

The Courtesan's Voice

*Petrarchan Lovers, Pop Philosophy,
and Oral Traditions*

COURTING MUSIC

Like the *donna angelicata* (the revered woman) of Petrarch's lyric canon, so immensely popular in the sixteenth century, courtesans were often reproached by abject lovers but also venerated by them. A painting by Parrasio Michel of ca. 1560 (fig. 4.1) condenses this double status of the courtesan by presenting her in a performative guise. She gazes heavenward as she sings to the lute but with breasts exposed and is attended by a secularized Cupid who stands in as both son of Venus (herself a stand-in for the courtesan) and the Roman God of Love deployed so prolifically in sacred and secular images.

As the site of this doubleness, the courtesan was also the quintessential object of a generalized male way of encountering women. In Petrarchan glosses she was the lyric obsession that marked the poet's lost youth, his sweet error, the cause of his tears and singing and his loss of reason. But more often than other women, she could suffer when the balance tipped toward viewing her as the cruel, unattainable lady. When that happened her reputation could be put on the line. And as a woman who conversed and sang when other women often could not, her voice then became the locus of an irresolvable paradox—madonna or a whore, lady or harlot? Small wonder, then, that as the voice was increasingly added to the courtesans' wares in the sixteenth century, the female voice became a general blazon of courtesan-like disrepute—the more so as singing styles increasingly favored solo virtuosity. By the 1540s, when reactionary religious leanings had intensified debates about female propriety, "singing" itself became a watchword for female impropriety, something from which courtesans' uses of courtly singing could profit but which could also damn them, and exclude them from legitimate social life.¹ Thus, for example, where the humanist Pietro Bembo exalted the place of singing for women as well as for men in his 1505 dialogue on love *Gli asolani*, in 1541 he admonished his teenage daughter not to play a musical instrument, since doing so was "a thing for vain and frivolous women."² No longer was it clear by the mid-sixteenth century whether courtesans



FIGURE 4.1. Courtesan with lute, oil painting by Parassio Michel.
Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest

might sing as beautifully as noblewomen, or whether “honest” women who sang turned into courtesans.

The mercurial place of singing in female self-production and reception of the time has long bewildered scholars. Further on in this volume Bonnie Gordon shows that the popular tradition of sixteenth-century love treatises aggravated confusions over courtesans' singing in their own day, since love was conceived as spiritually uplifting yet threatening to self and society. Bembo's own dialogue on love, which initiated the tradition, spells out the dilemma. Staged during a wedding at the court of the ex-Cypriot queen Caterina Cornaro at Asolo, the queen's ladies-in-waiting charm their guests with song, then join conversations among those who dispute the Neoplatonic musical theories of Marsilio Ficino. Love emerges as the desire for beauty, and beauty in turn as a grace that results from harmony: the better proportioned the parts of the body or the virtues of the soul, the more beautiful each may

be. Access to bodily beauty is given mainly through sight, whereas access to the beauty of the soul is attained solely through hearing. As the soul reawakens to its divine origins, music becomes a means of ascent to God,³ valorized for its power to enrapture the soul.⁴

But the dialogue soon turns to a more worldly mood, even while invoking the Neoplatonic notion of sympathetic vibrations: when two lutes are well tuned and one of them is plucked, the other lute will immediately respond at pitch. The same thing happens to two loving souls who make sweet matching harmonies, even when distant from one another.⁵

As Bembo's fusion of music and eros was propelled through a veritable explosion of vernacular writings on love, language, music, and beauty issued in the second quarter of the sixteenth century, tensions between the spiritual and the worldly became their chief burden. Popularly the claim was still that music was a medium of love and the lover one who had to be skilled in music,⁶ with loftier Neoplatonic philosophy linking the faculty of hearing with the spiritual side of love. It was de rigueur at mid-century to spiritualize love in popular love dialogues like Giuseppe Betussi's *Il raverta* (Venice 1544). Yet inevitably the ambivalent nexus between love and music was unloosed, as the two slipped perilously from spirit to body and back. Along that continuum, Betussi, for example, proposed a series of gradations from intellectual love wholly devoid of sensuality to corporeal love devoid of intellect, even as, paradoxically, he glossed them as "the two Venuses."⁷ Between these poles, Betussi imagined female protagonists—emblematic of courtesans—who figured radical cosmic stretches from immaterial to material, spiritual to physical. The same divide marked Bernardino Tomitano's *Ragionamenti della lingua toscana* (Conversations on the Tuscan Tongue) (Venice, 1545), which personified music and verse as "a most sweet procuress who, with the enticements of her sweetnesses, lures the soul into that happiness with the state of loving an unknown ('un non so che')."⁸ When beautifully sung, poetry was a female "temptress" ("lusinghiera"), he added, furtively gathering souls for some spectral place in a world beyond.

At stake in these discourses was less how music inflected the status of love than how it inflected the status of lovers. Love theories generally made music an asset to lovers, even as it made the practice of making music a liability for women. Not surprisingly, therefore, the single dialogue on love written by a woman, Tullia d'Aragona's *Dialogo della infinità d'amore* (Dialogue on the Infinity of Love) (Venice, 1547), effaced music altogether—along with her own status as a courtesan—when it went about comparing the virtues of spiritual and mundane love.⁹ Significantly, the *Dialogo* did much to help legitimize her intellectual standing, not least by using the famed Florentine literato Benedetto Varchi as her foil but also by appropriating his Aristotelian discourse on love and reshaping it to fashion her own virtuosic apologia endorsing physical love. "Virtuous love," she wrote, could encompass physical as well as spiritual love because humans, being made of intellect and matter, needed both kinds.

Tullia d'Aragona's total omission of music in a work that defends physical love is striking given that she herself was a poet, lutenist, and singer, and owned a considerable library of music books, in addition to her many books in Italian and Latin.¹⁰ According to an admirer at the Ferrarese court, her sight-reading of music was proficient

enough that she could “sing from the book any motet or chanson,”¹¹ and as she played the lute, she surely accompanied her own verse in monodic arrangements too. But her music, like that of other women of her time, could be met with distrust. She had been publicly excoriated for accompanying elderly clients, who danced barefoot the *rosina* and *pavana* to the tune of her lute.¹² At a chilly moment in her *Dialogo* Tullia tells Varchi that he’s trying to “slip out of the argument, get away, and pay [her] with a song.”¹³

If song was a useful currency in Tullia’s own trade, it was just as useful for beating Varchi at his own game. For song was cheap and dangerous from the Aristotelian heights of Varchi’s argument, not least in the nervous Counter-Reformational climate (so-called) of the 1540s. Polyphonic singing was deemed less dangerous for women than solo singing because it regulated the rhythmic pacing of declamation, made lavish ornamentation musically harder to incorporate and easier to put under metrical controls, and in general discouraged excessive ostentation by virtue of collective delivery. But even polyphonic singing and lute-playing could be seen as risky. When Bembo admonished his daughter not to play a musical instrument, only eight years had passed since the brilliant, notorious Pietro Aretino published his vituperative satire on prostitutes, *I ragionamenti* of 1533, and invective literature was flooding from Venetian presses.¹⁴ Indeed in his first book of letters published in 1537 Aretino declared that “the sounds, songs, and letters that women know are the keys that open the doors to their modesty.”¹⁵ Even more blunt were several satiric verses addressed some years later by the poet and music-lover Girolamo Fenaruolo to Adrian Willaert, choir master of St. Mark’s: “Never is there found a woman so rare nor so chaste that if she were to sing she would not soon become a whore.”¹⁶

This demotion of song to a tool of self-display makes a striking contrast to Castiglione’s humanistic endorsement of song for courtiers and court ladies in 1528. But by the 1540s fashions for solo song had traveled from the northern Italian courts to the salons of mercantile cities where they were no longer festishized in print as they had been in the early part of the century. When the venal polygraph Antonfrancesco Doni (an Aretino knock-off) wrote in his *Dialogo della musica* (Venice, 1544) about his first encounter with the salons of Venice, he had seven male interlocutors adorning with conversation and music the society of a woman named Selvaggia, ambiguously presented as an urbane courtesan or a courtly libertine woman. “Honored” and “indebted,” as she calls herself in courtly rhetoric, Selvaggia thrives among men who praise, adore, and sing with her. At last they serenade her with four solo monodies accompanied by the “lyre” (*lira*) on sonnets whose music is unwritten, unlike all the other music in the *Dialogo*.

THE COURTESAN'S SONG

At issue in all of this is women’s self-display in unwritten solo song. Such singing and playing went on primarily in the cultured salons where women—some, or perhaps most, courtesans—were typically admitted for their poetic prowess, complemented with singing to their own accompaniment.¹⁷ The Venetian academist Domenico Venier rhapsodized about an otherwise little-known singer named Franceschina Bel-

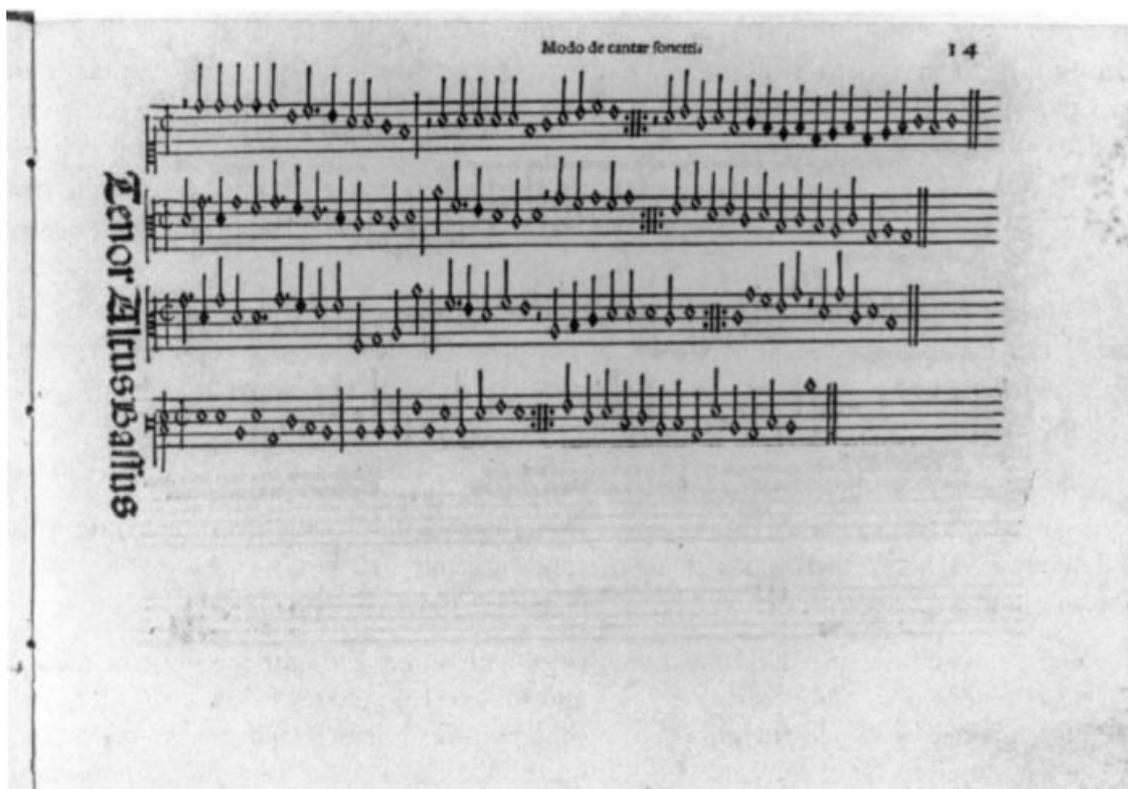


FIGURE 4.2. Ottaviano Petrucci, “Modo de cantar sonetti.”
Libro quarto de frottole (Venice, 1505).

lamano, making her hand into a metonym for her song: “With various words, now this, now that string / Does the lovely hand [“la bella mano”] touch on the hollow wood, / Miraculously tuning her song to its sound” (no. 68, vv. 9–11).¹⁸ And virtually all the other women who make an appearance at Venier’s prestigious salon were singers too.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the singing of courtesans and other soloists utilized melodic formulas that were committed to memory and performed over chord or bass patterns.¹⁹ Examples of these oral practices survive in some of the frottola books printed by Ottaviano Petrucci between 1504 and 1514, books of vernacular songs in three- or usually four-voice format, and explicitly so in Book 4 of 1505 (undated but dateable), which printed different “modi” (“modes” or “melodies”) for particular poetic forms.²⁰ Figure 4.2 shows in facsimile the “modo de cantar sonetti” (mode for singing sonnets) as printed in Petrucci’s Book 4, transmitted without words since any sonnet can be sung to it.

The layout of the four voices makes it obvious that the printed format was merely the basis for whatever arrangement a given performer or group of performers would choose to make. Not only is no text given, but the parts (tenor, altus, and bassus, respectively, beneath the unnamed cantus) have no obvious means of being realized. They are nothing more than a spare three phrases each, each phrase sixteen minims long (or eight semibreves) with shared consonances and phrase endings and a repeat sign after the second phrase. Unlike the syntactic parsing of poetry in polyphonic madrigals of the 1540s, such monodies appear to have been based almost entirely

on a principle of matching poetic lines to musical phrases. That this was the case throughout the sixteenth century is suggested by prints and songs that appear well into the later sixteenth century and beyond. Seventy years after Petrucci's print was made, the Florentine lutenist Cosimo Bottegari compiled a manuscript (the "Bottegari Lutebook") including *modi* of a very similar kind (some texted and some untexted), and the same was true three years later of tunes in the Neapolitan print *Aeri raccolti* edited by Rocco Rodio.²¹

Using a combination of practical knowledge and historical fantasy, we can picture Tullia d'Aragona declaiming one of the sonnets she wrote to her mentor and lover Girolamo Muzio, a courtier, soldier, and writer at the court of Ferrara (the probable pattern of musical phrases is shown in capital letters):

A Fiamma gentil che da gl'interni lumi	Gentle flame that descends in me
B con dolce folgorar in me discendi,	from internal lights with a sweet burning,
B il mio intenso affetto lietamente prendi,	take my intense affection with joy,
C com'è usanza a tuoi santi costumi;	as you are used to doing,
A poi che con alta tua luce m'allumi	since with your great light you illumine me
B e sì soavemente il cor m'accendi,	and so sweetly ignite my heart
B ch'ardendo lieto vive e lo difendi,	that, burning, it lives happily and you defend it,
C che forza di vil foco nol consumi.	for the force of a terrible fire does not consume it.
A E con la lingua far che 'l rozo ingegno,	And with language you let my rough talent,
B caldo dal caldo tuo, cerchi inalzarsi	warmed by your ardor, seek to awaken itself
C per cantar tue virtuti in mille parti;	to sing your virtues in a thousand places.
A io spero ancor a l'età tarda farsi	I still hope in old age to make it
B noto che fosti tal, che stil più degno	known that such were you that a more worthy style
C uopo era, e che mi fu gloria l'amarti.	was needed, and that it was an honor for me to love you.

Published in her *Rime* in 1547, the sonnet weaves praise of Muzio, as the true author who taught her to write and "sing," into praise of herself as his worthy and glorious pupil.²²

Tullia claims by suggestion that his honor is hers, since it was *she* who learned to sing of his virtues, and who can therefore take the credit through her act of proclaiming them. Elaborating on the theme, she declares with all too specious modesty that the great Muzio is no common man but a "flame," "gentle" yet so overwhelming that only he can protect her from the threat of the "terrible fire" he ignites in her. But eros pales beside the fire of fame: it was his flame that gave her voice, and with it now lit, she sings to her own glory of his virtues and his love for her. This is much the way love strikes Petrarch in his famous canzone 23, "Nel dolce tempo della prima etade," which declares that Love and his lady transformed him "into what I am, turning me from a living man into a green laurel"—transformed him, that is, into a poet crowned with the laurel wreath that bestows fame on the poet laureate.²³ Yet Tullia puts the fire back in the torch of fame. Inverting directly Petrarch's last lines—"But I have certainly been a flame lit by a lovely glance and I have been the bird that rises highest in the air raising her whom in my words I honor" ("ma fui ben

EXAMPLE 4.1. Sonnet setting in frottola style by Paulo Scotti, published in 1511 in the second book of frottole for voice and lute arranged by Franciscus Bossinensis.

A

5 B

9 C

fiamma d'un bel guardo accense, et fui l'uccel che più per l'aere poggia alzando lei che ne' miei detti onoro")—she eroticizes Petrarch, claiming not just that it is her lover who has raised her to write and sing with honor, but that it was his ardor for her that motivated and thus honors her, and that will allow her to be honored (like a poet laureate) in old age. The direction of the Petrarchan urge to write is reversed here too, the man inspiring the woman (and the woman showing up the man).²⁴

In ex. 4.1 I give a simple setting by Paulo Scotti, published in 1511 in the second

book of frottole for voice and lute arranged by Franciscus Bossinensis, of Petrarch's sonnet "O tempo, o ciel involubil" (no. 355), which represents the kind of *modo* Tullia could have used to sing her own poem (replacing Petrarch's poem with hers). Highly recitational, the music, like Petrucci's "modo de cantar sonetti," is merely a skeletal starting point for the elaborated repetitions of phrases that singers turned out in performance. It could just as easily have served as a *modo* for new texts as the untexted *modo* of Petrucci did (cf. fig. 4.2). Like all other such *modi*, this one limits itself to several phrases of music that match the sonnet's two quatrains and two tercets in the pattern ABBC, ABBC, ABC, ABC.²⁵ The three phrases array themselves by step around a Dorian tonality on g that lifts off from g' to a' (phrase A), moves down to pause on f# (phrase B), and finally rises from f# back to g' (phrase C)—overall an initiating, medial, and final phrase that form together a kind of structural mordent.

Imagine Tullia offering her own sonnet in praise of her lover to the ears and hearts of fellow academists, stirring up a lather of ornaments through each successive quatrain and tercet. (See the different renderings of phrase 3, compared with Scotto's melody, at the endings of the quatrains and the sestet in ex. 4.2a–d.) At first she might have held back all but a little tugging at the cadences—some pathetic rubato here, a seductive mordent there (e.g., "costumi," which ends the first quatrain, ex. 4.2b). By the second quatrain one might suppose more extravagant diminutions, delicious runs and turns over sustained notes on phrases like "soavemente 'l cor," a trill seasoned with a turn at the cadence at "il cor m'accendi" (verse 6) and still more on the culminating "nol consumi" that ends the octave (verse 8, ex. 4.2c). Only at the end of the sonnet might there have been a really frothy surface (ex. 4.2d).²⁶

We have little idea how luxuriant the ornaments produced by female monodists (or any solo singers from the mid-sixteenth century) actually were.²⁷ Ornamented examples of polyphony and monophonic examples in ornamentation treatises of the mid- to later sixteenth century tend largely to avoid leaps in embellished passages, instead favoring scalewise "diminution" (runs and figuration). But these were largely written for students by male teachers and published for a public of amateur music-lovers. They are more prescriptive than descriptive, and steer toward normative practice over the arresting extravagance that courtesans may have ventured.

There are at least modest examples of extensive runs and leaps in written-out monodies from the early to mid-sixteenth century, suggesting that the degree of luxuriance depended on the poem sung and the self-presentation of the singer. An example from the late fifteenth- to early sixteenth-century frottola repertory is the anonymous *Ayme sospiri*, which exists in an unornamented manuscript version of ca. 1460–70 as well as an ornamented version in Petrucci's book 4, performable like all such pieces in either a vocal version or an instrumental version.²⁸ Other cousins to improvised *modi* and ornamented frottole include various through-composed, treble-dominated polyphonic madrigals. Some were included in lutebooks, like the lute-accompanied solo madrigal by Hippolito Tromboncino *Io son ferito, ahi lasso* shown in facsimile in fig. 4.3. The madrigal comes from the "Bottegari Lutebook" dated 1574 and shows a vocal part ornamented throughout, albeit in a relatively measured and reserved way. Other written-out ornaments found their way into genres of repertoires printed in partbooks. Among them are the *madrigali ariosi*, "song-like" madrigals

EXAMPLE 4.2 (A–D). Paulo Scotti’s melody for phrase 3 of Ex. 4.1, compared with proposed ornamentation for Tullia d’Aragona to use in declaiming verses 4, 8, and 14 of her sonnet “Fiamma gentil che da gl’interni lumi.” Ornamentation by Martha Feldman.

(a) Phrase 3, Scotto’s melody unadorned



(b) Phrase 3, first quatrain, v. 4



(c) Phrase 3, second quatrain, v. 8



(d) Phrase 3, second tercet, v. 14



evocative of oral traditions that were linked with practices of reciting *ottava* (eight-line) stanzas from Lodovico Ariosto’s epic *Orlando furioso* and then codified and printed in written polyphonic form by the Roman Antonio Barré between 1555 and 1562; and what Alfred Einstein dubbed “pseudo-monodies,” madrigals that mimic solo improvisations by supplying buyers with written-out runs and decorations in the treble part of a four-voice texture supported by relatively plain chords in the accompanying parts beneath.²⁹

Pseudo-monodies make it especially clear that crucial to the seductive bravura of the *cantatrice* was delivery and embellishment, whether prepared or improvised. An archetypal example is a setting by the Venetian Baldissera Donato of the anonymous poem “Dolce mio ben, dolce colomba mia,” published in his four-voice madrigal book in Venice in 1568 (CD track 3).³⁰ While the lower voices are largely chordal, the soprano is replete with ornamentation of a sort that was otherwise rarely notated before the early seventeenth-century monodies of Giulio Caccini and Sigismondo d’India. The piece has an intriguingly flexible metrical feel and lithe style of embellishment, both suggestive in imagining how courtesans like Tullia d’Aragona might have sung. As the dialect poet Andrea Calmo wrote in praise of a female friend (filtering a sensual libertine style through the local patois then fashionable among literati), “Oh, what a beautiful voice, what style, what runs and divisions, what sweetness, enough to soften the cruelest, hardest, most wicked heart in the world! How excellent the



FIGURE 4.3. Hippolito Tromboncino, *Io son ferito*. Lute song with written-out vocal ornamentation from the Bottegari Lutebook.

words, the subject, the meaning, so acute, so elegant that poetry itself lags behind . . .” (“[O]himè che bela vose, che maniera, che gorza, che diminution, che suavitaè da far indolcir cuori crudeli, severi e maligni al mondo! Mo le sorte de le parole, del sugieto, del significato tanto eccellente, tanto arguto, tanto doto, che la poesia istessa ghe perderave . . .”).³¹

In the mid-sixteenth century, with the onset of severe anxieties in response to the Protestant Reformation, there were growing proscriptions against display and indecorousness for women of the nobility and the class-conscious “bourgeoisie” (as Rosenthal points out). When courtesans declaimed poems like Tullia’s, they were brokering their class status as it crossed with the axis of gender. Envoicing their physical love with a view to crafting idealized portraits of female sensuality, they also joined in an energetic process of social differentiation that saw fast development in the mercantile culture of sixteenth-century Venice. To that end, they required not just fine things and fine skills, but the flair of a distinctive personal style.³² They needed above all to capture the untranslatable and ephemeral power of song, for only beyond the reach of script could song attain that most esteemed, elusive, and mystical appellation of “aria,” an ineffable expressive power endowed with the Neoplatonic force located in the realm of the suprasensual. In the words of the organist, madrigalist, and polygraph Girolamo Parabosco, rhapsodizing over the poet-singer Gaspara Stampa,

“What shall I say of that angelic voice, which sometimes strikes the air (“l’aria”) with its divine accents, making such a sweet harmony that it not only seems to everyone who is worthy of hearing it as if a Siren’s... but infuses spirit and life into the coldest stones and makes them weep with sweetness?”³³

Stampa was the unchallenged lyric heroine of her time, authoress of a then unpublished *canzoniere* (known among *cognoscenti*) that translates the Petrarchan idiom of poetic self-creation and narration into a female voice.³⁴ An acclaimed lutenist–singer, she was an underground legend in literary and musical circles of her time—this despite having avoided publication (if not partly because of it)—and had gained and given *entrée* to the most prestigious literary and musical salons in Venice.

Stampa has been the object of an enduring controversy that has made her out as a courtesan on one side and roundly denied it on the other. Her relatively free lifestyle (free by mid- to late sixteenth-century standards) is well known. She was born in 1524 to a wealthy mercantile family in Padua and moved as a child to Venice, along with her mother and siblings. Living there as an unmarried woman, she began composing poetry and performing song to her own lute accompaniments in private salons. By her own poetic account she had two liaisons, most famously with the neglectful, quasi-feudal Count Collaltino of Collalto. But unlike known and professed courtesans such as Tullia or the later sixteenth-century Veronica Franco, she voiced her *canzoniere* predominantly in a pastoral mode imitative of Petrarch and seemingly resisted publication.³⁵ Perissone Cambio’s setting of the anonymous Petrarchan imitation “Non di terrestre donna il chiaro viso,” printed in a book dedicated to Stampa in 1547 (see the essay following by De Rycke), might remind us of Stampa’s last canzone (table 4.1 below), which is not pastoral but an encomium of a deceased nun.

Non di terrestre donna il chiaro viso
 Che m’arde e strugg’il cor, non l’aurea testa,
 Non de gli occhi sereni i rai lucenti,
 Né le labbra di rose e ’l dolce riso,
 Non la divina angelica modesta
 Voce onde s’odon sì soave accenti,
 Ma di celeste dea tal che finire
 Ne lei per morte può nel mio martire.

No earthly woman’s, the fair face
 That enflames and melts my heart, nor the golden hair,
 Nor the limpid eyes’ sparkling rays,
 Nor the rosy lips and gentle laugh,
 Nor the divine, angelic, modest
 Voice that makes such soft sounds,
 But a celestial goddess’s, so that not even death
 Can end my torments.³⁶

Where “Non di terrestre” praises its subject for her “golden crown” (“l’aurea testa”) and “divine, angelic, modest voice,” quoting Petrarch’s depiction of a celestial Laura in his sonnet “Ripensando a quell ch’oggi il ciel onora” (no. 343, vv. 20 and 3–4, respectively), Stampa’s “Alma celeste” (see below, table 4.1) eulogizes the nun as a bride of god, referring to Heaven where the deceased “lived always with her first Love [God] in delightful ways” (“in dilettose tempore” in other contexts could

mean “in” or “with charming *modi*”), and thus lamenting the fate of the nun’s mortal brethren who struggle for mastery over their bodily senses. Behind the image of Petrarch’s Marian-styled madonna Laura with which Stampa endows the nun lies the whispered suggestion of Stampa herself, as a repentant Mary Magdalen imploring heaven’s grace.

I will forgo a summary of the copious evidence adduced as proof and disproof of Stampa’s courtesanship in controversies that raged between 1913 and 1920 and have reared their head on various occasions since. More interesting for my purposes is the fact that her ambiguous position has given observers room over a good four hundred and fifty years to make of Stampa what they would. Alfred Einstein—more knowledgeable than anyone on Italian secular music—typified the staunch patriarchalism that underwrote the twentieth-century vision of such a woman, collapsing her into a master narrative in which virtually all female musicians were fallen women.

One way she undoubtedly did resemble courtesans, though, was in the style of her repertory, produced by fleshing out her own melodies from skeletal melodic formulas used for Petrarch’s verse, or by making up new material.³⁷ Indeed Lynn Hooker has produced evidence that Stampa elaborated melodic formulas in singing to her lute, as I have speculated Tullia did. Hooker notes that Stampa’s only two canzoni share the exact same versification scheme with Petrarch’s canzone *Chiare fresche e dolci acque*, the obvious model for Stampa’s *Chiaro e famoso mare*. (See table 4.1, with the first two stanzas of each poem and lexical/thematic correspondences italicized.) She also cites a letter to Stampa from the Friulian religious reformer Orazio Brunetti, who begs for reentry into Stampa’s salon, pleading that he has missed her marvelous singing and especially her rendition of Petrarch’s *Chiare fresche*.

Canzone stanzas were the least regular of the fixed poetic forms, and therefore the least amenable to being sung to melodic formulas. Singers could utilize stock melodic phrases for them, apt for seven- or eleven-syllable lines and for beginnings, middles, and endings of pieces, so long as they ordered the phrases to match a given canzone’s individual formal scheme. That meant stitching together the phrases with due attention to the length and form of the *piedi* and *sirima*, the idiosyncrasies of the rhyme scheme, including its placement of rhymed couplets, the need for opening gambits, expressive high points, and cadential closure, as well as the need for melodic continuity. The mere fact that all three of Stampa’s canzoni share the exact same poetic form, down to the last syllable and rhyme scheme, makes it quite likely that she performed them all using the same or a similar succession of melodic phrases.

Since Stampa’s singing lay largely beyond the reach of script, we can only dream of her intoning the words of *Chiare fresche* or *Chiaro e famoso mare* to her lute. Yet there is some written evidence linking *Chiare fresche* with formulaic oral declamation, at least by association. *Chiare fresche* was set as a multi-voiced madrigal cycle by Jacques Arcadelt and printed in 1555 in Barré’s first collection of *madrigali ariosi*. The cycle is polyphonic, but as James Haar has shown, it is laced throughout with a melodic formula that migrates from voice to voice and seems to have been widely associated with orally transmitted traditions of declaiming Ariosto’s *ottave*.³⁸ To evoke something of this spirit, the Newberry Consort has performed Arcadelt’s setting of Petrarch’s *Chiare fresche* substituting for the latter Stampa’s *Chiaro e famoso mare*

TABLE 4.1. Comparison of first two stanzas of Petrarch's canzone no. 23 with the only two canzoni by Gaspara Stampa (Stampa, *Rime*, no. 68 and no. 299)

Verse numbers and rhyme scheme	Petrarca, <i>Chiare fresche</i> , no. 126	Stampa, <i>Rime</i> , no. 68 (corresponding verses)	Stampa, <i>Rime</i> , no. 299 (corresponding verses)
1 a	<i>Chiare fresche e dolci acque</i>	<i>Chiaro e famoso mare</i>	Alma celeste e pura,
2 b	Ove le belle membra	Sovra 'l cui nobil dosso	che, casta e verginella
3 C	Pose colei che sola a me par donna	si posò 'l mio signor, mentre Amor volle;	stata tanto fra noi, se gira al cielo
4 a	Gentil ramo ove piacque (<i>con sospir mi rimembra</i>)	rive onorate e care (<i>con sospir dir lo posso</i>)	dov'or sovrà misura
5 b	a lei di fare al bel fianco colonna	che 'l petto mio vedeste spesso molle;	ti strai lucente e bella,
6 C	erba et fior che la gonna	soave lido e colle,	di più perfetto accesa e maggior zelo,
7 c	leggiadra ricoverse	che con fiato amoroso	perché nel mortal velo
8 d	co l'angelica seno	<i>udisti le mie note,</i>	rade volte altrui lice
9 e	aere sacra sereno	<i>d'ira e di sdegno vote,</i>	unir perfettamente
10 e	ove Amor co' begli occhi il cor m'aperse:	<i>colme d'ogni diletto e di riposo;</i>	al suo Fattor la mente,
11 D	<i>date udienza insieme</i>	<i>udite tutti interni</i>	sì triste è del nostro arbor la radice
12 f	<i>a le dolente mie parole estreme:</i>	<i>Il suon or degli acerbi miei lamenti.</i>	e sì forte n'atterra
13 F			Questa del senso perigliosa guerra;
1 a	S'egli è pur mio destino, e 'l cielo in ciò s'adopra,	I dico che dal giorno che fece dipartir	Tu vagheggi or beata quell'infinito Sole,
2 b	ch'Amor quest'occhi lagrimando chiuda, qualche grazia il meschino	l'idolo, ond'avean pace i miei sospiri, toltr mi f'ir d'attorno	di cui questo altro sole è picciol raggio; e la voglia appagata
3 C	corpo fra voi ricopra, e torni 'l palma al proprio albergo ignuda;	tutti i ben desta vita; e restai preda eternal de martiri:	hai sì, ch'altro non vuole, giunta a l'ultimo fin di suo viaggio;
4 a	la morte fa men cruda	e, perché pur m'adiri e chiami Amor ingrata	e la noia e l'oltraggio
5 b	se questa spene porto	che m'involò sì tosto	e l'ombra di quell male,
6 C	a quell dubbioso passo, ché lo spirito lasso	il ben ch'or sta discosto,	che sostenesti in vita,
7 C	non poria mai in più riposato porto	non per questo a pietade è mal tornado;	è per sempre sbandita
8 c	nè in più tranquilla fossa	e tien l'usare sempre,	salta in parte, ove dolor non sale,
9 e	fuggi la carne travagliata et l'ossa.	perchio mi sfaccia e mi lamenti sempre.	ove si vive sempre
10 e	[five more stanzas]	[five more stanzas]	Col primo Amor in dilettose sempre.
11 D			[five more stanzas]
12 f			
13 F			

The table is based on unpublished research by Lynn Hooker.

(CD track 4). Soprano Ellen Hargis sings the lyrics attended by a viol ensemble, thus replacing the masculine voice of Petrarch's model with the feminine voice of one whose faith (*fede*) will be sung in a thousand pages (*in mille carte*). At the same time the viol players replace Stampa's own lute with a hypothetical consort of admiring accompanists.³⁹ With another leap of historical imagination we can conceive Stampa singing these canzoni as lute-accompanied monodies, perhaps varying a specific formula like the one James Haar distilled from Arcadelt's cycle to make a simulacrum of what Brunetti so sorely missed hearing when he found himself barred from her salon.⁴⁴

At this high echelon of poetizing and vocalizing, women like Tullia d'Aragona and Gaspara Stampa needed more than just good vocal timbre, agility, and other technical skills to achieve fame. Above all they needed a distinctive *modo* and that special personal style that would render the voice untranscribable. Only by transcending the printed page could song attain that most esteemed, elusive, and mystical appellation of "aria" that Parabosco attributed to Stampa.

Here I want to return to Einstein's assessment of Stampa and virtually all other Renaissance women singers as lascivious. For Einstein's view imposed on female music-making of the Renaissance a view that rent asunder mind and body through a romantic metaphysics in which the spiritual and corporeal are irreconcilable. The sixteenth century, to the contrary, viewed body and spirit in a continuous affiliation,⁴¹ and saw female voices dispersed along this continuum. In salons, printed love dialogues, and lyric expression, the passions of the female voice slid along a mind-body continuum, especially when female subjects escaped simple classification at extremes of chastity or wantonness.

In several ways Stampa's position reminds me less of professed courtesans than of the *nacnis* of southern Bihar in East Central India who have been studied by Carol Babiracki.⁴² Babiracki describes *nacnis* as kept women and semi-professional singer-dancers, who typically remain mistress to a single man over many years. In one of her primary cases, the poetic performance of the *nacni* is interwoven with the life she shares with her partner, as the two invoke images of themselves using the playful love lyrics of the divine couple Krishna and Radha. As in early modern Venice, the man who keeps a *nacni* as mistress can maintain and even enhance his own social position, though, unlike in Venice, she becomes casteless in the feudal society of rural East Central India. Her sacrifice of respectability and children makes for an inherently ambiguous relationship with the man who keeps her. The two are what the Bijaris call "non-social," or socially unofficial, the women are literally out-castes, and their union is said to be made for "private" reasons motivated by love, madness for music and dance, poverty, and sometimes devotion to Krishna.

Strikingly, the dynamics of a courtesan's or mistress's relationships were mobilized, like the *nacni*'s, by the affect of her performances, which often invoked the established, pervasive idiom of Petrarch for the expression of love and the conflicts between spirit and flesh. A *nacni*'s performances, Babiracki argues, are intensely affective because of her identification with the goddess Radha, even though the full consequences of her union for the sake of love put her in social disgrace. She becomes a "goddess" only to other performers and to her lover, who may idolize her (as Babiracki says) in an "inversion of normative gender roles [that] recalls the reversal

of Radha and Krishna, whereby Krishna becomes the submissive devotee and Radha his powerful, even cruel goddess.⁴³

That reversal recalls the poetic trope of the pitiless lady, Petrarch's unattainable goddess Laura, or even the elusive mistress of a rival peer. Not unlike *nacnis*, early modern courtesans and their like were products of a quasi-feudal, stratified system of patronage. In Venice, as that system threatened to crack under the pressures of early modernity, the courtesan's arts of speech, music, and manners, so susceptible to appropriation and imitation, became increasingly vulnerable to reaction, counteraction, and retaliation. Yet her virtuosity as a performer of rhetorical arts only gave her greater powers of seduction, power that in some cases was transformed through her reincarnation as the seventeenth-century diva in the new genre of Venetian opera. Detached from script, the courtesan's voice conjured up sensible worlds to which she had uncommon access. Special powers could accrue to her who could tap this affective world of sound. In Renaissance conceptions she gained power over harmonies and proportions with larger realms of sensory resonance, the immaterial glories of the voice affirming but eluding the material triumphs of the body.⁴⁴

Notes

1. Important on the early layer of Italian courtesanship, complemented by music-making, are Monica Kurzel-Runtscheiner, *Töchter der Venus: Die Kurtisanen Roms im 16. Jahrhundert* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1995); William F. Prizer, "Games of Venus: Secular Vocal Music in the Late Quattrocento and Early Cinquecento," *Journal of Musicology* 9 (1991): 3–56; and Shawn Marie Keener, "Virtue, Illusion, *Venezianità*: Vocal Bravura and the Early *Cortigiana Onesta*," in *Musical Voices of Early Modern Women: Many-Headed Melodies*, ed. Thomasin K. LaMay (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), chap. 5. On the practice and valence of women's music-making at the time see William F. Prizer, "Una 'virtù molto conveniente a madonne': Isabella d'Este as a Musician," *Journal of Musicology* 17 (1999): 10–49; Howard Mayer Brown, "Women Singers and Women's Songs in Fifteenth-Century Italy," in *Women Making Music: The Western Art Tradition, 1150–1950*, ed. Jane Bowers and Judith Tick (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 62–89; and with specific attention to courtesans, William F. Prizer, "Wives and Courtesans: The Frottola in Florence," in *Music Observed: Studies in Memory of William C. Holmes*, ed. Colleen Reardon and Susan Parisi (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2004), 401–15. I am grateful to him for sending me his newly published essay just in time to take account of it here.

2. *Opere in volgare*, ed. Mario Marti (Florence: Sansoni, 1961), 877–78. Bembo also had in mind the publicness of his words and their reception, since he had to establish the illegitimate Helena in patrician society, which he did by marrying her off to a Venetian nobleman in 1543.

3. *Gli asolani* (Venice, 1505), III, fol. vii^r. Cf. Gary Tomlinson, "Rinuccini, Peri, Monteverdi, and the Humanist Heritage of Opera" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1979), 37–43.

4. Gordon's essay in this volume makes clear how dominant Neoplatonism was in an early modern worldview.

5. *Gli asolani*, II, fol. vii^r.

6. Cf. Marco Equicola's *Libro della natura de amore* (Venice, 1525), Book V, fol. 171.

7. See Betussi, *Il Raverta* (Venice, 1544), esp. 19–45.

8. Quoted from Bernardino Tomitano, *Ragionamenti della lingua toscana*, rev. ed. (Venice, 1546), 461.

9. *Dialogo della infinità d'amore*, in *Trattati d'amore*, ed. Giuseppe Zonta; repr. ed. Mario Pozzi (1912; Rome: Giuseppe Laterza, 1975); in English as *Dialogue on the Infinity of Love*, ed. and trans. Rinaldina Russell and Bruce Merry, Introduction by Rinaldina Russell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

10. Salvatore Bongi, *Annali di Gabriel Giolito de' Ferrari*, 2 vols. (Rome: I Principali Librai, 1890–97), 1:193–95.

11. The correspondent was writing to the Marchesa Isabella d'Este of Mantua to keep her informed; see Rita Casagrande di Villaviera, *Le cortigiane veneziane nel Cinquecento* (Milan: Longanesi, 1968), 226.

12. *Ibid.*, 221.

13. See *Dialogue on the Infinity of Love*, 79; *Trattati d'amore*, 211.

14. See, importantly, Paula Findlen, "Humanism, Politics, and Pornography in Renaissance Italy," in *The Invention of Pornography: Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity, 1500–1800*, ed. Lynn Hunt (New York: Zone Books, 1993), 49–108.

15. See Alfred Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal*, 3 vols., trans. Alexander H. Krappe, Roger H. Sessions, and Oliver Strunk (1949; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 1:94 ff.

16. Quoted in Edmond Vander Straeten, *La musique aux Pays-Bas avant le XIX^e siècle: Documents inédits et annotés*, 8 vols. repr. in 4 (1882; New York: Dover, 1969), 6:221, vv. 122–24 and the full capitolo reproduced there. For analogues within injunctions against women's speech see chap. 6 below; and Jones, *The Currency of Eros*, chap. 1. See also Anthony Newcomb, "Courtesans, Muses, or Musicians? Professional Women Musicians in Sixteenth-Century Italy," in *Women Making Music*, 92; and *idem*, *The Madrigal at Ferrara, 1579–1597*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 1:app. 5, doc. 13.

17. On salon life see my *City Culture and the Madrigal at Venice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), part 1.

18. In Ortensio Landi's *Sette libri de cathaloghi* (Venice, 1552) she ranked with Polissena Pecorina and the elusive Polissena Frigera as one of three most noted female musicians of the modern era. Landi lists her as "Franceschina bella mano" (512). In the poetic anthology entitled *De le rime di diversi nobili poeti toscani*, ed. Dionigi Atanagi, vol. 2 rev. (Venice, 1565), fol. 11, she is addressed as "una virtuosa donna, che cantava, & sonava eccellentemente di liuto, detta Franceschina Bellamano" (sig. K/2 4). See also *Rime di Domenico Veniero*, ed. Pierantonio Serassi (Bergamo, 1751), xv and 37. Bellamano could sing "from the book" as well improvising or singing by heart, as seen in Pietro Aaron's *Lucidario in musica* (Venice, 1545), which cites her among Italy's renowned "Donne a liuto et a libro" (fol. 32). For further references to Bellamano see Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal* 1:447 and 2:843, who considered her—without evidence—to have been a courtesan.

19. In this my conclusions correspond to those of singer/scholar Sheila Schonbrun, "Ambiguous Artists: Music-Making among Italian Renaissance Courtesans (with Particular Reference to Tullia of Aragon, Gaspara Stampa, and Veronica Franco)" (D.M.A. thesis, City University of New York, 1998).

20. See Ottaviano Petrucci, *Frottole Buch I und IV: Nach den Erstlingsdrucken von 1504 und 1505 (?)*, ed. Rudolf Schwartz (repr. Hildesheim and Wiesbaden: Georg Olms and Breitkopf & Härtel, 1967). Petrucci's fourth book of frottole was published in 1505 (albeit without date).

21. See *The Bottegari Lutebook*, ed. Carol MacClintock, The Wellesley Edition, no. 8 (Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College, 1965), nos. 8, 31, 53, 56, 63, based on Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS C311, no. 74, fols. 29–30; and *Aeri raccolti insieme . . . dove si cantano sonetti, stanze et terze rime*, ed. Rocco Rodio (Naples, 1577; = RISM 1577⁸). The theorist Gioseffo

Zarlino attests to the continued practice in the mid-sixteenth century of singing sonnets on formulas, mentioning “those *modi* [i.e., ‘*arie*’] on which these days we sing sonnets or canzoni of Petrarch, or the verse of Ariosto”; *Le istituzioni harmoniche* (Venice, 1558), book iii, 79. Sonnets are included among the *arie* in Bottegari’s lutebook. On the *madrigale arioso* see James Haar, “The ‘Madrigale Arioso’: A Mid-Century Development in the Cinquecento Madrigal,” *Studi musicali* 12 (1983): 203–19, reprinted in idem, *The Science and Art of Renaissance Music*, ed. Paul Corneilson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), chap. 10 (from which I cite below); Howard Mayer Brown, “Verso una definizione dell’armonia nel sedicesimo secolo: Sui ‘madrigali ariosi’ di Antonio Barré,” *Rivista italiana di musicologia* 25 (1990): 18–60; and John Steele, “Antonio Barré: Madrigalist, Anthologist, and Publisher in Rome—Some Preliminary Findings,” in *Altro polo: Essays on Italian Music in the Cinquecento*, ed. Richard Charteris (Sydney: Frederick May Foundation for Italian Studies, 1990), 82–112. Melodic formulas also surface in other polyphonic madrigal settings of stanzas from Ariosto’s early sixteenth-century epic *Orlando furioso*. As James Haar has shown in “Arie per cantar stanze ariotesche,” in *L’Ariosto, la musica, i musicisti: Quattro studi e sette madrigali ariosteschi*, ed. Maria Antonella Balsano with preface by Lorenzo Bianconi (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1981), the *Orlando* stanzas were recited for centuries by musical improvisers who continued to use traditional formulas for epic recitation; see also idem, “*Improvvisatori* and Their Relationship to Sixteenth-Century Music,” in James Haar, *Essays on Italian Poetry and Music in the Renaissance, 1350–1600* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), chap. 4. On Rocco Rodio’s book and Petrarchan recitation in Naples, see Howard Mayer Brown, “Petrarch in Naples: Notes on the Formation of Giaches de Wert’s Style,” in *Altro polo*, ed. Charteris, 16–50. In Spain, during the 1530s there were books with pieces by Luis de Milán and Alonso Mudarra that offered sonnets by Petrarch arranged for voice and vihuela (the indigenous guitar-like instrument), like the *modi* of Petrucci, Bottegari, and Rodio; see Louis Jambou, “Sonnets de Pétrarque et chant accompagné a vihuela: Deux projets compositionnels distincts: Milan (1536) et Mudarra (1546),” in *Dynamique d’une expansion culturelle: Pétrarque en Europe, XIV^e–XX^e siècle. Actes du XXVI^e congrès international du CEFI, Turin et Chambéry, 11–15 décembre 1995*, ed. Pierre Blanc (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2001), 497–525.

22. In analyzing the dynamics of fame here I take inspiration from the astute work of Ann Rosalind Jones, *The Currency of Eros*, esp. 103–17.

23. The classic formulation of this poetic strategy is that of John Freccero, “The Fig Tree and the Laurel: Petrarch’s Poetics,” *Diacritics* 5 (1975): 34–40. For an intelligent recent analysis of Petrarch’s poetics in various fifteenth- and sixteenth-century assessments see Gordon Braden, *Petrarchan Love and the Continental Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), esp. chap. 1, “Petrarchism,” which claims that Bembo virtually invented the interpretation of Petrarch’s poetizing as a solitary, autobiographical mode of poetic expression and gave it his own Neoplatonic overlay (94–101 and *passim*).

24. Fascinating in this regard is Prizer’s account of a courtesan named Maria, a poet, singer, and quite possibly composer of the Roman and Florentine orbits, who sang songs “in the masculine role of seducer,” addressing a man in a voice that would normally have been used to address a woman (“Wives and Courtesans,” 412–13). Prizer notes that Maria thus “speaks” (by singing) to her client, yet does so on his behalf, “speaking for him of the desire she herself arouses.” In keeping with the high/low dichotomies seen by Davies and others in this volume within courtesans’ repertoires (and repertoires about them), Maria also sang frottole with bawdy texts, again envoicing the role of a man who in this case tries to “titillate” women.

25. Other variants use four phrases of music.

26. These are my own ornaments. Using the same tune, Schonbrun has made a contrafactum of a sonnet by the poet-singer Gaspara Stampa and provided ornaments that increase

in complexity and remoteness from the original tune through the second quatrain and especially the two tercets, somewhat in the extravagant manner of written exemplars of monodic singing from around 1600. Cf. n. 31 below.

27. Singing and instrumental masters who wrote about ornamentation techniques in the period between the 1550s and 1580s show us nothing as lavish as Schonbrun offers, yet it seems to me likely that some courtesans would indeed have sung so elaborately if they were skilled enough to do so. Tullia would certainly be a candidate for such singing. The questions involved in such a matter are much too intricate to develop here. For a fundamental review of embellishing sixteenth-century music see Howard Mayer Brown, *Embellishing Sixteenth-Century Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), *passim* (and Introduction for a review of primary sources). It does seem evident that treatises dealing with vocal ornamentation during the sixteenth century, especially those written before the advent in about 1580 of what Anthony Newcomb calls the "luxuriant style" (*The Madrigal at Ferrara*), were often quite conservative, aiming to tame singers of overly ostentatious habits and mostly exemplifying stepwise passagework with few leaps and no consecutive leaps and with relatively regular forms of rhythmic organization.

28. Mod. ed. in Ernst Ferand, *Die Improvisation in Beispielen aus neun Jahrhunderten abendländischer Musik: Mit einer geschichtlichen Einführung* (Cologne: Arno Volk, 1956), 50–52. A vocal performance of the ornamented version has been recorded by Sara Stowe, soprano, and the group Sirinu, *The Cradle of the Renaissance: Italian Music from the Time of Leonardo da Vinci* (London: Hyperion, 1995), CDA66814.

29. See *The Italian Madrigal*, 2, chap. 12.

30. *Libro primo dei madrigali a 4 voci* (Venice, 1568). It is performed here with harpsichord accompaniment, using Einstein's transcription, which reduces the four voices of the original to an accompanied-song style version for soprano and keyboard (*The Italian Madrigal*, 3:322–25). For the text and translation, see the appendix.

31. *Le lettere di Andrea Calmo*, ed. Vittorio Rossi (Turin: Ermanno Loescher, 1888), book iv, 295–96; trans. quoted from Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal*, 2:843.

32. See Haar, "Improvvisatori," 83; and Nino Pirrotta, *Music and Culture in Italy from the Middle Ages to the Baroque: A Collection of Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), *passim*.

33. Girolamo Molino also referred to Stampa in a poem to her first and main lover, Count Collalto di Collaltino, as a Siren ("Nova Sirena"); see Abdelkader Salza, "Madonna Gasparina Stampa, secondo nuove indagini," *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 62 (1913): 25–26; and for Ortensio Landi's praise of her musical prowess, *ibid.*, 17–18.

34. See, most recently, Mary B. Moore, *Desiring Voices: Women Sonneteers and Petrarchism* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), chap. 3, "Body of Light, Body of Matter: Self-Reference as Self-Modeling in Gaspara Stampa."

35. As Jones points out (*The Currency of Eros*), courtesan-poets like Tullia d'Aragona and Veronica Franco sought out publication rather than avoiding it.

36. Translation by Justin Flosi and Courtney Quaintance from the program book for the concert by the Newberry Consort, *The Courtesan's Voice in the Italian Renaissance* (April 5, 2002), 14.

37. Both of these had been done by the late fifteenth-century singing star Serafino Aquilano, according to his contemporary biographer Vincenzo Calmeta. See *Vita del facondo poeta volgare Serafino Aquilano*, in Vincenzo Calmeta, *Prose e lettere edite ed inedite*, ed. Cecil Grayson (Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1959). For relevant excerpts in English, see the passage translated in *Source Readings in Music History*, ed. Oliver Strunk, rev. ed. Leo Treitler (New York: Norton, 1998), part 3, *The Renaissance*, ed. Gary Tomlinson, 321–25, esp. 322.

38. For the essential form of the Ariosto formula as deduced by Haar from Arcadelt's polyphonic setting of *Chiare fresche*, see Haar, "The 'Madrigale Arioso,'" in his *Science and Art*, 226. Haar also makes a hypothetical extraction of the formula from each stanza of Petrarch's canzone set by Arcadelt, sometimes from the tenor voice and sometimes from the soprano. Most important for the history of song among Barré's *delle muse* prints is the *Primo libro delle muse a quattro voci, madrigali ariosi di Ant. Barre et altri diversi autori* (Rome: Barré, 1555 = RISM 1555²⁷), a volume that was reprinted many times over a thirty-year period.

39. Janet L. Smarr, "Gaspara Stampa's Poetry for Performance," *Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association* 12 (1991): 61–84.

40. A woman whose singing who bears some analogies with Stampa's as I reconstruct it here, especially in her general ability to manipulate song, improvisation, and polyphony, is Isabella Medici-Orsini, provocatively analyzed by Donna G. Cardamone in "Isabella Medici-Orsini: A Portrait of Self-Affirmation," in *Gender, Sexuality, and Early Music*, ed. Todd Michael Borgerding (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1–40.

41. Cf. Gary Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Toward a Historiography of Others* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 202–3.

42. Carol M. Babiracki graciously shared with me her work on *nacnis* in the form of two unpublished papers: "Ideologies of Power, Gender, and Art in the Nacni Tradition of East-Central India," Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology (Oxford, Miss., October 27–31, 1993), and "Gender and Religion in the Nacni Tradition of East-Central India," Annual Conference on South Asia (University of Wisconsin, Madison, November 4, 1994). Among Babiracki's published work in this area are: "What's the Difference? Reflections on Gender and Research in Village India," in *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 121–36; and "The Illusion of India's Public Dancers," in *Women's Voices across Musical Worlds*, ed. Jane A. Bernstein (Boston: Northeastern Illinois Press, 2004), 36–59.

43. Babiracki, "Gender and Religion," 5. See the strategies of courtly love discussed in Flosi's essay in this volume, chap. 6.

44. See Gordon (chap. 9 below) for much fuller dealings with these issues. On male rivalries see the essays herein of Flosi, Quaintance, and Ruggiero, chaps. 6, 10, and 15.