

Review Article

Bernardo Pasquini's Cantatas

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HISTORICAL musicology as a discipline was for a long time shaped by the study of musical genres and forms. Consequently many composers often became characterized by a single aspect of their musical lives, one sometimes only arbitrarily chosen as the most significant, while their other musical activities remained in the shadows. The case of Bernardo Pasquini offers a good example: in 2001 *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* labelled him 'the most important Italian composer of keyboard music between Frescobaldi and Domenico Scarlatti'. The entry only fleetingly mentions Pasquini's contributions to opera and oratorio; of his cantatas it says nothing.¹ It is true that, in his time, Pasquini was esteemed and even venerated as one of the principal virtuosos of the keyboard – witness the convergent testimonies of his contemporaries and the numerous renowned students who had occasion to learn from him in order to perfect their keyboard skills. Georg Muffat remembered Pasquini as 'the famous Apolline of Italy' from whom he had learnt 'the Italian way of playing the organ and the harpsichord'.² Francesco Gasparini declared Pasquini's harpsichord playing 'the most true, beautiful and noble manner of playing and of accompanying'.³ Not without reason, then, is Pasquini's fame today still tied to his keyboard music. One need only look at the different editions of his harpsichord and organ works and at his discography, which effectively concentrates on this same repertory.

In contrast, Pasquini's name appears rarely or only in passing in histories of opera and oratorio, genres to which he made numerous and important contributions. In this respect, music history has clearly assigned Pasquini a role similar to Vivaldi's, whose reception even now is dominated by his instrumental oeuvre, despite the notable progress made in studies and recordings of his operas and cantatas. A quick look at Pasquini's work list, however, makes it obvious that over a span of 20 years or so – more or less between 1671 and 1692 – Pasquini wrote music for no fewer than 16 operas, 15 oratorios and about 70 cantatas. This

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¹ John Harper and Lowell Lindgren, 'Pasquini, Bernardo', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd edn, London, 2001), xix, 187–90 (p. 187).

² Georg Muffat, Preface to *Auserlesene mit ernst und lust gemengte Instrumental-Music erste Versammlung* (Passau, 1701).

³ Francesco Gasparini, *L'Amoroso pratico al cimbalo* (Venice, 1708), 60.

vast and important part of his output has never garnered equal interest for musical research. Two doctoral dissertations written several decades ago, one dedicated to the operas and the other to the oratorios, neither stimulated further studies on the music of the composer nor changed the image of him that had been fixed for over a century.⁴ While the titles of Pasquini's operas continued to lie in shadow, more light fell on the oratorios, not so much in the field of musicology as in relation to musical performances, since almost all of them have been offered to the modern public.⁵ But before the appearance of the impressive work of Alexandra Nigito under review here, Pasquini's cantatas remained completely unexplored territory, notwithstanding the fact that, far from being a single sheaf of charming chamber entertainments, they form a considerable corpus of about 70 works.

As is typical for most music of this genre from this period, 50 of Pasquini's cantatas for solo voice are preserved only in manuscript. Eugen Schmitz noted in his pioneering study, written a century ago, how the cantata had circulated in print for the first two or three decades of its life, but towards the middle of the Seicento moved almost exclusively into manuscript transmission.⁶ Closer to our time, Lorenzo Bianconi remarked, in considering the sources of the cantatas of Cesti brought to light by David Burrows's catalogue, how the provenance of this manuscript repertory at the height of the Seicento led to the conclusion that the genre was almost exclusively Roman.⁷ It was indeed in Rome that the principal composers of the genre were active, and Pasquini was certainly one of them.

During the 1970s, a group of scholars focused their research on a number of composers reputed to be the most representative and prolific in this genre. The late Owen Jander began the Wellesley Edition Cantata Index Series, which, however, achieved only six volumes, one dedicated to each of the composers Cesti, Savioni, Luigi Rossi, Stradella and Carissimi, and one shared by Alessandro and Atto Melani.⁸ The series aimed principally to inventory and catalogue the cantatas of single authors, and to offer a useful contribution to the problems of attribution. It is not clear why a prolific composer of cantatas such as Pasquini was not

⁴ Gordon F. Crain, 'The Operas of Bernardo Pasquini' (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1965); Egils Ozolins, 'The Oratorios of Bernardo Pasquini' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California Los Angeles, 1983).

⁵ Of the seven oratorios for which scores have come down to us, those that have appeared on CD are *Caino e Abele* (Teatro Armonico, dir. Alessandro De Marchi; Symphonia SY90S01, 1990) and *Santa Agnese* (Consortium Carissimi, dir. Vittorio Zanon; Verany PV703051, 2003). More recently, there have been new performances of the oratorios *Sant'Alessio* (Cantar Lontano, dir. Marco Mencoboni; Ancona and Viterbo, 2004), *I fatti di Mosè nel deserto* (Weser-Renaissance Bremen, dir. Manfred Cordes; Smarano, 2010) and *La sete di Cristo* (three performances: (1) Pro Musica Firenze with Semperconsort, dir. Gabriele Micheli; Lamole and Massa e Cozzile, 2010; (2) Concerto Romano, dir. Alessandro Quarta; Rome 2013 and Cologne 2014; and (3) Academia Montiregalis, dir. Alessandro De Marchi; Cracow, 2015).

⁶ Eugen Schmitz, *Geschichte der weltliche Solokantate* (Leipzig, 1914), 69.

⁷ Lorenzo Bianconi, 'Cesti, Pietro Antonio', *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome, 1980), <[www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pietro-cesti_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pietro-cesti_(Dizionario-Biografico))> (accessed 1 October 2015).

⁸ In the order in which they were published, the Wellesley volumes were 1: *Antonio Cesti (1623–1669)*, ed. David Burrows (1964); 2: *Mario Savioni (ca. 1608–1685)*, ed. Irving Easley (1964); 3a–b: *Luigi Rossi (ca. 1598–1653)*, ed. Eleanor Caluori (1965); 5: *Giacomo Carissimi (1605–1674)*, ed. Gloria Rose (1966); 4a–b: *Alessandro Stradella (1644–1682)*, ed. Owen Jander (1969); 8–9: *Alessandro Melani (1639–1703)* and *Atto Melani (1626–1714)*, with a supplement: *An Index to the Operas and Intermedii of Alessandro Melani*, ed. Robert Weaver (1972). A planned volume for Pietro Simone Agostini was never issued.

included in this first group. We can, however, imagine that sooner or later his cantatas, too, would have attracted a scholar to prepare a volume; but in 1972 the series stopped suddenly and definitively, in part because Jander himself had shifted his research interests to historical keyboard instruments and to Beethoven. In addition, the radical shift of research horizons in music history during the course of the 1980s and 1990s played a part in revising the agenda of the discipline. Problems of a classificatory nature, which had long been central to the work of historical musicology, were progressively demoted to a secondary plane. Of course, some more or less ample studies dedicated to cantatas of single composers continued to broaden the total picture, even beyond the context of music in Rome.⁹ However, in the field of the cantata (and of other musical genres transmitted predominantly in manuscript) it became increasingly clear that problems of attribution and dating could not be faced and resolved on the basis of historical-stylistic considerations, as if, for example, an aria with a da capo section could be considered more modern than a strophic air.

With regard to the sources that transmitted the greater part of the repertory in the middle of the Seicento, the research objective accordingly shifted from the hunt for authors to the investigation of problems of a social and cultural nature. In fact, as I have observed, manuscript sources should not be considered merely as neutral containers that can be used to track a history of music viewed as a history of musical works; rather, they can also be examined and studied as material objects that contribute to an understanding of the functions of music, the taste of patrons and the mechanisms of transmission, and eventually to a clarification of the stylistic choices and compositional strategies of a given time and a given context.¹⁰ In this way, we enter the methodological sphere of material history or (better) of the history of material culture – culture in an anthropological sense. The history of material culture with reference to the cantata sources therefore requires something very different from the traditional codicological approach. Since men and women cannot conceivably be removed from any historical discourse, material culture locates itself in the relationship between objects and human beings.¹¹ Looking through the lens of material culture, the study of sources has thus opened up a research perspective on social aspects related to the production, consumption and transmission of the cantata repertory, understood in its broadest sense – not restricted to the

⁹ See, for example, the work of Emans on the cantatas of Legrenzi and the studies of Gialdroni on composers in the region of Naples: Provenzale, Sarro and Vinci. Reinmar Emans, 'Die einstimmige Kantaten, Canzonetten und Serenaden Giovanni Legrenzi's' (Ph.D. dissertation, Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, Bonn, 1984); Teresa M. Gialdroni, 'Francesco Provenzale e la cantata a Napoli nella seconda metà del Seicento', *La musica a Napoli durante il Seicento: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi: Napoli, 11–14 aprile 1985*, ed. Domenico Antonio D'Alessandro and Agostino Ziino (Rome, 1987), 125–50; *eadem*, 'Le cantate profane da camera di Domenico Sarro: Primi accertamenti', *Musicisti nati in Puglia ed emigrazione musicale tra Seicento e Settecento: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Lecce, 6–8 dicembre 1985*, ed. Dety Bozzi and Luisa Così (Rome, 1988), 153–211; *eadem*, 'Leonardo Vinci operista autore di cantate', *Studi in onore di Giulio Cattin*, ed. Francesco Luisi (Rome, 1990), 307–29.

¹⁰ Arnaldo Morelli, 'Seventeenth-Century Roman Cantata Manuscripts as a Source for a Material History', *Musical Text as Ritual Object*, ed. Hendrik Schulze (Turnhout, 2015), 191–8.

¹¹ Renata Ago, *Il gusto delle cose: Una storia degli oggetti nella Roma del Seicento* (Rome, 2006), trans. as *Gusto for Things: A History of Objects in Seventeenth-Century Rome*, trans. Bradford Bouley and Corey Tazzara with Paula Findlen (Chicago, IL, 2013), xv.

cantata 'da camera', but also including the spiritual cantata 'da oratorio', the genre of *academia per musica* and the large-scale serenata.

As early as the 1980s, Margaret Murata directed our attention to the material characteristics of cantata manuscripts, examining typologies of their formats and clarifying some important aspects of their purpose and function.¹² In particular, she observed how the repertory communicated through manuscripts 'does not resemble either the printed anthologies of early 17th-century composers or Schmitz' 19th-century notion of a "monumentum" to a composer or genre'.¹³ A closer scrutiny of manuscript sources has permitted us to identify anthologies compiled for the use of amateurs, collectors and professional singers, such as, for example, the well-known manuscripts of the singer Marcantonio Pasqualini¹⁴ and two manuscripts belonging respectively to a 'Cecilia, *musica*' (a Roman soprano who sang in the Venetian theatres in the 1640s)¹⁵ and to the Florentine bass Ippolito Fusai.¹⁶

Recent research has illustrated how the output of the principal composers active in Rome contributed in a decisive manner to the dissemination of the seventeenth-century cantata.¹⁷

¹² Margaret Murata, 'Roman Cantata Scores as Traces of Musical Culture and Signs of its Place in Society', *Atti del XIV Congresso della Società Internazionale di Musicologia: Trasmissione e ricezione delle forme di cultura musicale: Bologna, 27 agosto–1° settembre 1987, Ferrara–Parma, 30 agosto 1987*, ed. Angelo Pompilio *et al.*, 3 vols. (Turin, 1990), i, 272–84. Also to be noted is Claudio Annibaldi's research on Rome, Archivio Doria-Pamphilj, MS 51: 'L'archivio musicale Doria-Pamphilj: Saggio sulla cultura aristocratica a Roma fra 16° e 19° secolo (II)', *Studi musicali*, 11 (1982), 300–4.

¹³ Murata, 'Roman Cantata Scores', 272.

¹⁴ Margaret Murata, *Thematic Catalogue of Chamber Cantatas by Marc'Antonio Pasqualini*, *Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music: Instrumenta*, 3 (forthcoming).

¹⁵ Arnaldo Morelli, 'Una cantante del Seicento e le sue carte di musica: Il "Libro della signora Cecilia"', *'Vanitatis fuga, aeternitatis amor': Wolfgang Witzemann zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Sabine Ehrmann-Herfort and Markus Engelhardt (Laaber, 2005), 307–27.

¹⁶ Teresa M. Gialdroni, 'Dalla Biblioteca Comunale di Urbania: Due raccolte musicali per un interprete', *Aprosiana: Rivista annuale di studi barocchi*, n.s., 16 (2008), 112–32.

¹⁷ Paola Besutti, 'Produzione e trasmissione di cantate romane nel mezzo del Seicento', *La musica a Roma attraverso le fonti d'archivio: Atti del convegno internazionale, Roma 4–7 giugno 1992*, ed. Bianca Maria Antolini, Arnaldo Morelli and Vera Vita Spagnuolo (Lucca, 1994), 137–66; Arnaldo Morelli, "'Perché non vanno per le mani di molti...": La cantata romana del pieno Seicento: Questioni di trasmissione e di funzione', *Musica e drammaturgia a Roma al tempo di Carissimi*, ed. Paolo Russo (Venice and Parma, 2006), 21–39; Alessio Ruffatti, "'Curiosi e bramosi l'oltramontani cercano con grande diligenza in tutti i luoghi": La cantata romana del Seicento in Europa', *Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music*, 13 (2007), <<http://sscm-jscm.org/v13/no1/ruffatti.html>> (accessed 31 December 2015); Margaret Murata, 'A Topography of the Barberini Music Manuscripts', *I Barberini e la cultura europea del Seicento: Atti del convegno internazionale (Roma, 7–11 dicembre 2004)*, ed. Francesco Solinas, Lorenza Mochi Onori and Sebastian Schütze (Rome, 2007), 375–80; Arnaldo Morelli, 'Per una storia materiale della cantata: Considerazioni sulle fonti manoscritte romane', *Francesco Buti tra Roma e Parigi: Diplomazia, poesia, teatro: Atti del convegno di studi (Parma 12–15 dicembre 2007)*, ed. Francesco Luisi (Rome, 2009), 381–94; Christine Jeanneret, "'Armoniose penne": Per uno studio filologico sulle opere dei copisti di cantate romane (1640–1680)', *ibid.*, 395–414; Morelli, 'Seventeenth-Century Roman Cantata Manuscripts'; Alessio Ruffatti, 'French Sources of Roman Cantatas: The European Dissemination', *Musical Text as Ritual Object*, ed. Schulze, 59–72; Christine Jeanneret, 'The Roman Cantata Manuscripts (1640–1680): A Musical Cabinet of Curiosities', *ibid.*, 73–90; Margaret Murata, 'The Score on the Shelf: Valuing the Anonymous and Unheard', *ibid.*, 199–212.

In particular, this music circulated for the most part in the form of manuscripts produced by professional copyists. We find recurring characteristics, such as a typical oblong format (90/100 × 270/280 mm); watermarks; and luxury designs in gold embossed on parchment or morocco leather covers. But the most surprising aspect is that the number of professional hands that occur in Roman manuscripts is relatively few, and in many cases they are readily recognizable. Receipts that copyists wrote out in order to be paid and then signed themselves on payment have allowed us to individuate their names and to associate them with the fascicles and cantata collections that have come down to us.¹⁸ Archival research has also allowed us to establish to a reasonable extent the years in which these copyists were active, thereby offering a valuable contribution towards a more secure dating of the manuscripts. We know, for example, that Cardinal Flavio Chigi employed in sequence the copyists Giorgio Lottico (1657–9), Antonio Chiusi (1659–66), Bernardino Terenzi (1668–70) and Vincenzo Paoletti (1676–7);¹⁹ while serving Cardinal Benedetto Pamphilj in the years 1670–90 were the copyists Tarquinio Lanciani and Giovanni Pertica.²⁰

A deeper familiarity with copyists and the environments in which they offered their services provides useful elements for consideration as we confront problems of dating and the authorship of the cantatas. In fact, copyists in general worked in the service of single patrons, and thus found themselves collaborating with the musicians in their patrons' entourages. Giovanni Antelli is a case in point. He was copyist to the Borghese family for at least 20 years, from 1674 to 1695 – the same years in which Pasquini was in their service.²¹ With the title 'copista di casa' (house copyist), Antelli maintained a tight relationship with the composer; Pasquini in fact signed all the invoices for copying that Antelli presented to the Borghese prince. The collaboration between copyist and composer was so close that in one copying bill presented to Cardinal Pamphilj, Antelli was explicitly mentioned as the 'copyist of signor Bernardo Pasquini'.²² Also indicative is the fact that when Antelli worked on other commissions – for example, on jobs for Pietro Ottoboni, Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna and Flavio Chigi – he almost always copied pieces by Pasquini.²³ Many of the works by Pasquini that have survived exist in

¹⁸ Morelli, "Perché non vanno per le mani di molti..."; Ruffatti, "Curiosi e bramosi"; Jeanneret, "Armoniose penna". In the volume under review, Nigito offers a number of facsimile images of copyists' receipts and music.

¹⁹ Jean Lionnet, 'Les activités musicales de Flavio Chigi, neveu de Alessandro VII', *Studi musicali*, 9 (1980), 287–302 (pp. 290, 292–3, 297–302). The fact that the succession of copyists in the service of Cardinal Chigi does not present overlaps in time seems to confirm that he employed only one 'in-house' copyist at a time.

²⁰ Hans Joachim Marx, 'Die "Giustificazioni della casa Pamphilj" als musikgeschichtliche Quelle', *Studi musicali*, 12 (1983), 121–87 (pp. 142–68).

²¹ Fabrizio Della Seta, 'I Borghese (1691–1731): La musica di una generazione', *Note d'archivio per la storia musicale*, n.s., 1 (1983), 139–208 (pp. 154–9); Morelli, "Perché non vanno per le mani di molti..."; 24–5 and 36 note 19. For an analytical study of the accounts of Antelli, see Arnaldo Morelli, 'La musica vocale in casa Borghese fra Sei e Settecento: Contesti, produzione e consumo', *Die italienische Kantate im Kontext aristokratischer Musikpatronage*, ed. Berthold Over (Kassel, forthcoming).

²² Marx, 'Die "Giustificazioni della casa Pamphilj"', 146; Nigito, 'Introduzione' to *Bernardo Pasquini: Le cantate*, i–clxv (p. xli).

²³ See Hans Joachim Marx, 'Die Musik am Hofe Pietro Kardinal Ottobonis unter Arcangelo Corelli', *Studien zur italienisch-deutschen Musikgeschichte V*, ed. Friedrich Lippman (Cologne and Graz, 1968), 104–77 (p. 132); Elena Tamburini, *Due teatri per il principe: Studi sulla committenza teatrale di Lorenzo*

multiple manuscripts copied by Antelli, whose hand is readily recognizable for its elegance and its neatness, in comparison with those of his Roman colleagues.²⁴ In the absence of autograph scores, it is reasonable to assume that copies of Pasquini's music in Antelli's hand should be considered as important and reliable exemplars of the composer's work. Naturally, the same reasoning could be tested for the music of other composers who were in the service of their respective patrons, as mentioned above.

In general, the manuscripts of Roman cantatas seem to radiate from a few qualified copyist workshops. Nonetheless, copyists should not be considered responsible for the direct dissemination of cantatas, operas and oratorios, for they did not act autonomously, but rather at the order of a few patrons, presumably of aristocratic rank, who had effective control over the repertory produced by the musicians in their entourages. The documents indeed show us that these nobles habitually resorted to their 'house copyists', to whom fell the task of preparing copies of music either for the needs of the patron's court or for him to send as precious gifts of homage to satisfy the requests of others. Invoices and receipts in fact reveal that sometimes the same cantata would be copied two or three times and sent as gifts to different individuals of high standing.²⁵

Only later, towards the end of the Seicento and in the early part of Settecento, did Roman cantatas – even those of composers like Luigi Rossi or Carissimi, by then consecrated as the true *classici auctores* of the genre – circulate in copies gathered by music-lovers in various European countries beyond Italy, such as France and England. As Alessio Ruffatti has suggested, 'The production of these sources, often realized with exquisite workmanship, was stimulated by the European diffusion of Roman vocal music, that of Luigi Rossi and Giacomo Carissimi being the most prominent.'²⁶ If this was so for the circulation of cantatas in north European countries, we must also recognize that within the network of relations between Rome and other Italian centres the elegant cantata manuscript constituted a precious object or an exclusive gift. For the individual who owned it, a manuscript volume of cantatas represented a connection to the highest circles of the Roman court, at that time seen as the most important in Italy.

Returning to the object of this review, we must first observe that the corpus gathered by Nigito extends beyond a strict definition of the so-called cantata da camera, since it includes cantatas for the oratory and for academies, and even one serenata. Her edition of Pasquini's cantatas encompasses 73 compositions, of which 50 are scored for voice and basso continuo (41 of them for soprano); 5 for two or three voices with continuo; and 4 for one or two voices with instruments. Included also are incomplete, doubtful or spurious cantatas. The transcriptions take up 764 pages of a weighty and unwieldy volume of more than a thousand pages. In this impressive project – conceived as a master's thesis at the University of Pavia-Cremona and gestated over a period of at least 15 years – Nigito has applied primarily the methods of traditional textual and musical philology. Above all, the edition offers a complete catalogue of Pasquini's cantatas, filling in after 40 years a glaring hole left by the cessation of the Wellesley Edition Cantata Index Series. Nigito helpfully includes detailed and comprehensive

Onofrio Colonna (1659–1689) (Rome, 1997), 153, 472; Frank D'Accone, 'Cardinal Chigi and Music Redux', *Music Observed: Studies in Memory of William C. Holmes*, ed. Colleen Reardon and Susan Parisi (Warren, MI, 2004), 65–100 (pp. 70, 74, 82, 86–7).

²⁴ For a list of these manuscripts, see Nigito, 'Introduzione', xlii–xliii.

²⁵ Morelli, "Perché non vanno per le mani di molti ...", 24–5.

²⁶ Ruffatti, "Curiosi e bramosi", abstract.

descriptions of the sources which facilitate the user's understanding of the provenance and dating of particular exemplars. Confronting problems in relation to the sources and the work of their copyists, the editor seems for the most part to have taken into account the most recent research on the cantata, to which I shall return later. One section of Nigito's ample introduction is in fact dedicated to the principal sources of Pasquini's cantatas, such as those in the Santini Sammlung in Münster and the Estense collection in Modena.

In addition, Nigito pays particular attention to the copyists; their hands are tracked down and identified for copies not only of cantatas but also of operas and oratorios. On the one hand, we find Roman copyists like Antelli, Pertica, Paolo Lisi and Lanciani, who worked for the princes Giovanni Battista and Marcantonio Borghese and for the cardinals Pamphilj and Ottoboni; on the other hand, copyists who were in service at the court of Modena have been identified thanks to autograph receipts in the Archivio Estense. In copyists' accounts, such as those from the archives of the Borgheses and Pamphilj, the copied items are listed by text incipit. This offered Nigito a means of hypothesizing *termini ante quem* for the composition of some of the cantatas. Apropos of this, however, and contrary to what Nigito surmises, to Pasquini should be assigned the (lost) music for the *Introduzione musicale per una caccia da farsi alla delitiosissima villa Versaglia dell'e.mo Chigi agl'ecc.mi principe e principessa Doria con intervento d'altre dame e cavalieri l'anno 1677 alli 17 di marzo*²⁷ ('Vaghi fiori, pompe de' prati'), to poetry by Giovanni Filippo Apolloni, for which we have only a manuscript libretto.²⁸ The origin of this cantata for four voices with instruments, performed at Cardinal Flavio Chigi's villa La Versaglia in Formello, near Rome, is confirmed by payments to Pasquini as 'composer of the music', in addition to payments to singers, instrumentalists, the harpsichord technician – and the copyist Antelli.²⁹

Nigito's edition of the music is accompanied by a critical edition of the texts, which are compared when possible with manuscript or printed sources of the poems, even for the lost compositions. Her analysis of these texts concentrates on common aspects of the forms and prosody for music of the era, even when from several comparisons it seems evident that composers adapted their texts with a certain amount of flexibility with respect to the musical forms then in vogue. In a few cases, Nigito has succeeded in finding authors for Pasquini's cantatas: she found *Arse gran tempo*, *Dove Flora gentile* and *Parmi o Lidio crudele* in a manuscript collection of poems entitled *Cantate per musica a voce sola* by the poet Francesco Maria Paglia,³⁰ while among the poems of Apolloni occur the texts of the cantatas *Se il pentirsi d'amor*, *Tu parti alle delizie*, *D'un monte alle radici* and *Al tramontar del giorno*.³¹ And, finally, *Narciso al fonte* ('Il nemico d'Amore delle selve tiranno') is one of the manuscript 'cantatas and odes' by Pamphilj.³² In her study of the texts, Nigito tends to classify them on the basis of historical-literary or historical-musical treatises of the early eighteenth century, such as those

²⁷ 'Musical introduction for a hunt to take place at the most delightful villa Versaglia of the Most Eminent [Cardinal] Chigi for the Most Excellent Prince and Princess Doria, with the participation of other ladies and knights, in the year 1677 on 17 March'.

²⁸ Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (hereafter BAV), Fondo Chigi I.VII.273, fols. 12r–17v; see Giorgio Morelli, 'L'Apolloni librettista di Cesti, Stradella e Pasquini', *Chigiana*, 39 (1982), 211–64 (p. 252).

²⁹ Frank D'Accone, 'Cardinal Chigi and Music Redux', 70, 85–7.

³⁰ BAV, Vat. lat. 10204. In the same collection can also be found the texts of two further lost cantatas by Pasquini; see Nigito, 'Introduzione', lxi.

³¹ Nigito, 'Introduzione', lxvi, cvi–cvii.

³² *Ibid.*, cvi.

of Crescimbeni or Brossard, following the precedent of Carolyn Gianturco.³³ From a socio-anthropological point of view (as Roger Freitas has observed), the texts sometimes show us how the consumption of cantatas was part of civil *conversazione*, with their customary appreciation of cleverness and wit.³⁴

Indeed, in these cases the cantata texts are modelled on forms that recall subjects and formats of academic discussions. Pasquini provides an example in his cantata *La bellezza d'un semblante*, whose lines recall an academic discussion of moral character, though in miniature. It focuses on the subject of where feminine beauty lies. After all the hypotheses (the face, the hands, the eyes) are confuted, the text concludes that earthly beauty is only an ephemeral manifestation in comparison with a higher and immortal beauty. Academic settings might also have been the purpose of moral cantatas on historical subjects, such as Pasquini's *Germanico* ('Agrippina, compagni, io moro'), *La Didone: La regina spogliata dell'onore* ('Sovra un'accesa pira') and *Lombra di Solimano* ('Era risorta invano'), the last with a clear reference to the 1686 Siege of Buda. These compositions, dramatic in nature but not theatrical, perfectly exemplify the dramaturgic differences between cantata and opera, in the sense indicated by Hendrik Schulze in his recent case study of the solo cantatas of Giovanni Legrenzi.³⁵ Also, the singular cantata for four voices with instruments *Erminia in riva al Giordano*, a work of ample proportions (over a thousand bars), was probably destined for an academic gathering offered by Pamphilj, who may have been the author of the text, given that the expense of its copying appears in the young Roman prelate's accounts for 1672.³⁶

The cantatas for two voices *Crudel che dal core* and *Crudo globo d'orrori funesti* present a dramatic rather than a narrative character, not so much because the parts bear names of characters, but because they make one think – especially in the second case – of scenes extrapolated from a *dramma per musica*.³⁷ It is possible that some cantatas of this type might have served as theatrical intermedii. We know, in fact, that Pasquini collaborated on plays staged during Carnival at the Palazzo Borghese.³⁸ Following the custom of the time, the spoken scenes were interspersed with ample musical insertions, such as prologues, intermedii, epilogues and scenes of singing and dancing, which at times appear in the librettos or in the accounts of the music copyist. Pasquini, furthermore, often received payments to distribute to the singers

³³ Carolyn Gianturco, 'The Italian Seventeenth-Century Cantata: A Textual Approach', *The Well-Enchanting Skill: Music, Poetry, and Drama in the Culture of the Renaissance: Essays in Honour of F. W. Sternfeld*, ed. John Caldwell, Edward Olleson and Susan Wollenberg (Oxford, 1990), 41–51; *eadem*, "'Cantate spirituali e morali"', with a Description of the Papal Sacred Cantata Tradition for Christmas 1676–1740', *Music and Letters*, 73 (1992), 1–31.

³⁴ Roger Freitas, 'Singing and Playing: The Italian Cantata and the Rage for Wit', *Music and Letters*, 82 (2001), 509–42 (pp. 512–19).

³⁵ Hendrik Schulze, 'Narration, Mimesis and the Question of Genre: Dramatic Approaches in Giovanni Legrenzi's Solo Cantatas Opp. 12 and 14', *Aspects of the Secular Cantata in Late Baroque Italy*, ed. Michael Talbot (Farnham, 2009), 54–77.

³⁶ Nigito, 'Introduzione', xlii.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, cxxix–cxxx.

³⁸ Arnaldo Morelli, 'Un modello di committenza musicale, i: Borghese nella seconda metà del Seicento', *Musikstadt Rom: Geschichte, Forschung, Perspektiven: 'Rom – die ewige Stadt im Brennpunkt der aktuellen musikwissenschaftlichen Forschung' am Deutschen Historischen Institut in Rom*, 28.–30. September 2004, ed. Markus Engelhardt (Kassel, 2011), 204–17 (pp. 209–10).

and instrumentalists engaged for these occasions, and one can presume that he himself would have composed the music for these plays. This is indirectly confirmed by a letter of 1678, in which Filippo Cesarini, the duke of Civitanova, asked Prince Giovanni Battista Borghese for 'two intermedij in music by Sig.r Bernardo Pasquini, from among those, however, that he holds of little account'; Cesarini wanted to insert them in some plays that he intended to stage in Spoleto, where he was governor.³⁹

In fact, the range of cantatas as objects of consumption is broader and more articulated than we can imagine. The sources often show a mix of different types. In the manuscript collections we find cantatas on amorous or gallant themes, as well as moral, sacred, spiritual, historical, laudatory and humorous texts. These are the same categories that poets used to organize their works in both manuscript and printed anthologies of the time. Seventeenth-century vocal music, in fact, like the poetry from which it springs, accommodates its style and tone to the different kinds of occasion for which it was commissioned and performed. From a musical point of view, if we consider the cantatas intended to accompany ritual or devotional actions we can perceive a notable difference in style in comparison with the secular cantatas. Two spiritual cantatas – *Or ch' in ciel fra densi orrori* and *Padre Signore e Dio*, for two voices (soprano and bass), two violins and basso continuo, both with texts that seem appropriate for the rites of Holy Week – provide excellent examples.⁴⁰ It is highly likely that both were destined for the devotions held regularly in the chapel of the Palazzo Borghese during Holy Week.⁴¹ Owing to the attention paid to the texts, the musical style of these spiritual cantatas suggests the chamber rather than the theatre (in the sense that Marco Scacchi formulated this distinction),⁴² a style rooted in the madrigal (a genre whose maturation in Rome was late but extraordinary). The two cantatas have recitatives with strong dramatic effects and polyphonic passages in an oratorio style, typically crafted in madrigal style. As in several of Pasquini's oratorios, such as *Caino e Abele* and *La sete di Cristo*, the poetic images are rendered in these spiritual cantatas by musical writing that is dense and exuberant, deployed in a manner that does not always follow the schematic procedure of recitative and aria. Nigito has also included in the corpus of these cantatas two Latin motets. Although they were destined for a different context, their musico-poetic structures in fact resemble the cantatas.

Completely extraneous to the context of both the chamber and the spiritual cantatas is another large-scale composition: the *Applauso musicale a 5 voci per il giorno festivo della chiarissima reale maestà di Maria Luigia*, included in a miscellaneous section entitled 'Festive Cantatas'.⁴³ The *Applauso*, a grand serenata for voices and instruments, is probably the one performed in the Piazza di Spagna in Rome on 25 August 1687 at the behest of Luís Francisco

³⁹ 'Dui intermedij in musica del sig.re Bernardo Pasquini, di quelli però che lui non tiene conto nessuno'; *ibid.*, 209.

⁴⁰ Nigito, 'Introduzione', xlvi. Both cantatas appear on the CD *Passion Cantatas* (Capella Tiberina, dir. Giovanni Caruso; Brilliant Classics, 2012).

⁴¹ Morelli, 'Un modello di committenza musicale, i', 208–9, 215–17.

⁴² Marco Scacchi, *Cribrum musicum ad triticum siferticum* (Venice, 1643); *idem*, *Breve discorso sopra la musica moderna* (Warsaw, 1649). See Lorenzo Bianconi, *Music in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. David Bryant (Cambridge, 1987), 48.

⁴³ Thomas Griffin, 'Alessandro Scarlatti e la serenata a Roma e a Napoli', *La musica a Napoli durante il Seicento*, ed. D'Alessandro and Ziino, 351–65 (p. 356). The score of the *Applauso* is I-Fc D.2359; the cast consists of Il Sole, La Bellezza, Pallade, Il Tempo and Il Destino.

de la Cerda, *marchese* of Cogolludo (later the duke of Medinaceli and viceroy of Naples), who was at the time the Spanish ambassador to the Holy See. It demands a high level of virtuosity from both singers and instrumentalists, a level rarely required in other compositions by Pasquini, and which one finds elsewhere only in his later opera *La caduta del regno delle Amazzoni*, staged in 1690 in the Teatro Colonna in Rome and commissioned by the same Spanish ambassador.⁴⁴

In the long introduction to the volume, Nigito addresses a pair of issues that in different ways relate to performance practice: the instruments in the Borghese household between 1652 and 1683 on the one hand, and basso continuo in Rome in the second half of the seventeenth century on the other. In neither case, however, does she specifically tie these issues to Pasquini's cantatas or to the possible ways of performing them which emerge from examination of the sources. With respect to the instruments, for instance, she advances no organological hypotheses about a unique item, a 'harpsichord with *piano* and *forte*' owned by the Borgheses. The rarity of this instrument, regularly maintained and used in the time that Pasquini served this family, could perhaps have prompted some investigation into its possible role in the performance of the cantatas or indeed in any other musical genres.⁴⁵ In the same way, Nigito offers no hypotheses about the use of harps, arclutes and guitars, all of which are mentioned in the account books in the Borghese archives, even though the relevant entries are transcribed in the appendix to the chapter.

The four pages dedicated to the basso continuo are in reality focused on the question of how to realize acciaccaturas and mordents in Pasquini's scores, especially since these two improvised ornaments were not indicated by notated symbols. To this end, Nigito draws on well-known printed treatises, such as the *Armonico pratico al cimbalo* (1708) of Francesco Gasparini, the *Lettera familiare* (c.1716) of Benedetto Marcello and the much later *Treatise of Good Taste* (1749) and *The Art of Accompaniment* ([c.1753–4]) by Francesco Geminiani. She also refers to other anonymous eighteenth-century manuscripts, but says nothing about their dating, provenance and possible authors. As Marcello testifies in his *Lettera familiare*, Pasquini did not make a distinction between the terms 'acciaccatura' and 'mordente', effects which 'served to suspend the ear somewhat' and which were not to be judged by the rules of counterpoint.⁴⁶ Rereading a well-known passage of Marcello's pamphlet, Nigito then observes how Gasparini

⁴⁴ José María Domínguez, 'Mecenazgo musical del IX Duque de Medinaceli: Roma–Nápoles–Madrid, 1687–1710', 2 vols. (Ph.D. dissertation, Universidad Complutense, Madrid, 2010), i, 87–8; published as *Roma, Nápoles, Madrid: Mecenazgo musical del duque de Medinaceli, 1687–1710* (Kassel, 2013). A recent discussion of the opera, with musical examples and scene designs, is in Andrea Garavaglia, *Il mito delle Amazzoni nell'opera barocca italiana* (Milan, 2015), 183–98.

⁴⁵ Some hypotheses on the typology of the instrument were advanced in my 'Storia della cembalaria e tipologia della documentazione: Alcuni esempi', *Fiori musicologici: Studi in onore di Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini nella ricorrenza del suo LXX compleanno*, ed. François Seydoux, Giuliano Castellani and Axel Leuthold (Bologna, 2001), 379–96 (pp. 389–90), and in Patrizio Barbieri, 'I cembalari della Roma di Bernardo Pasquini: Un censimento, con aggiornamenti sui loro strumenti', *Pasquini Symposium: Atti del convegno internazionale (Smarano, 27–30 May 2010)*, ed. Armando Carideo (Trent, 2012), 139–53 (p. 148).

⁴⁶ 'Servivano per tener alquanto sospeso l'orecchio'; Benedetto Marcello, *Lettera familiare d'un accademico filarmonico et arcade, discorsiva sopra un libro di duetti, terzetti e madrigali a più voci stampato in Venezia da Antonio Bortoli l'anno 1705* ([Venice], c.1716), 45.

and Pasquini accorded different meanings to the term 'acciaccatura'. This is demonstrated by the acciaccatura examples that Marcello's *Lettera* illustrates, which are passages for solo voice by Carlo Ambrogio Lonati, Pier Simone Agostini and Pasquini himself. Of the latter Marcello cites two excerpts from the cantatas *Filli che sempre fu l'anima mia* and *Un dì soletto Eliso*, and from a 'toccata for harpsichord' given to him by the composer himself, which significantly is notated in score and not in tablature.⁴⁷ Nigito then adds a final example of acciaccatura taken from the cantata *Placatevi un dì*, which one deduces by the figure 5–3♯–4 indicated twice above a dominant chord (bars 65 and 87).⁴⁸ Curiously, however, she does not place this figure in the edition of the cantata itself; the reader-performer has to hunt it down in the dense forest of critical notes, printed in a font size that could not have been tinier. Apart from these minimal reservations, Nigito will be well recognized for this impressive work, which offers a contribution of fundamental importance not only for the music of Pasquini, but also more generally for the seventeenth-century Italian cantata and its poetry for music.

Translated by Margaret Murata

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 50–2.

⁴⁸ Nigito, 'Introduzione', lxxxvii–lxxxviii.