982), 407–15; and Thorsten Hindrichs, "Towards an Understanding of Filippo de Monte's Thoughts on Music," *Journal of the Alamire Foundation* 3 (2011): 244–55, at 252–55.

than “humanistic,” contractually determined and reflecting widespread and generic associations between learned music and social elites rather than demonstrating his personal taste or connoisseurship.⁸

Although Rudolf’s apathy toward music might seem an odd way to open an article on musical encounters in Rudolfin Prague, it gives us a vantage point from which to scrutinize how other people connected to his court used music and found meaning in it. These people, learned but not necessarily wealthy, filled the spaces created by Rudolf II’s absence, and found in music a means of understanding identity and difference both within their own ethnically and linguistically diverse city and in relation to their coreligionists in other parts of Europe. Broadening our view from the cosmopolitan court to take in the worlds to which the court gave access, we find robust networks of friendship and patronage and traces of far-flung contacts among diplomats, intellectuals, and musicians.⁹ These ad hoc systems of support give us a sense of music’s myriad uses in a gift economy that often bypassed the emperor altogether. They also help explain the incontrovertible fact that, despite the emperor’s passivity, music thrived at his court and in Prague more generally during his reign. Indeed, even though Rudolf’s musicians struggled to attract and sustain the attention of their melancholic employer, more compositions can be connected to his court than to those of his father and grandfather, or his successor, Matthias (r. 1612–19). In quality and quantity, the output of his composers holds up well even when compared with the splendidly musical courts of Emperors Ferdinand II (r. 1619–37) and Ferdinand III (r. 1637–57).¹⁰

This article revolves around the musical hub that was Rudolfin Prague, using three figures to develop two basic points: that music—and ideas about music, and people who made music—traveled, and that because of this mobility, music was frequently a medium of cultural contact and encounter.¹¹ The Lutheran astronomer Johannes Kepler was troubled by what he heard in the cantillation of a Turkish visitor whose prayer he witnessed at the imperial court in Prague in 1608, and he used a venerable Latin plainchant to understand his discomfort. The musical adventurer Kryštof Harant of Polžice and Bezručice set out from Prague to Venice and then to the Holy Land, making sense of his experiences through sound and song. The Flemish composer Monte, relocating from Vienna to Prague along with the rest of the imperial court, used music to comment on the plight of Catholics in a world gone heretical and sent his musical commentary across Europe to the recusant composer William Byrd—a favorite of Elizabeth I of England even as he skirted charges of sedition.

An Astronomer: Johannes Kepler, Prague 1609

There were plenty of people at the imperial court and in the city below who were interested in music’s theoretical underpinnings and metaphysical workings, for all that such matters did not sustain the

⁸Claudio Annibaldi, “Towards a Theory of Musical Patronage in the Renaissance and Baroque: The Perspective from Anthropology and Semiotics,” *Recercare* 10 (1998): 173–82, at 174–76. Annibaldi’s piece is a response to Howard Mayer Brown’s assertion a decade earlier that there was as yet no theory to “demonstrate [via patronage] the relationship between an individual piece (or a particular genre) and the society that caused it to come into being.” See Brown, “Recent Research in the Renaissance: Criticism and Patronage,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 40 (1987): 1–10, at 9–10.

⁹For an analogous situation in Florence at this time, see Tim Carter, *Music, Patronage and Printing in Late Renaissance Florence* (Aldershot, 2000), 58: “[O]ne looks in vain for a Medici Duke or Grand Duke with the passionate commitment to music of an Alfonso II d’Este or a Guglielmo or Vincenzo Gonzaga.” On some musical traces of friendships at the Rudolfin court, see Robert Lindell, “Relations between Musicians and Artists at the Court of Rudolf II,” *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 65–66 (1989–90): 79–88.

¹⁰Steven Saunders, *Cross, Sword, and Lyre: Sacred Music at the Imperial Court of Ferdinand II of Habsburg (1619–37)* (Oxford, 1995); Andrew Weaver, *Sacred Music as Public Image for Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III* (Farnham, 2013); and Andrew Weaver, ed., *A Companion to Music at Habsburg Courts in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden, 2020).

¹¹The starting point for theories of encounter is given in Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2008), although her interest is primarily in the period of European expansion and colonization beginning in the eighteenth century. For a rich discussion of Bohemian and Moravian examples of a musical genre that thematizes encounter, see Scott Edwards, “‘Is There No One Here Who Speaks to Me?’ Performing Ethnic Encounter in Bohemia and Moravia at the Turn of the Seventeenth Century,” *Diasporas* 26 (2015): 17–34. On some of the issues that emerge when studying sixteenth- and seventeenth-century transcultural musical encounters, see Olivia Bloechl with Melinda Latour, “Music in the Early Colonial World,” in *The Cambridge History of Sixteenth-Century Music*, ed. Richard Wistreich and Iain Fenlon (Cambridge, 2019), 128–75. For an accessible and expansive treatment of music’s mobilities, see Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music on the Move* (Ann Arbor, 2020).

emperor's interests. The court painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1526–93), for example, engaged in the branch of speculative thought (i.e., *musica theorica*) concerned with music's mathematical foundations. Arcimboldo's efforts to translate the superparticular ratios (2:1, 3:2, 4:3, and 9:8) associated with commonly used musical intervals (octaves, fifths, fourths, and whole tones) into precisely measured combinations of black and white are preserved in *Il Figino overo del fine della pittura* (The Figino, or on the purpose of painting; Mantua, 1591), by the Mantuan cleric and poet Gregorio Comanini (1550–1608).¹²

Although more famous for its ekphrasis of Arcimboldo's 1591 portrait of Rudolf II as the Roman god Vertumnus, Comanini's treatise also describes in some detail the system Arcimboldo devised to represent music's fundamental proportions in a finely tuned gray-scale.¹³ Explaining somewhat elliptically how these proportions might be applied to other colors to accommodate the overlapping ranges of a polyphonic composition, Comanini assures the reader that the imperial chamber musician Mauro Sinibaldi was able to "read" the different shades of Arcimboldo's colored cards and reproduce the corresponding musical intervals on a harpsichord.¹⁴ For Comanini, Arcimboldo's experiments—their results proven empirically for having been tested by a practicing musician—served to make a larger point about the intellectual value of the visual arts: if colors could be shown to operate according to the same harmonious proportions that had governed musical consonances since Pythagoras's mythical discovery of the relation between sound and number in the din of a blacksmith's forge, painting might be worthy of the privileged place long accorded music among the liberal arts.¹⁵

The same intellectual tradition (i.e., canonic theory, after *kanōn*, or monochord) that undergirded Arcimboldo's experiments and Comanini's apologia for painting informed the hearing and worldview of another nonspecialist with musical interests, the German astronomer Johannes Kepler (1571–1630).¹⁶ A resident of Prague's Old Town while employed at the imperial court from 1600 to 1612, Kepler deployed his understanding of music's mathematical properties to very different ends. His understanding of the universe and its cosmic workings was fundamentally musical, as the title of his celebrated cosmological treatise *Harmonices mundi* (Harmonies of the world; Linz, 1619) suggests.¹⁷ It is, moreover,

¹²Gregorio Comanini, *Il Figino, overo del fine della pittura* (Mantua, 1591), 244–49. The dialogue treatise (a paragone on the relative merits of painting and poetry) is available in an excellent English translation as Giancarlo Maiorino and Ann Doyle-Anderson, eds., *Il Figino, Or, on the Purpose of Painting: Art Theory in the Renaissance by Gregorio Comanini* (Toronto, 2001); for the discussion of Arcimboldo's color experiments, see 102–3. On some of the larger music-theoretic issues, see Austin Caswell, "The Pythagoreanism of Arcimboldo," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* (1980): 155–61; for a snapshot of the branches of music theory as understood in the sixteenth century, Bianche Gangwere, *Music History during the Renaissance Period, 1520–1550: A Documented Chronology* (Westport, 2004), 137.

¹³Comanini, *Il Figino*, 245–48.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 248–49. Arcimboldo associated white with the lowest end of the pitch spectrum (i.e., the bass), incorporating yellow in precise proportions to ascend in pitch; likewise, to move through the tenor range, then alto, then the superius (i.e., soprano) range in a five-voice texture, he shaded yellow with green, green with blue, blue with purple, and finally purple with brown. Comanini refers to Sinibaldi in *Il Figino* only as "Mauro dalla Viola Cremonese," i.e., Mauro the Viol Player from Cremona; it was common for chamber musicians to be competent on more than one musical instrument. Sinibaldi had previously been mentioned in another important art-theoretical work: Gian Paolo Lomazzo's *Tratatto del l'arte de la Pittura* (Milan, 1584), 384.

¹⁵Comanini's painter outdid in color what Pythagoras could do with number, being able to divide the tone into two equal parts. On the foundational role of the Pythagoras myth in European music theory, see Calvin Bower, "The Transmission of Ancient Music Theory into the Middle Ages," in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory* (Cambridge, 2002), 136–67, at 142–43; on the myth's flawed physics, see Alexander Rehding, "Instruments of Music Theory," *Music Theory Online* 22 (2016), accessed 7 July 2020, <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.16.22.4/mto.16.22.4.rehding.html>. Painting's elevation to the liberal arts was much on the minds of Prague painters in the 1580s and 1590s; in a 1595 Letter of Majesty renewing the privileges of the Prague painters' guild, Rudolf II decreed that painting was an art, distinct from the handicrafts. See Michal Šronek, "The Representation Practices of the Prague Painters' Guild in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period," in *Faces of Community in Central European Towns: Images, Symbols, and Performances, 1400–1700*, ed. Kateřina Horníčková (Lanham, 2018), 149–94.

¹⁶For an accessible overview of the ancient music-theoretic tool known as the "monochord" see Cecil Adkins, "Monochord," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001–), accessed 21 Aug. 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.18973>; see also the more expansive treatment in Jan Herlinger, "Medieval Canonics," in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge, 2002), 168–92.

¹⁷See, among others, D. P. Walker, "Kepler's Celestial Music," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 30 (1967): 228–50; Mark Peterson, "Kepler and the Music of the Spheres," in *Galileo's Muse: Renaissance Mathematics and the Arts* (Cambridge,

shaped through and through not only by what he glimpsed in the heavens but also by what he saw and heard in the streets and squares and buildings around him. His treatise—a virtuosic reconciliation of his empirical observations of planetary motion with the venerable tradition of music as sounding number—bears the marks of his time in Prague; for all that he dedicated it to James I of England.

In other treatises on other matters, Kepler used local experiences to guide the reader into a given topic. In *Strena, seu de nive sexangula* (A New Year's gift, or the six-pointed snowflake; Frankfurt, 1611), for instance, he claims that snowflakes landing on his coat as he crossed Prague's Charles Bridge inspired his curiosity about why snowflakes always have six corners.¹⁸ His little New Year's gift (*strena*) for the courtier and aulic counselor Johannes Matthaeus Wacker von Wackenfels (1550–1619) is a pathbreaking work on crystalline structure, and the Prague anecdote makes for an effective and picturesque opening. But his reference to the snowflake on his lapel does not have significant implications for his theory; nor does it reveal much about his thoughts on older theories or worldviews.

In contrast, a listening experience that Kepler recounts in the middle of the *Harmonices mundi* (Book III, chapter 13: “What Naturally Suitable and Tuneful Melody Is”) is at once evocative and explanatory.¹⁹ He begins the chapter with his recollection of hearing the prayers of a member of an Ottoman delegation that visited Prague in 1609. He uses this account and his analysis of what he heard to deepen his justifications for assuming the divine origins of the mathematical proportions on which his cosmology rests. The anecdote both opens onto Kepler's larger theory of the geometric determination of the relationships among the planets, and updates a venerable tradition reaching back to the ancients, in which musical harmony (explained in arithmetic terms as a fundamentally rational property of sound) was aural evidence for a divine order that was invisible and unobservable, and to which humans were otherwise insensible.

The Ottoman embassy had arrived in Prague on 12 October 1609.²⁰ Sent by Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) in the wake of the 1606 Peace of Zsitvatorok—the agreement that brought to an end a protracted war between the Ottoman and Holy Roman Empires (1593–1606)—the delegation stayed in Prague until 6 December, negotiating, hunting, eating, sleeping, and praying.²¹ Details of their sojourn, from the formal greeting at the imperial frontier to the subsequent cautious and gift-laden rapprochement between representatives of the two recently warring empires, were reported to readers throughout the German-speaking lands in a short summary issued by the Augsburg printer and propagandist Wilhelm Peter Zimmermann.²² Zimmermann's account, along with a series of engravings by the Bohemian engraver Samuel Suchuduller, gives some sense of what Prague's residents saw and heard when the delegation first arrived—details that Kepler does not provide.²³

The visiting dignitaries entered Prague in the company of Habsburg representatives and civic officials in a sumptuous procession whose progress was marked aurally by the sounds of not only local but also Ottoman musicians. Headed by a group of mounted trumpeters and drummers, three groups of

MA, 2011), 174–96; Peter Pesic, “Earthly Music and Cosmic Harmony: Johannes Kepler's Interest in Practical Music, especially Orlando di Lasso,” *Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music* 11 (2005), <https://sscm-jscm.org/v11/no1/pesic.html>.

¹⁸Johannes Kepler, *Strena, seu de nive sexangula* (Frankfurt, 1611), 5. The Charles Bridge spanned the Vltava (Moldau) River, connecting Prague's Old Town with the Small Side and Castle Hill.

¹⁹“Quid sit Cantus naturaliter Concinnus et aptus.” See Johannes Kepler, *Harmonices mundi*, III (Linz, 1619), 62.

²⁰Wilhelm Peter Zimmermann, *Contrafettischer Abriss und Fürbildung Welcher massen / des groß Türggen / an die Römischen Kayserliche Mayestot...* (Augsburg, 1610), fol. Aii^v.

²¹The conflict gave rise to a distinct corpus of anti-Turkish motets, Mass settings, and monophonic songs—exclusively by Czech composers unaffiliated with the imperial court; see Jan Bat'a, “*Furor turcicus*: The Turkish Threat and Musical Culture of the Czech Lands during the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries,” in *Renaissance Music in the Slavic World*, ed. Marco Gurrieri and Vasco Zara (Turnhout, 2019), 279–96.

²²See note 20.

²³Samuel Suchuduller, *Ankvnt vnd Einzug der Tyrkgischen Potschaften wie sy allhier zu Prag den XII October Anno 1609 von Ir Röm: Kay: May: von denen leblichen Landsstenten vnd Ritterschaft des Kenigs Reich Behamb sambt den Pragerischen Treien Stetten sent eingeleitet worden, wie volgt hernach, ornlichehn verzeichnet...* (n.p., [1610?]). The author is grateful to Peter Harrington, curator of the Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection at Brown University Library, for his kind assistance in reproducing this exceedingly rare print.

riders representing Prague's constituent towns (Old Town, New Town, and the Small Side) led the way, each with its own standard-bearers and trumpeters. The Ottoman ambassador, probably Qāizāde 'Alī Paşa (d. 1616) from the Buda pashalik, took pride of place at the center of the procession, riding alongside the imperial equerry Adam of Waldstein and a "Herr von Fels"—probably Leonhard Colonna of Fels, one of the leaders of the Bohemian Estates' forces (see Figure 1).²⁴ At some distance behind them, mounted drummers and trumpeters from the imperial stables heralded the presence of a group of Bohemian nobles (see Figure 2). Entering just behind them was a group of Turkish musicians on horseback, playing trumpets, shawms ("schalmain," i.e., *zürnā*), and drums. Standard-bearers for the rival empires brought up the rear (see Figure 3).²⁵

Perhaps because such processions and the accompanying fanfares were relatively routine in the imperial capital, Kepler did not comment on the entry.²⁶ Something else—a more private sort of utterance than the military music of the Ottoman *mehterhâne*, and one usually inaccessible to Christian listeners—caught the astronomer's ear. At some point during the long Ottoman sojourn, he overheard the prayers of a man he identifies as the *sacerdos* (priest) of the Ottoman ambassador. He struggled in his treatise to describe the man's recitation, representing it or, more precisely, representing his hearing of it, in European music notation (see Figure 4).²⁷

He notes that the man knelt and repeatedly touched his head to the floor while singing, an observation that suggests he witnessed Qur'anic recitation with *sujūd*, or prostrations, typical of *salat*. Kepler's notational representation of the Muslim prayer is curious: simply a set of interlocking descending minor thirds without order or hierarchy, bearing little resemblance to the pitch profiles of Qur'anic recitation. He was either unable to notate it accurately or chose to render it irrationally to underscore his larger point about the rational and natural qualities of Christian song and the irrational and unnatural qualities of non-Christian song. Unaccustomed to quarter-tones—smaller intervals than the tones and whole tones that comprised the European pitch gamut—Kepler heard the chanting as out of tune. He decided that the model for their sounds could not therefore be divine, and that the "truncated, abhorrent intervals" must ultimately derive from some imperfect, crude instrument crafted by human hands.²⁸ Listening to the Turkish cantillation, Kepler stacked what he heard against what he knew of the resonances of music's consonances with the divine order of the cosmos, and he found the cantillation wanting.

Although a more commensurable point of comparison to Ottoman cantillation would have been the psalm tones and other recitational chants ubiquitous in Catholic worship, the Lutheran Kepler (perhaps unaware that he was hearing recited scripture) instead contrasts his transcription of

²⁴Suchuduller, *Ankvnft vnd Einzug*, 4. On the pasha's identity see the excellent draft article by Kateřina Horníčková and Michael Šroněk, "Staging Oriental Delegations at the Habsburg Imperial Court in Prague (1600–1610)" (unpublished manuscript, consulted 25 Sept. 2020), typescript; for the context of his visit, see Gustav Bayerle, "The Compromise at Zsitvatorok," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980): 5–53. "Pashalik" is an Ottoman territorial designation and describes the area over which the pasha had jurisdiction.

²⁵The description in Zimmermann, *Contrafettischer Abriß*, fol. Aii^v, is general ("mit fliegenden Fahnen / Trummel / vnnd Schalmeyen daselb einkommen/ welche man stattlich empfangen") but both reinforces and complements some of the details in Suchuduller's schematic. Prague's Jewish inhabitants recorded the entry as taking place on the eve of *sukkot* in the year 5370; see Abraham David, ed., *A Hebrew Chronicle from Prague c. 1615*, trans. Leon Weinberger and Dena Ordan (Tuscaloosa, 1993), 14.

²⁶A Persian delegation representing Shah Abbas I had arrived in June of that year, evidently to encourage a renewal of hostilities against the Turks; see "Venice: May 1609," in Horatio Brown, ed., *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice* 11 (London, 1904), 267–78; *British History Online*, accessed 1 Sept. 2020, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/venice/vol11/pp267-278>; and "Venice: June 1609," in Brown, *Calendar of State Papers*, 279–91, accessed 1 Sept. 2020, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/venice/vol11/pp279-291>.

²⁷Kepler's encounter with Ottoman music is discussed in Pesic, "Earthly Music and Cosmic Harmony"; and Pesic, *Music and the Making of Modern Science* (Cambridge, MA, 2014), 75–77. While Pesic's assertion that Kepler sought to faithfully render what he heard is well taken, it does not necessarily follow that the notation is an accurate rendering of Ottoman cantillation.

²⁸Kepler, *Harmonices mundi*, III, 61: "at intervallis usus est miris, insolitis, concisis, abhorrentibus." Kepler's treatise is available in English as Johannes Kepler, *The Harmony of the World*, trans. Eric Aiton, Alistair Duncan, and Judith Field (Philadelphia, 1997). For this chapter, it is crucial to refer to the Latin original as the translation does not always render the music-theoretical terms (e.g., *cantus mollis*) accurately.



Figure 1. Qāizāde ‘Alī Paşa and Lords Adam von Waldstein and [Leonhard?] von Fels, in Suchuduller, *Ankvnft vnd Einzug*, [4]. Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library. Reproduced by permission.

Muslim prayer with the Easter sequence *Victimae paschali laudes* (Praise the Paschal victim), sung by Catholics and Lutherans alike. Sequences are a particularly poetic and tuneful sort of plainchant, and Kepler juxtaposes this especially beloved example with his representation of the Ottoman prayer to demonstrate for his readers—in a form they could test out for themselves—that Christian song gravitates toward consonance and thus to divine order.²⁹ Muslim sounds, however, he characterized as dissonant and earthbound: the soulless replication of human error.

Kepler’s aural encounter with Muslim prayer reflects his confidence both in empirical observation and in received precepts concerning how a harmonious melody was structured. Certainly, he would have been able to glean these basic principles from his childhood instruction in musical rudiments. But references peppered throughout the *Harmonices mundi* suggest he had a far more sophisticated musical understanding than his early education could possibly have given him. He was evidently familiar with the objections of the lutenist and music theorist Vincenzo Galilei (father of the astronomer Galileo Galilei) to received canonical theory, for example, and in his discussion of the rules of polyphonic composition he makes reference to the writings of music theorist Gioseffo Zarlino’s pupil

²⁹Kepler, *Harmonices Mundi*, III, 61.



Figure 2. The Imperial Trumpeters, in Suchuduller, *Ankvnft vnd Einzug*, [6]. Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library. Reproduced by permission.

and apologist Giovanni Artusi, and the German Lutheran transmitter of Zarlilian theory, Sethus Calvisius.³⁰ He was, moreover, sufficiently familiar with the music of the Wittelsbach chapelmaster Orlande de Lassus (1530/32–94) to aptly invoke specific compositions (e.g., the motets *Ubi est Abel* [Where is Abel] and *Tristis est anima mea* [Sad is my soul]) elsewhere in the *Harmonices mundi*. His admiration for Lassus puts him in the company of many other Lutherans who found Lassus’s music—though connected to the most Catholic of Central European courts and by 1619 somewhat out of date—to epitomize music’s possibilities as an art both mathematical and rhetorical.

Kepler’s inability to make sense of the Ottoman prayer is unlikely, in other words, to have been a mere mishearing; rather, he heard what he heard because of who he was. He could not help but hear the sounds of the Ottoman prayer with the ears of a European Christian, believing this hearing to be universal and, moreover, believing that Christian music (and only Christian music) was capable of rendering divine sounds audible—perhaps even of echoing them. Significantly, he prefaces his discussion of the Ottoman prayer with a passing jibe at the bestial quality of the battle cries of Ottomans and the Hungarians fighting for them on the eastern edges of the Holy Roman Empire. “Let us say nothing of

³⁰Ibid., 82–86. On Calvisius’s *Melopoeia seu melodiarum condendae ratio* (Erfurt, 1592) and its relation to contemporary music theory, see Paul Walker, *Theories of Fugue from Josquin to J. S. Bach* (Rochester, NY, 2000), 78–79.



Figure 3. The Ottoman Embassy's Trumpeters, Shawm Players, and Drummers, in Suchuduller, *Ankvnft vnd Einzug*, [6]. Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library. Reproduced by permission.

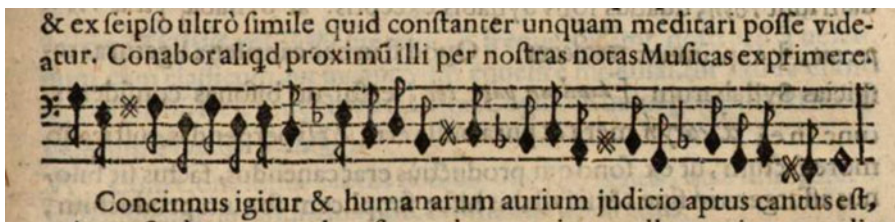


Figure 4. Transcription of Ottoman cantillation, in Kepler, *Harmonices mundi*, III, 62. Public domain.

such strident battle cries," he writes, but not before saying that these foreigners and non-Christians sound like animals.³¹ Later in the chapter, Kepler quotes a melody that he identifies only as a "very old German one," showing that even though it begins on a different pitch than the "final" or home pitch, it implies the final at every turn.³² This kind of variety in practice is to be expected, he insists, and is, moreover, delightful. The tune he quotes is *Christ ist erstanden* (Christ is arisen), an eleventh-century vernacular hymn whose text and melodic contour were derived from *Victimae paschali laudes*. Kepler did not need to identify it because he knew his German readers, whether Catholic or Lutheran, would recognize it and would likely have sung it; moreover, he expected that any readers who did not recognize it would discern in the notated excerpt the sort of well-turned phrase that characterized natural (i.e., divinely ordered) song.

³¹Kepler, *Harmonices Mundi*, III, 61-2: "Nihil dicemus de stridulo illo more canendi, quo solent uti Turcae et Ungari pro classico suo: brutorum potius animantum voces inconditas, quam humanam Naturam imitati." Although Kepler uses the term "Hungarians," he almost certainly understood this to refer to the Turks and Hungarians fighting to maintain and expand Ottoman control in Hungary.

³²Kepler, *Harmonices mundi*, III, 62.

It is not clear what the members of the Ottoman delegation thought of the Christian music or prayer they heard during their time in Prague; unlike the Persian delegation that had visited in 1600, for which the *Relaciones* of Juan of Persia survives, there appears to be no printed account that conveys an Ottoman perspective on the 1609 visit.³³ Zimmermann did note in his report that six members of the delegation mocked (*gespottet*) the celebration of Mass and splattered the holy water (*Weichbrunn*). Unsurprisingly given his own perspective and his Christian audience, Zimmermann does not speculate about what the visitors might have found ridiculous or objectionable. Instead, he notes the harsh punishment meted out by the Ottoman leaders for these infractions. Zimmermann writes that the culprits were flogged and would have been “hacked” (*säbeln*; i.e., cut with a sabre) had the imperial equerry (Adam of Waldstein) not interceded on their behalf.³⁴

The sort of speculative music theory that informed Kepler’s cosmology was already on its way out by the time his treatise appeared. Advancements in tuning theory and acoustics, as well as the transformation of musical style in the ensuing decades (the rise of the so-called *stile moderno* in its many forms), rendered his musical cosmos obsolete. In 1652, the Spanish-Bohemian polymath Juan Caramuel of Lobkowitz (1606–82) observed from his Prague study that, “There are many who have written about the music of spheres,” recalling that Pythagoras had done so in ancient times. In “our age,” he continued, Kepler grounded this theory geometrically, while Kepler’s rival Robert Fludd located it in the principles of tension and release. Caramuel concluded that, for his part, he simply could not hold the music of the spheres—for so long a matter of faith—to be materially true.³⁵

A Traveler: Kryštof Harant, Jerusalem and Cairo, 1598

Eleven years before Kepler heard the prayers of the Turkish delegation in Prague, the adventuring nobleman Kryštof Harant of Polžice Bezdružice (1564–1621) had his own series of musical encounters with unfamiliar sounds over the course of an extended pilgrimage to the Holy Land.³⁶ His *Putowánj aneb Cesta* (Pilgrimage or journey; Prague, 1608), is an expansive account of that journey.³⁷ As is customary for such travelogues, Harant intersperses his own observations with historical descriptions of the places he visits. Less usual is the careful attention he pays to sounds musical and otherwise, and his inclusion of music notation to communicate precisely what he sang at the many sites he visited that were connected to Christ’s birth, death, and resurrection. In his account of visiting the Column of Flagellation, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and other sites in Jerusalem, for example, Harant includes both the texts and the tune of the hymns he sang at each site. These correspond in text and order to the hymns prescribed in Book 6 of Jean Zuallart’s *Viaggio di Gerusalemme* (Venice, 1587), a widely read travelogue and guidebook, although Harant includes music notation where Zuallart does not.³⁸

³³*Relaciones de Don Ivan de Persia ... Divididas en tres libros. Donde se tratan las cosas notables de Persia ... y las que vido en el viaje que hizo à España* (Valladolid, 1604), a translation of the original Persian. A convert to Catholicism, “Juan of Persia” was born Uruch Beg. The correspondence of the Buda pasha in, for example, Gustav Bayerle, ed., *The Hungarian Letters of Ali Pasha of Buda, 1606–1616* (Budapest, 1991) has yet to be read with a sensitivity to sound.

³⁴Zimmermann, *Contrafettischer Abriß*, fol. B [i]f.

³⁵Juan Caramuel y Lobkowitz, *Encyclopaedia concionatoria* (Prague, 1652), 50. On Caramuel as music theorist, see Eric Bianchi, “Scholars, Friends, Plagiarists: The Musician as Author in the Seventeenth Century,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 70 (2017): 61–128.

³⁶On Harant’s life and his place in the intellectual milieu of early modern Bohemia, see Marie Koldinská, *Kryštof Harant z Polžic a Bezdružic: Cesta intelektuála k popravišti* (Prague, 2004). A helpful (albeit a bit dated) overview of his musical output is Jan Racek, *Kryštof Harant z Polžic a Jeho Doba*, specifically “Harantovo Dílo Literární a Hudební,” 41–140. On the larger context for Harant’s encounter with Muslims, see Laura Lisy-Wagner, *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity, 1453–1683* (London, 2016).

³⁷Kryštof Harant, *Putowánj aneb Cesta z Kralowstwj Českého do Města Benátek: Odtud po Moři do Země Swaté / země Júdské / a dále do Egypt a velikého Města Kairu* (Prague, 1608). A German translation prepared by Johann Georg Harant in 1638 was issued as *Der Christliche Ulysses: oder weit-versuchte Cavallier, fürgestellt in der Bereisung, sowol deß Heiligen Landes, als viel andrer morgenländischer Provinzen, Landschafften, und berühmter Städte* (Nuremberg, 1678).

³⁸Jean Zuallart, *Viaggio di Gerusalemme* (Venice, 1587), 385ff. See Harant, *Putowánj*, 170, where he includes musical notation for the hymn *Eia fratres carissimi*, with the implication that the same tune would be used for other hymn texts he provides.

Departing still further from the norms of the genre, Harant also includes one of his own compositions in his travelogue. At the end of the first part of the *Putowánj*, he appends a six-voice polyphonic setting of *Qui confidunt in Domino* (They who believe in the Lord), from Psalm 124 (125) with its message of confidence that those who keep faith in the Lord will enjoy the Lord's protection for eternity.³⁹ He explains that the sounds of monks singing polyphony in the evening at their monastery in the shadows of Mount Zion inspired him to write his own setting of the psalm.⁴⁰ He shares his motet with his Czech readers so that they might sing it too, and feel something of what he felt.

A skilled composer, Harant's received musical training came not in Prague but much earlier, at the Innsbruck court of Rudolf II's uncle Archduke Ferdinand "of the Tyrol" where he spent his youth, and where he probably studied with the Flemish chapelmaster Alexander Utendal (1543/5–81). In a world where musical affinities were widely understood to be signs of good character, this early training stood him in good stead. Indeed, in the dedication of his Czech translation of Georg Lauterbeck's *Regentbuch*, a popular handbook on politics and rulership, the Prague printer Jan Bohutský praises Harant for his considerable skills as a singer and instrumentalist, and above all his skills as a composer—observing that his compositions were much admired.⁴¹ A portrait by the court engraver Aegidius Sadeler that appears in the prefatory material to the *Putowánj* (see Figure 5) explicitly positions Harant as a man whose musicality is a sign of his virtue.

His personal motto appears below his visage—disguised, however, in a kind of musical rebus. Using the six "solmization syllables"—ut, re, me, fa, sol, la—that Christian singers had used to navigate the pitch gamut since Guido of Arezzo had devised them in the eleventh century, Harant encodes part of his motto in musical notation: *Virtus UT SOL-MI-cat*, that is "Virtue like the sun shines," or more idiomatically, "Virtue shines like the sun" (the clef and position of the pitches allowing no other possibilities). Only a similarly musical (and thus virtuous) reader would be able to decipher the motto.

Having fought the Ottomans on Hungarian battlefields between 1591 and 1597, Harant probably had firsthand experience with the animal-like battle cries that Kepler could only describe secondhand (indeed, one wonders if Harant was Kepler's source). Whatever his prior experience with Ottoman sounds, Harant had no ear for the Ottoman music he heard on his 1598 journey, finding it incomprehensible and in at least one place describing it in explicitly bestial terms. The relevant passage comes in his account of his visit to Cairo, which had come under direct Ottoman rule in 1517. As the sun sets, he and his companions watch people strolling on or near their ships in their finery, and in other places sitting cross-legged in circles. The air is filled with the perfume of flowers and with the sounds of "Turkish" (i.e., Ottoman) musicians. But the sounds that give the local listeners pleasure strike him as ridiculous. Harant divulges that the music moved him and his European companions to discreet laughter because it sounded to them like they were hearing not human musicians but a pig on the pipes and a donkey on a drum, with no trace of harmony.⁴²

He then directs his reader to an illustration of three musicians (see Figure 6), writing dismissively that it shows what passes for music among the Turks.

But the image, executed by the engraver Johann Willenberger after Harant's own sketch, depicts an entirely different sort of musical performance than the evening entertainments he had just described: two men play fretted stringed instruments, while the third sings. The image is sufficiently detailed to suggest that the plucked instrument is a *tanbur* and the bowed instrument a *rebab*, and the musicians'

³⁹The motet is edited along with other Harant compositions in Jiří Berkovec, ed., *Kryštof Harant z Polžic a Bezdržic Opera Musica* (Prague, 1956).

⁴⁰Harant, *Putowánj*, I, 398; and Harant, *Der Christliche Ulysses*, I, 472.

⁴¹Jan Bohutský, dedication to Georg Lauterbach, *Politia Historica, o Wrchnostech a Správcých Swětských, Knihy Patery* (Prague, 1606), fols. Aiii r-v.

⁴²Harant, *Putowánj aneb cesta*, II, 59: "a pohlédagice nahoru do oken / muzykau kterau osebau wezli, sebe obwesekowal / s welikým swým zaliobwaánjm / a nassjm tegným smjchem: gakoby swině pjskala a Osel bubnowal. Gakž každý z Kontrffektu té gegich muzyky / co za harmonij býti musyla, sauditi mocy bude." See also Harant, *Der Christliche Ulysses*, 552–53: "und erlusterten sich mit bey sich habender Music mit ihren grossem Belieben uns aber zum heimlichen Gelächter / als wann eine Sau pfeiffen und ein Esel trummeln thäte. Wie solches aus der Abbildung ihrer Music was es für eine Harmonia gewesen seye / abzunehmen ist."



Figure 6. Turkish musicians in Harant, *Putowánj* II, 59. Public domain.

there was a Milanese singer who had been a member of the music chapel of Archduke Charles of Inner Austria.⁴⁴ There are other instances in which music helped Harant participate in (not just observe) a local Christian community. Arriving in Candia (i.e., Crete), for example, he found his musical abilities were needed at a local monastery. Still using the old Julian calendar, the locals were celebrating the Feast of Mary Magdalene, which Harant notes had been commemorated ten days earlier in those places (not least the Holy Roman Empire) that had adopted the Gregorian calendar. Having celebrated vespers at their monastery, a group of Discalced Carmelite monks took Harant to a nearby friary for another vespers service. There, the monks sang a five-voice polyphonic setting of the Magnificat (i.e., the Cantic of Mary: *My soul magnifies the Lord*, Luke 1:46–55), beckoning to Harant to join in on a three-voice setting of the *Esurientes* verse (Luke 1:53), which he did without hesitation.⁴⁵ Yet when he found himself in the company of Ottoman Turks, music reinforced Harant's sense of distance and difference. Whatever he admired about the performance setting of the music he happened upon in Cairo—the perfumed sunset and the delicate finery—he judged what he heard wafting through the air to be bereft of both reason and harmony. And so, he laughed.

An Exile: Philippe de Monte, Prague and London, 1583

There were no Czech composers in Rudolf's music chapel: as a landed nobleman, Harant was appointed to the more prestigious position of imperial chamberlain (a position with ample room for advancement) and was never paid by the emperor for his compositions. The imperial chapel was instead—and entirely in keeping with similar establishments elsewhere in Europe—dominated by Franco-Flemish singers and composers. They were joined by a handful of Spanish singers (high-voice “discantists”) and chamber musicians who either came from Italy or had trained in Italy. Arriving in Prague, these devoutly Catholic men found themselves surrounded by a populace and a kingdom that was primarily non-Catholic (either Lutheran or Utraquist, i.e., following the teachings

⁴⁴Harant, *Putowánj*, I, 398.

⁴⁵Harant, *Der Christliche Ulysses*, 92.

of Jan Hus). Rudolf, moreover, showed little inclination toward music and even less toward religion, a situation that only got worse over the course of his reign. This backdrop is essential to understanding a remarkable and celebrated musical exchange between the imperial chapelmaster, Philippe de Monte (1521–1603), and a gentleman of the Chapel Royal at the court of Elizabeth I, the recusant William Byrd (ca. 1540–1621), on texts excerpted from Psalm 136 (137), *Super flumina Babylonis* (By the rivers of Babylon)—the lament of the Israelites forced to sing while in exile.⁴⁶ Well-known to musicologists, the exchange vividly illustrates how individuals separated by distance and language used Latin polyphony and a common understanding of music's workings to assert their shared membership in a single community of faith.⁴⁷

In 1554, the young Monte had traveled to England as a singer in the entourage of Philip II of Spain. The Spanish king remained in England for several months following his July marriage to Mary Tudor, leaving in September of the following year when an expected pregnancy did not materialize. There is little doubt that members of Philip's music chapel and the English Chapel Royal met during this long English sojourn, and it is probably during this period that Monte first met Byrd, who would at that time have been a chorister.⁴⁸ This conjectural meeting between the two would be of little substantive historical interest were it not for their well-known musical "conversation" in the early 1580s, in which they used the musical genre of the Latin motet to comment on the plight of Catholics in lands in which they were a minority. For both Monte and Byrd, the plight was urgent and immediate. The 1581 torture and execution of the Jesuit Edmund Campion while in England on a clandestine evangelizing mission devastated not only the English recusants who supported his cause but also Catholics in Prague, where Campion had been ordained and where he had spent the better part of the 1570s teaching and preaching. Through their private musical exchange (the sole trace of which is a note in an eighteenth-century English copy), Monte and Byrd gave voice to the despair of their dispersed and beleaguered community—but also to its defiance.

The careers of the two composers had proceeded along roughly parallel paths after Monte's English stay. Upon returning to the continent, Monte left the Spanish chapel (unhappy, evidently, at being the only Flemish singer) and after a short period in Antwerp joined the music chapel of Maximilian II. His many prints of madrigals and motets in the 1570s—issued either in Venice, the undisputed center of music printing at this time, or in Antwerp—earned him considerable fame and contributed to the growing reputation of the Austrian Habsburg court as an important player on the European music scene. He was retained as imperial chapelmaster by Rudolf II on Maximilian's death and remained productive, dedicating his numerous prints to eminent Catholic nobles and clerics at home and abroad. Although many imperial composers issued their music at the Prague printing house of Georgius Nigrinus, Monte continued to print his music abroad, preferring to access the more extensive distribution networks of printers in Italy and the Low Countries. A 1579 Mass setting printed in Antwerp traveled all the way to Cuzco, bound with a collection of Mass settings by Philip II's chapelmaster, Philippe Rogier, issued in Madrid in 1598.⁴⁹ Byrd, meanwhile, was appointed a gentleman of the Chapel Royal in 1572, in which capacity he composed settings of Anglican texts that were both useful for and much admired by his employer.

⁴⁶The most comprehensive study of Monte's motets remains Michael Silies, *Des Motetten des Philippe de Monte* (Göttingen, 2009).

⁴⁷For a good summary, see Alison Shell, *Oral Culture and Catholicism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2007), 126–27, drawing largely on Joseph Kerman's influential analysis in *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd* (Berkeley, 1981); see also Joseph Kerman, "Music and Politics: The Case of William Byrd (1540–1623)," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 144 (2000): 275–87; John Harley, *William Byrd: Gentleman of the Chapel Royal* (Aldershot, 1997); Roger Bray, "British Library, R.M. 24 D 2 (John Baldwin's Commonplace Book): An Index and Commentary," *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 12 (1974): 137–51.

⁴⁸The prefatory poem by Ferdinando Heybourne in Byrd and Tallis, *Cantiones sacrae* (London, 1575) suggests Thomas Tallis was Byrd's teacher, making it likely that Byrd was a member of the Chapel Royal or, possibly, at St. Paul's. Unlike Habsburg music chapel records, Chapel Royal rosters do not name the choirboys.

⁴⁹As late as 1598, there was in the holdings of the Cuzco Cathedral a copy of Monte's *Missa ad modulum Benedicta es sex vocum* (Antwerp, 1579), bound with Rogier's posthumous *Missae sex* (Madrid, 1598); see Robert Stevenson, *Renaissance and Baroque Musical Sources in the Americas* (Washington, DC, 1970), 30 and 249.

By 1582, Byrd's situation had become precarious, however. Already in 1580 he had been counted among those suspected of furnishing "papists" with shelter, money, and other forms of support.⁵⁰ After Campion's execution in 1581, he wrote a consort song setting *Why doe I use my paper, ynke, and pen*, an openly seditious poem that celebrated Campion as a martyr. Campion's refusal to remain silent despite the dangers of speaking out ("With tung & pen the truth he taught & wrote") inspires the anonymous poet to take up his own pen, and "call [his] wits to counsel what to say."⁵¹ The printer Stephen Vallenger had his ears cut off and was imprisoned merely for printing the text.⁵² Byrd managed to escape such drastic punishment and his subsequent use of music for political commentary was so veiled as to be nearly imperceptible.⁵³

Monte's eight-voice setting of *Super flumina Babylonis* is among the relatively few of the roughly 250 motets he wrote that was never printed—a point that underscores the private nature of the cross-continental exchange. Manuscript copies were vulnerable to loss, and indeed whatever de Monte sent to Byrd does not survive. A sixteenth-century manuscript anthology in Prague preserves just one of the eight voices of Monte's motet, while an eighteenth-century English manuscript—clearly based on a lost original—transmits the motet in its entirety.⁵⁴ The Prague copy gives no information about why, when, or for whom Monte composed the text. The later English copy, however, includes a note indicating that Monte sent the setting to Byrd in 1583. An eight-voice motet by Byrd setting different portions of the same psalm, appears immediately after Monte's motet in the English source, along with a note indicating that Byrd sent it to Monte in 1584.

The motets comment on each other and on the wider predicament facing Catholics in England, Bohemia, and in Monte's homeland textually and compositionally. Reflecting a widespread practice of combining and reordering Biblical and liturgical texts to convey specific meanings, Monte rearranged the verses of Psalm 136 as follows:

De Monte's motet text	Verse no.	Translation
Super flumina Babylonis, illic sedimus et flevimus, dum recordaremur Sion.	1	By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion.
Quia illic interrogaverunt nos, qui captivos duxerunt nos, verba cantionum et qui abduxerunt nos: Hymnum cantate nobis de canticis Sion.	3	For there they demanded of us, they who led us into captivity, the words of songs; and they who carried us away said: Sing to us a hymn of the songs of Zion.
Quomodo cantabimus canticum Domini in terra aliena?	4	How shall we sing the song of the Lord in a foreign land?
In salicibus in medio ejus suspendimus organa nostra.	2	On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments.

In this way, Monte's motet builds up to the question: "How shall we sing the song of the Lord in a foreign land?" In his setting, surely written with the knowledge of what had happened to Vallenger, or at the very least with a grim understanding of the risks of professing Catholicism in Elizabeth's England, the question of how to sing in a hostile land is answered with an earlier verse, such that the motet ends in silence: "On the willows in the midst thereof, we hung up our instruments."

⁵⁰Kerman, *The Masses and Motets*, 43.

⁵¹On this episode, see chapter 3 ("Paper, ynke and pen": A Literary *Memoria*) in Gerard Kilroy, *Edmund Campion: Memory and Transcription* (Milton Park, 2016).

⁵²Thomas McCoog, SJ, "'Guiding Souls to Goodness and Devotion': Clandestine Publications and the English Jesuit Mission," in *Publishing Subversive Texts in Elizabethan England and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth* (Leiden, 2016), 93–110, at 106.

⁵³Byrd's setting survives in several manuscript versions; a version giving only the first stanza of text (which does not name Campion) was printed in *Psalmes, Sonets, & Songs of sadnes, and pietie* (London, 1588). On Byrd's political motets, see especially Craig Monson, "Byrd, the Catholics, and the Motet: The Hearing Reopened," in *Hearing the Motet*, ed., Dolores Pesce (Oxford, 1997), 348–74.

⁵⁴Prague, Národní Muzeum, ms. AZ 37 (formerly XIV C 149).

Monte's decision to write for eight voices creates an unusually dense sonic texture even for the period and demonstrates his formidable skill at controlling dissonance among the interacting voice parts.

In *Quomodo cantabimus in terra aliena*, Byrd began where Monte ended: with the question "How shall we sing in a foreign land?" (Psalm 136:4). Byrd looked to scripture and found a very different answer than Monte. Letting the subsequent verses unfold exactly as they do in the psalm, the answer to the question posed by Byrd's motet is a fiery commitment to faith, where silence is a mark of those who have forgotten their spiritual home: "If I should forget you, Jerusalem, let my right hand fall idle. Let my tongue stick in my throat, if I do not remember you."⁵⁵ In his musical rejoinder to Monte's motet—and a rejoinder it is—Byrd outdoes the older composer by embedding a canon, an exact imitation of a given melody, in three of the eight voices. With this display of compositional virtuosity, Byrd shows himself to be unwilling to "hang up his instruments" under the threat of persecution, as Monte's motet had pessimistically suggested. As the mutilated printer Vallenger languished in jail—having used his paper and his ink to encourage Catholics to write and to speak—Byrd reached across Europe and encouraged Monte to sing.

Conclusion

Music could travel in ways that paintings could not. Bought and sold, collected and bequeathed, it could and did travel deep within and far beyond Central Europe. As such, it offers a particularly useful perspective from which to consider the larger questions centered in this forum relating to Prague's status as a "global" city. Operating according to a narrow set of principles laid out in such treatises as Gioseffo Zarlino's influential *Le Istitutioni harmoniche* (Venice, 1558), composed polyphony was a lingua franca among sixteenth-century European Christians. In theory (theory that, crucially, shaped practice), music connected the majority of Prague's inhabitants to those of Antwerp and Madrid and London and even colonized Cuzco, holding diverse peoples in a single imagined community and keeping them in alignment with the invisible world and the movements of celestial bodies—taken in the sixteenth century, as they had been since classical antiquity, to be ordered according to the same harmonious proportions that ordered audible music.⁵⁶ Understood thus, music also necessarily left out those Europeans and those of Prague's residents—Muslims and Jews—who sounded different and who understood music differently, and whose presence could only be accounted for as dissonance in God's divine order.

The emphasis in musicological literature connected to Habsburg courts (and the Rudolfine court in particular) has long been on the preferences and inclinations of the patron. Hartmut Krones proposes that the compositions of Philippe de Monte and Carolus Luython traffic in a sort of "musical mannerism," something akin to the sophisticated and artificial style characteristic of Rudolfine visual artists.⁵⁷ Nicholas Johnson hypothesizes that the pitch content of specific compositions engages the emperor's well-known interests in astrology and hermeticism.⁵⁸ Most recently, Christian Leitmeir argues for a sonic expression of Rudolf II's apparently pacific ideals in polyphonic settings of the votive antiphon *Da pacem Domine* (Grant us peace, O Lord) by his composers, pointing to their use of an unusual and plangent chromatic inflection of the chant melody.⁵⁹ The search for distinctively "Rudolfine" musical tendencies has sometimes obscured the rich and productive relationships his musicians cultivated locally, with institutions in the city below Prague Castle (an avenue that Czech scholars in particular

⁵⁵Psalm 136: 5–6: "Si oblitus fuero tui, Jerusalem, oblivioni detur dextra mea. / Adhaereat lingua mea faucibus meis, si non meminero tui."

⁵⁶See the various essays in Jacomien Prins and Maude Vanhaelen, eds., *Sing Aloud Harmonious Spheres: Renaissance Conceptions of Cosmic Harmony* (New York, 2018).

⁵⁷Hartmut Krones, "Manieristische Tendenzen im musikalischen Umfeld Rudolfs II.," in *Die Wiener Hofmusikkappelle II. Krisenzeiten der Hofmusikkappellen*, ed. Elizabeth Fritz-Hilscher and Theophil Antonicek (Vienna, 2006), 21–31.

⁵⁸Nicholas Johnson, "Carolus Luython's *Missa super basim Caesar Vive* and Hermetic Astrology in Early Seventeenth-Century Prague," *Musica Disciplina* 56 (2011): 419–62.

⁵⁹Leitmeir, *Da pacem Domine*.

have been exploring), as well as their participation in broader musical-stylistic movements, diplomatic exchanges, and epistolary networks that spanned Europe.⁶⁰

The cases of Kepler, Harant, and Monte—singular but not unique—suggest that there is much to be gained by thinking about how music helped ordinary people understand the world around them. Benefiting from the presence of the imperial musicians, Prague’s citizenry, too, made music and collected it. The most learned among them listened closely to the music of their own communities of faith and language and assessed the musicality of those who differed from them in language and religion—responding to these other sounds sometimes with wonder, sometimes with revulsion. I have shifted the focus in this article away from the emperor and toward some of the men who made his court their home to show that sometimes it was in private moments—in overhearing unfamiliar sounds, or in sending and receiving motets to a like-minded acquaintance, knowing they might never be performed in public—that early modern individuals used music to think about themselves and to understand themselves in relation to others. Today the historian encounters a composition, or a fragment of notation, or a description of a performance, as an artifact.⁶¹ Yet for the early moderns who thought about how to describe what they heard, who puzzled over how to write it down, or who looked at a musical passage and sang it to themselves, music was present as a living thing, mediating actual encounters.

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⁶⁰The work of Jan Bat’a is exemplary of the rich insights that can be gained by studying the relationship between the court and the city. See, among others, Jan Bat’a, “Luca Marenzio and the Czech Lands,” *Hudební Věda* 46 (2007): 117–26; Jan Bat’a, “*Quod laudat praesens, omnis mirabitur aetas*: Gradual Trubky z Rovin, jeho repertoár a evropský kontext,” in *Littera Nigro scripta manet: In honorem Jaromir Černý*, ed. Jan Bat’a, Jiří Kroupa, and Lenka Mráčková (Prague, 2009), 126–52. See also Jan Bilwachs, “Die Konkordanz der Carl Luythons Motteten *Bellum insigne* und *Festa dies hodie*,” *Musicologica Brunensia* 51 (2016): 37–45; Erika Supria Honisch, “Music In-Between: Sacred Songs in Bohemia, 1517–1618,” in *Renaissance Music in the Slavic World*, ed. Marco Gurrieri and Vasco Zara (Turnhout, 2019), 169–204.

⁶¹For a thoughtful reflection on how musical sources might be used as historical documents, see Matthew Champion and Miranda Stanyon, “Musicalising History,” in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 29 (2019): 79–103.