Death, War, Dance, and Discovery:
The Representation of Percussion Instruments in Medieval and Early Modern French Literature

By

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Introduction

One of the first treatises on music, the Euclidean *Sectio Canonis*, defines sound in the following way: "if anything is going to be heard, impact and movement must occur."[1] Furthermore, one of the first anecdotes about music (specifically, the ratios of different pitches to one another) concerns Pythagoras' observation of the sounds that different hammers made when they struck an anvil.[2] Both of these ancient texts rely on an understanding of musical sound as something fundamentally percussive, not necessarily as melodic arrangements.[3] This focus on the literal impact of soundwaves on the air, or of objects against each other, sparked my interest in exploring the cultural and social contexts surrounding text-music relationships, particularly in regards to percussion instruments during the medieval and early modern periods in French literature.

Because I am first a literary scholar, this project will not deal with percussion instruments on an organological level; aside from an effort to orient my readers to the instruments and their place in history, I will not carry out a detailed exploration of the ways that certain drums or other percussion instruments evolved over time. Nor do I undertake to provide a musicological perspective on these instruments (that is, a study of exact genres of music that percussion instruments played). My study, however, is

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[1] Euclid, *Katatomē kanonos*. Trans. Andrew Barker, *Greek Musical Writings II* (Cambridge: Cambridge Musical Press, 1989) 190-208, 191.

[2] Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*. Ed. Claude Palisca. Trans. Calvin M. Bower (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983) 18.

[3] Ancient Greek theory relied mostly on mathematical ratios of musical notes in its study of music and its explanation of how to compose it. Music was more of an active, logical function of sound rather than a series of specific pitches arranged in a melodic and esthetically-pleasing way. See Euclid, *Katatomē kanonos*. Trans. Andrew Barker, *Greek Musical Writings II* (Cambridge: Cambridge Musical Press, 1989) 190-208; 194-207.

related to and relies on the scholarship of Jeremy Montagu, Kate Van Orden, James Blades, and Carla Zecher, who deal extensively with the melodic elements of music, the history and development of music and musical instruments, and the place of music in early modern cultural history. [4]

Inspirations and Limitations

Unlike other instruments, such as flutes or lutes, early percussion instruments from the West have largely not survived. Those examples that we do have, all from the sixteenth century and beyond,[5] vary widely in shape and size,[6] and thus give no indication of what a "typical" specimen may have looked or sounded like. Furthermore, it was not until the early seventeenth century, notably in Monteverdi's 1607 opera, *Orfeo*, that we see written instrumental music for mixed ensembles specifying which instruments should play each part.[7] That is not to say that earlier examples of such scores did not exist; after all, as Montagu succinctly states, "Far more music existed than

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[4] See Jeremy Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); Kate Van Orden, *Music, Discipline, and Arms in Early Modern France* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005); James Blades, *Percussion Instruments and their History* (London: Faber & Faber, 1971); and Carla Zecher, *Sounding Objects: Musical Instruments, Poetry, and Art in Renaissance France* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

[5] Jeremy Montagu, *Making Early Percussion Instruments* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976) xi.

[6] Jeremy Montagu, "Organological *Gruyère*." *From Renaissance to Baroque: Change in Instruments and Instrumental Music in the Seventeenth Century*. Ed. Jonathan Wainwright and Peter Holman (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2005) 265-66.

[7] John Spitzer and Neal Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) 42-44.

has survived and even more was improvised and never written down. Scholars today disagree about the interpretation of what little has come down to us."[8] In fact, the best sources we have for studying both specific percussion instruments and their uses throughout Western European musical history are texts and images that describe and depict them. However, these sources "are mute; they can never come to life and reveal the sound of early music . . . ."[9] The most they can give us are clues about the appearance of these instruments, so that we may hope to recreate them in our own time, since, at the very least, "if we use an instrument that looks wrong, it cannot possibly sound right."[10]

Given these restrictions, in order to carry out my project, I explored different readings and literary depictions of uses of percussion instruments throughout the medieval and early modern periods in French literary culture.[11] Percussion's multifaceted role is reflected by the many descriptions of drums and other instruments in various kinds of texts, from travel narratives (explicitly fictionalized or not) to poetry

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[8] Jeremy Montagu, *The World of Medieval and Renaissance Musical Instruments* (Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1976) 50.

[9] Montagu, *Making Early Percussion Instruments* ix.

[10] Ibid.

[11] I am defining percussion as the families of idiophones and membranophones, which include drums, bells, xylophones, cymbals, tambourines, rattles, castanets, chimes, claves, ratchets, and other instruments which are struck, shaken, or rubbed and whose sound is derived from either the resonance of their bodies (idiophones, like cymbals, bells, and claves) or of a vibrating membrane (membranophones, like drums and tambourines), For a more detailed breakdown of these instrument families, see the MIMO Consortium's "Revised Hornbostel-Sachs Classification of Musical Instruments," *MIMO*. 19 Sept. 2018. Available FTP: http://www.mimo-international.com/documents/Hornbostel%20Sachs.pdf

to instruction manuals meant for young courtiers. It plays an important part in the development of French (and broader European) identity as well as in the understanding of other cultures. Furthermore, by anchoring my analysis to a specific object, I create a closer bond between the modern-day researcher and the early modern period; allowing the drum to embody various attitudes, roles, and ideas, drive us to more deeply understand some of the social, literary, and cultural contexts of the texts I will treat. Through this work, representations of percussion instruments move from background elements or invisible foundations to central motifs that play important roles in literary texts, from symbols of death and dead bodies to definitions of civilization. As there are few examples of modern scholars who study percussion instruments from a literary lens, I have drawn heavily on musicological, organological, ethnographical, historical, and other related fields in order to bolster the arguments I make based on close analyses of my primary source texts.

In some ways, my project must be both linked to and differentiated from work previously undertaken in the fields of musicology and sound studies, as well as material culture, given my arguments about the power of drums as literary symbols as well as cultural objects represented in literature. Furthermore, it seeks to provide literary examples that support not only the percussive and rhythmic underpinnings of music but also the importance of percussion instruments and rhythm in literature. Although much of the percussion music of the medieval and early modern periods has long since

disappeared, its influence lives on in various literary and historical texts and can be uncovered through scholarly work in various related fields.[12]

Like the works of Christopher Marsh, Gretchen Peters, and Emma Dillon, who use historical texts in order to explore and "listen through" to early modern sonic environments, especially non-courtly milieux, this project seeks to recapture lost sounds of percussion instruments and analyze the reasons for their inclusion in various literary contexts.[13] However, my narrower focus of object (percussion as opposed to music or "noise" more generally) and broader chronological perspective, as well as the additional perceived ambiguity of musical representation in literature as opposed to more "factual" mentions of musical *use* in records of civic ceremonies or entries in municipal account books, are crucial differentiators. By relying on literary depictions of percussion instruments, rather than more precise or technical descriptions of music or musical events, my project requires significant extrapolation and some degree of speculation about the information the author attemps to convey. Additionally, because this study includes texts from such a wide time period (from the 13th century to the 17th), I have been able to delineate the change over time of the ways in which percussion instruments

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[12] Additional texts not discussed in this section, which nevertheless represent important work in these fields are : Jacques Attali, *Bruits : essai sur l'économie politique de la musique* (Paris : Le Livre de Poche, 2007) ; Brigitte Cazelles, *Soundscape in Early French Literature* (Turnhout : Brepols Publishers, 2005) ; *Hearing the City in Early Modern Europe*, Ed. Tess Knighton and Ascensión Mazuela-Anguita (Turnhout : Brepols Publishers, 2018) ; and Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past : Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham, NC : Duke University Press, 2003).

[13] Emma Dillon, *The Sense of Sound: Musical Meaning in France, 1260-1330* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 6, 8, 332; Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 30-31.

have been represented, instead of focusing on reconstructing sonic environments of specific times or places.

In many ways, Dillon, Peters, and Marsh offer analyses that provide important points of departure for my research. For example, although Marsh speaks only briefly of percussion instruments at various points in his work, the evidence he brings to bear in order to argue their close links with masculinity, violence, and corporal punishment are additional supports to arguments I offer in my first and second chapters.[14] Dillon's chapters on sound in prayer – specifically how sound is "embodied in prayer books" through marginalia and other illuminations – are a helpful model as I consider the visual cues of music in texts such as the *danses macabres* and even later works, such as Arbeau's *Orchésographie*.[15] Finally, Peters' focus on musical sounds of everyday life, gleaned from archival documents preserved by guilds, city governments, and other urban organizations, which she rightly considers "marginalized in musicological scholarship" opens the door to other studies of seemingly unimportant, "not unique" music, musical sounds, and musical instruments that nevertheless provide crucial evidence for the ways that music permeated everyday life throughout medieval and early modern French society.[16]

The argument that sound and listening were major elements in medieval and early modern life also finds support in the work of Andrew Hicks, Bruce R. Smith,

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[14] Marsh 159-60.

[15] Dillon 174-242.

[16] Gretchen Peters, *The Musical Sounds of Medieval French Cities: Players, Patrons, and Politics*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-2.

Nicholas Hammond, Ardis Butterfield, and Daniele Filippi.[17] In his article, Hammond argues that noises and sounds in early modern urban soundscapes are part of early modern life in ways that are seen as "disruptive, disordered, invasive, threatening in a way that the other senses are not."[18] The power of sound, he says, penetrates society in ways that cannot be blocked, overwhelming even potent visual stimuli and the constraints of geography, a statement with which sound theorist Michel Chion agrees.[19] Hammond's assertion here appears to be in direct conflict with Hicks' work, in which he states that sound is "a special kind of relational knowledge, a 'knowing-with and knowing-through the audible."[20]

Hammond's study of sound in early modern cities as fundamental forces of disorder seems to deny the classical, medieval, and early modern ideas of what Hicks calls "a cosmic acoustemology," in which sound has always been embedded in

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[17] Ardis Butterfield, *Poetry and Music in Medieval France: From Jean Renart to Guillaume de Machaut* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Daniele Filippi, "Sonic Afterworld: Mapping the Soundscapes of Heaven and Hell in Early Modern Cities," *Cultural Histories of Noise, Sound and Listening in Europe 1300-1918*, Ed. Ian Biddle and Kirsten Gibson (London: Routledge, 2017), 186-204 ; Nicholas Hammond, "Striking the Air : Early Modern Parisian Sound Worlds." *Paragraph,* 41(1) 2018 : 42-51; Andrew Hicks, *Composing the World: Harmony in the Medieval Platonic Cosmos* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999).

[18] Hammond 43.

[19] Ibid; "Contrairement à un objet visual, nous ne pouvons pas lui [la musique] 'tourner le dos'." Michel Chion, *Musiques, Médias, et Technologies* (Paris: Flammarion, 1994), 92.

[20] Hicks 3.

humanity's efforts to understand its place in the world and the wider cosmos.[21] Smith uses the same concept in his work, albeit worded differently, calling for the creation of three movements in scholarship: a "psychology of listening", a "cultural poetics of listening", and a "phenomenology of listening" in order to reconnect listening to existing – an "ecology of listening".[22] His use of concrete musical examples and geographical settings to explore different sonic environments in the early modern period reminds us that, even though sound can and does flout physical and cultural distances, studying who hears what in the early modern period is necessary in order to answer questions of access to media and representation as well as to study the effects of that access and representation.

In terms of the representational power of musical sound, as Filippi shows in his chapter on the "sonic afterworld," music and sound as forces of both order and disorder are used in depictions of the afterlife in the early modern period. Furthermore, the links between urban sounds and celestial (or infernal) ones continue to support the idea of sound as a dual, even paradoxical, force in the universe, as Filippi shows connections between urban sounds and both heaven and hell in early modern writings. Additionally, Jean-Luc Nancy's work on listening demonstrates the continuing importance of paying attention to sonic elements in literature. By pointing out not only the connection between hearing and understanding, but also the fact that being in a state of listening ("être à l'écoute") is to constantly tread the border of current and future experience or

[21] Ibid 3-4.

[22] Smith 8-9, 341.

knowledge, Nancy reminds scholars that all sound (especially musical sound) – past and present – exists in the margins.[23]

This marginalization of music/sound is clearly delineated in Butterfield's work, which calls for a reintegration of the "musical" and the "poetic" in studies of medieval poetry. Through close study of works such as *Le Roman de la Rose* (texts by both Jean Renart and Guillaume de Machaut) or Adam de la Halle's *Le Jeu de Robin et de Marion*, she not only elucidates the written contexts for secular songs in the thirteenth century but also clarifies the ways in which song and narrative forms developed throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The goal of this work is both to encourage literary scholars to become familiar with different types of "lyric" and "narrative" in medieval song and poetry and remind us that the transmission of texts is not simply sharing words; it is also a matter of "relaying a living context"—a performance.[24] Thus, with these works in mind, in my project, I not only acknowledge the tension between musical sound as both destructive and constructive by analyzing the ways in which the representation of percussion and percussive sound can both uphold and destroy order, sometimes even in the very same work, as in *La Description du Monde* or *Les Tragiques,* but also attempt to move sound and its representation from the fringes of literature into a more visible, central position. Furthermore, this work highlights the different degrees to which authors and readers are aware of music, thereby illustrating Chion's assertion that music is often regarded as input that does not necessarily need to

[23] Jean-Luc Nancy, *A l'écoute* (Paris: Editions Gallilée, 2002), 18-19, 21.

[24] Butterfield 2-3, 8.

be decoded.[25] However, it is in this decoding of music—and of its literary representations—that its power in the world and its influence on human bodies becomes most notable.

When considering the link between bodies and music, Bruce Holsinger must be the first resource. His work puts human bodies in the center of medieval musical development, as both sources and subjects of music. The assertion that, in early Christianity, "the history of the body and the history of music become indistinguishable" is a crucial point of departure for my project, especially given the metonymic link between drums and human bodies.[26] In particular, his close analysis of music as a way to represent suffering in the Middle Ages helps conceptualize other connections between percussion, rhythm, and bodies, as literary representations of percussion instruments often focus on the effects they produce within humans.[27] While many of the works included in my project fall outside of the medieval period, Holsinger's focus on the deep-rooted traditions of using musical language to break semantic barriers to understanding religious or bodily pain are still an important foundation to my analyses of the ways that percussion music and instruments represent and affect bodies in literature.

Another scholar whose work illuminates the power of music and sound over bodies is Steve Goodman, whose book *Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and the Ecology of Fear* presents a wide-ranging study of "the acoustic violence of vibration and the

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[25] Chion 93

[26] Bruce Holsinger, *Music, Body and Desire in Medieval Culture: Hildegard of Bingen to Chaucer* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 39.

[27] Ibid 194.

trembling of temperaments."[28] Goodman not only provides intertextual examples of what he calls "sonic warfare", but also analyzes the various ways that sound can be weaponized in order to change the ways that bodies and minds – individual and collective – function. Although his focus is generally on the power of noise in general, rather than explicitly *musical* noise, the alternation he creates between technical analyses of sound, acoustics, biology, and physics, and more accessible, lay-directed explanations of key ideas ensures multiple entry points to the concept of sound as violence.

In contrast to the works discussed above, this study offers a thematic and somewhat longitudinal analysis of the contexts in which percussion instruments appear in literary works of various genres. By closely analyzing and "listening" to these texts, I use percussion as a window to a deeper understanding of the attitudes, beliefs, and customs surrounding depictions of war, courtly life, death rituals, and overseas exploration. However, I have also used these previous studies to inform my analyses of the relationships between percussion instruments and bodies, religion, and power. By focusing closely on discrete passages describing percussion music or instruments in various sources of literature, I combine elements of anthropological, historical, musicological, and material cultures research with a fundamentally literary approach – allowing the text to stand as its own "world", in conversation with the real context surrounding it, in order to draw conclusions about the importance of percussion in both musical performance and other elements of medieval and early modern life.

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[28] Steve Goodman, *Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and the Ecology of Fear* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2010), xiv.

Chapter Summaries

Music of Death: Funeral Music and the Danse Macabre

Death during the medieval and early modern periods was an ever-present element, especially during the violence of the Reformation and the several devastating bouts of the Plague. In a way, death, while frightening, was an integral part of medieval and early modern life. In the medieval period, the dead had three possible fates: heaven, purgatory, and hell; even after death they could remain "present" in some way to the living world, since a soul's destination might be influenced by those still alive.[29] During and after the Reformation, death represented a more definitive separation from the living, but the community left behind still needed a way to handle it in a socially and liturgically appropriate way.[30] The closeness of the grave is illustrated in two different phenomena during this time: funeral rituals and the texts of the *Danse Macabre*. Analyses of various texts representing death and death rituals tease out the symbolic and practical meanings of the musical instruments associated with these two different cultural elements in this chapter.

Funeral rituals often included the use of a different kind of percussion instrument: the bell. In both medieval and early modern funerals, church bells were used to either signal the fact of someone's death (a communicative function), to indicate their importance within the social hierarchy, or, in the case of pre-Reformation funerals,

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[29] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation: A History* (New York: Penguin, 2003) 576.

[30] Ibid. 577; See also Timothy Chesters, *Ghost Stories in Late Renaissance France: Walking by Night* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) and Neil Kenny, *Death and Tenses: Posthumous Presence in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

to ward off evil.[31] Church bells were an important part of daily life, so their use in rituals of death is no surprise. Other bells made an appearance in the funeral ritual as well, such as during the funeral procession of Francis I and the extravagant funeral of Anne de Bretagne.[32]

The texts collectively known as *danse[s] macabre[s]* come from all over Europe during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and even sixteenth centuries. They are all literary texts accompanied by illustrations, which makes for a fascinating interplay between image and text. In this chapter, I use several *danse macabre* texts: a) the *Danse Macabre des Femmes*, the first manuscript of which is dated 1482; b) Marchant's 1486 *Danse macabre*; and c) Hans Holbein's *Les Simulachres et Historiées Faces de la Mort*. Each text depicts various dead musicians playing drums or other percussion instruments, with the illustrations accompanied by text in French or Latin.

Deadly Marches: Martial Drums

As I alluded to in the previous section, France was embroiled in a variety of martial conflicts, ranging from the end of the Crusades to the Hundred Years' War, not to mention the devastating battles of the Reformation. The music described in some

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[31] Jeanine Curvers, "Burial Rituals and the Reformations in Early Modern Europe." MA Thesis. Utrecht University, 2010.

[32] Pierre du Chastel, *Le trespas, Obseques & Enterrement de tres hault, trespuissant & tresmagnanime François, par la grace de Dieu Roy de France, treschrestien, premier de ce nom, prince clement, pere des ars & sciences : les deux sermons funebres pronõcez esdictes obseques, l'ung a Nostre dame de Paris, l'autre a Sainct Denys en France*. (Paris : Robert Estienne, 1547) B4v ; Pierre Choque, *Récit des funérailles d'Anne de Bretagne : précédé d'une complainte sur la mort de cette princesse et de sa généalogie ([Reproduction en fac-similé]) le tout composé par Bretaigne son héraut d'armes ; publié pour la première fois avec une introduction et des notes par L. Merlet et Max de Gombert* (Geneva : Slatkine Reprints, 1858).

texts reflected these waves of violence. The drums which appear in the texts I analyze in this chapter are used primarily to enhance the reader's comprehension of this violence, in addition to providing auditory stimulus – to help a reader immerse him or herself in the text.

In this chapter, I discuss the war music described in the texts of Richard le Pèlerin, Jean de Joinville, and Marco Polo in order to analyze the strong connections between music and the representation and practice of violence. I also explore literary descriptions of the music of the 16th century, especially with regards to the French Psalm translations, Montaigne's *Essais* and Aubigné's *Les Tragiques*. The vernacular Psalm translations were a threat to the Catholic Church, and therefore became martial music in the minds of both the Huguenots and the Catholics.[33] This melding of faith and ferocity, while not unique to the Reformation, takes on new meaning here, when the Psalms become a divisive element within Christianity. For Montaigne and Aubigné, drum music in particular is inevitably associated with war. Montaigne sees drums as inspiring courage, while Aubigné recalls drum music in tandem with fear and destruction.

Additionally, in order to support my analysis of the literary and historical texts, I discuss parts of Thoinot Arbeau's *Orchésographie*, since, although this treatise is about dance, he discusses the importance of martial drums at length. For Arbeau, there are two broad categories of dance: *guerrière* and *recréative*. Drums are especially important for the *danse guerrière*, whose instruments are strident and suitable for a battlefield. Arbeau is also concerned with the drum as an object – his detailed

[33] W. Stanford Reid, "The Battle Hymns of the Lord: Calvinist Psalmody of the Sixteenth Century." *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies* 2(1971): 36-54.

description of the "tambour des perses" and the kind of drum used by the French[34] would certainly allow even the least musically-educated reader to recognize it. Furthermore, he elaborates on the importance of the drum for soldiers: it not only helps give them direction and courage, but it also measures *time* and, in a way, *distance*.[35] The systematic and precise way in which Arbeau lays out each rhythmic pattern seems to indicate a certain focus on drum music as an organizing force – it provides order even in the midst of chaotic situations. Moreover, I use a text by an early modern military theorist and historian, Louis de Montgommery,[36] to further discuss the use of musical instruments in war.

Drums and Dance: The Rhythms of Court

We are all very familiar with the great *ballets de cour* written by Jean-Baptiste Lully and his contemporaries in the 17th century. Drums feature prominently in these lavish spectacles, but they are not the only ones in which drums are associated with dance. In fact, broadly speaking, the art of dancing was of paramount importance for a courtier, according to Thoinot Arbeau, Baldassare Castiglione, and Madame de Lafayette. Arbeau's *Orchésographie* is a dialogue between Arbeau, a dance instructor, and Capriole, a young gentleman. Capriole seeks to learn to dance, for he regards it as

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[34] Thoinot Arbeau, *Orchésographie, Metode et teorie en forme de discours et tablature pour apprendre a dancer, battre le tambour en toute sorte & diversité de batteries, jouer du fifre & arigot, tirer des armes & escrimer, avec autres honnestes exercices fort convenables à la Jeunesse* (Lengres : Jehan des Preyz, 1589) 7r-7v.

[35] Ibid. 8v-9r

[36] Louis de Montgommery, *La Milice françoise reduite à l'ancien ordre & discipline Militaire des Legions : telle & comme la souloient observer les anciens François, à l'imitation des Romains, & des Macedoniens* (Paris : François Rousselet, 1615).

"un art fort beau & necessaire a la chose publique"; a man who cannot dance is "estimé quasie une buche de bois" at court.[37] For Castiglione, his characters in *Le livre du courtisan* by and large concede that a true courtier should be graceful, strong, and light on his feet.[38] Finally, Madame de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves* offers a compelling literary example in which dance serves as an integral part of courtly life and love.

But what does all of this have to do with drums? In a word, rhythm.[39] Not only does Arbeau's treatise instruct the reader on the importance of dance, but it is also, in some ways, a how-to manual for the rhythmic properties of each dance and the role that accompanying instruments play in each type of dance. Arbeau gives Capriole (and the reader) precise information not only about the drum itself and its many uses, but also on the various rhythms that it sets for dances. The precision of Arbeau's musical notation gives even the least-musical reader a way to see, "hear", and perform each rhythmic pattern, such that one can become for a time a percussionist oneself. With this chapter, I show the close relationship between embodied rhythm, rhetoric, and representations of courtly life in the early modern period in order to prove the social importance of percussion and dance.

Drums and Discovery: Resonating across Cultures

The late medieval and early modern periods are marked by an increasing hunger for travel from Europe to the Levant and Far East, as well as the New World. By

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[37] Arbeau 2v.

[38] Baldesar Castiglione. *Il libro del cortegiano*. Ed. Walter Barberis (Torini:Biblioteca Einaudi, 1998) 63.

[39] "[C]ar sans la vertu rithmique, la dance seroit obscure & confuse » (Arbeau, 5v)

analyzing travel literature written from the thirteenth through the late seventeenth centuries, I hope to trace the process by which non-European musical instruments may become assimilated into European culture. The texts I use in this chapter are : (1) Marco Polo, *Le Devisement du Monde* (1298); (2) André Thevet, *Les singularitez de la France antarctique, autrement nommée Amérique, & de plusieurs terres et isles découvertes de nostre temps* (1558); (3) André Thevet, *Le Brésil et les Brésiliens* (1575); (4) Jean de Léry, *Histoire d'un voyage en terre de Brésil* (1578); (5) Augustin de Beaulieu, "Mémoires du Voyage aux Indes Orientales" (c. 1619-1622); (6) Marcello Mastrilli, "Relation des Isles Philipines Faite par un Religieux qui y a demeuré 18. Ans" (1637); (7) Martin Martinius, "Description géographique de l'Empire de la Chine" (1655); (8) François Bernier, *Voyages, Contenant la Description des Etats du Grand Mogol, de l'Hindoustan, du Royaume de Cachemire, &c* (1671)

In each of these cases, I track the percussion instruments mentioned from their first encounter to their full absorption into Western musical practice, with the understanding that the simple model I have created (composed of four stages – Encounter, Acquisition, Reinterpretation, and Reclamation) is neither linear nor comprehensive, as it deals only with a limited sample size of percussion instruments within a circumscribed time period. Through this model, I show not only the ways that musical instruments act as mirrors and metonyms for non-European cultures in the eyes of European explorers, but also the importance of recognizing multiple influences on the development of Western musical and cultural practices.

A Brief History of Percussion Instruments

In order to contextualize the discussions of these instruments in the body of this dissertation, I will briefly present here the history and evolution of the drum, as well as certain other percussion instruments, during the late medieval and early modern periods.[40] The very first instruments were likely simple idiophones – sticks, stones, or bones struck together to make noise[41] - given that it takes no special skill or technology to create such instruments, only a willingness to experiment with different materials. More complicated noisemakers followed – flutes, whistles, slit drums, rattles.[42] Music and musical instruments existed long before recorded history, but even once we started keeping records, the evidence that we have today is scant compared to what surely was practiced, made, and heard in pre- and early historical time periods.

[40] For a useful primer on medieval and early modern percussion instruments, as well as details of their performance practice, see Tabourot, *Historic Percussion: A Survey* (Austin: The Tactus Press, 1994).

[41] James Blades, "'Strong Gongs Groaning' – Metals and Percussion Instruments." *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 132.5331 (1984), 149–154. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/41373707: 149.

[42] Ibid.; Bo Lawergren, "The Origin of Musical Instruments and Sounds." *Anthropos* 83.3 (1988) : 31–45. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/40461485: 41.

Kettledrums

Figure 1: A naqqara constructed sometime before the 20th century. Image credit: Tropenmuseum, part of the National Museum of World

By the 11th and 12th centuries, the Crusaders had brought the small, Arabic kettledrums, called *naqqara*, back to Europe from the Middle Eastern battlefronts.[43] Always played in pairs, the *naqqara* – called "nakers" in English and *nacaires* in French – became very popular throughout Europe in subsequent centuries. They are shaped like kettles, with round bottoms and a single skin stretched over the top – hence their name, "kettledrums". As you can see from the image to the right, the skin is held in place by an elaborately-woven rope. This rope would also have been used to tension the skin – to keep the head tight, and perhaps even to "tune" it – as hides stretch over time, or under the influence of environmental factors. This method of construction probably originated in the East, from whence these drums first came, and its Western players likely saw no reason to change it until other quick and reliable methods of tensioning drum heads were developed in the 15th and 16th centuries.[44] The bodies of these drums were made of a variety of materials – clay and wood for earlier, and less expensive, instruments;[45] copper or brass for later, more expensive, and often larger, versions of the kettledrum.[46] In terms of how each pair of *naqqara* sounded, it is hard to know. Because of the degradation of drum heads over

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[43] James Blades, "Percussion Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance: Their History in Literature and Painting." *Early Music,* 1.1 (1973): 11-18; 11.

[44] Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion* 26, 43.

[45] Blades, "The World of Percussion" 11.

[46] Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion* 43.

time, as well as the lack of surviving written music – or even detailed accounts – the kinds of music in which they were used remains a mystery.[47] We speculate that each drum in a pair may have been tensioned to produce a different pitch, making it possible for a player to create contrasting rhythmic and semi-melodic patterns. What we do know is that the *naqqara* was suitable for multiple kinds of music, from dance tunes to military marches.[48]

Distinct from the *naqqara* for modern scholars[49] are the larger kettledrums that were brought from the Ottoman Empire later in the medieval and early modern periods. Montagu states that the earliest definitive reference to these instruments in a European text dates from the mid-15th century.[50] However, I believe that Polo's mentions of the Khan's "*grant nacaire"* in his *Description du monde* may be a reference to the drums that would eventually become the timpani used so widely across Europe in the 15th century and beyond.[51] While it is true that Polo's musical vocabulary may be judged as

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[47] Montagu, *World of Medieval and Renaissance Musical Instruments* 48.

[48] Blades, "The World of Percussion" 11; Montagu, *World of Medieval and Renaissance Musical Instruments* 46.

[49] I will mention here that there appears to be some dissent between Blades and Montagu on this score. Montagu was a student and close colleague of Blades, so it is entirely possible that the research Montagu undertook after Blades' death in 1999 uncovered new evidence of the distinction between *naqqara* and timpani. Blades states in his 1973 "Percussion Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance" that "the small kettledrums used by the Arabians and the Moors inspired the European use of cavalry kettledrums, which in their turn began to be put to orchestral use in the 17th century . . . ." (12), while Montagu makes a stark distinction between the two instruments in his 2002 *Timpani and Percussion* (26-27, 42-43).

[50] Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion* 42-43.

[51] I will discuss Polo's work in greater detail in the second chapter of this dissertation.

sparse and his work as lacking in the crucial details that would confirm this hypothesis, it is my opinion that Polo's use of the word *nacaire* to describe this instrument, as well as his care in specifying its (potentially) unusual size, are enough to prompt a closer look at just when timpani were first introduced to Europeans.

Aside from their size, another distinction between *naqqara* and these large kettledrums (which I will call timpani or kettledrums for simplicity's sake) was their use. Unlike the *naqqara*, whose use seems to have been unrestricted, the timpani were, from their introduction to Europe, heavily associated with royalty.[52] Just as they had been used by leaders in the East to signify sociopolitical power,[53] so the European nobility assimilated them, along with trumpets, as symbols of their status in the 15th and 16th centuries: "Who could employ trumpeters and kettledrummers? . . . [T]hese musicians were allowed to serve only in the households of emperors, kings, electors, dukes, princes, counts, lords, and others of noble and knightly rank."[54] Every element of a kettledrummer's performance was carefully calculated to impress and to remind the audience of the importance of the drummer's employer: "In all countries the most

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[52] Montagu, *World of Medieval and Renaissance Musical Instruments* 108.

[53] Amira K. Bennison, "Drums, Banners and *Baraka*: Symbols of Authority during the First Century of Marinid Rule, 1250-1350." *The Articulation of Power in Medieval Iberia and the Maghrib*. Ed., Amira K. Bennison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) 213

[54] Caldwell Titcomb, "Baroque Court and Military Trumpets and Kettledrums : Technique and Music." *Galpin Society Journal* 9 (1956) : 56-81; 57.

magnificent uniforms were provided for the players, the most decorative aprons for the kettledrums . . ., the most lavish caparisons for the horses and drum carriages . . . ."[55]

The unequivocal masters of this art were the Germans, whose exclusive guild kept the details of their "skillful and spectacular style of playing" from the knowledge of the uninitiated.[56] The strict guild system for kettledrummers was the model throughout Europe, and the total control these groups enacted both preserved the perceived "nobility" of the instruments and has severely limited our knowledge today:

Figure 2: A modern mounted kettledrummer. The pageantry associated with horse-mounted kettledrums – the elaborate costumes, embroidered caparisons, and choreographed playing style - has not diminished in the past four centuries. Image Credit: Ultra7

> [W]e must take full account of unwritten repertoires, especially of the dance music, marches, trumpet calls, and drum patterns played by professional instrumentalists, many of them in military service. Minstrels controlled their repertory and employment through a guild system based on orality and secrecy, and little of it was written down.[57]

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[55] Ibid. 59.

[56] Blades, "The World of Percussion" 504; Titcomb 60-61.

[57] Kate Van Orden, *Music, Discipline, and Arms in Early Modern France* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005) 20.

Of course, in addition to the secrecy of the guilds was a musical culture that expected and encouraged skilled improvisation:

> Improvisation was a prerequisite and prerogative of the drummers . . . The military signals were relatively fixed . . . but it was up to the drummers to supply a more or less undetermined rhythmic bass [line] of their own invention and to adjust their parts to those of the trumpets . . . .[58]

The "varied repertoire of strokes and motives"[59] of the kettledrummers was likely shared also by players of other military drums, given the detailed descriptions of drum rhythms included by Thoinot Arbeau in *Orchésographie*, ostensibly an instructional dance manual, but also an important source of other musical information from Renaissance France.[60]

In France, the royal trumpeters and kettledrummers were part of the *Grande Ecurie*, established around 1530 and continuing to serve the French monarchy to the end of the eighteenth century.[61] This select group of instrumentalists

> . . . was responsible for the performance of music in the King's private chambers and in his chapel; they were also required for various occasions and ceremonies,

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[58] Titcomb 61.

[59] Ibid. 66.

[60] I will discuss *Orchésographie* further in the second and third chapters of the dissertation.

[61] Don L. Smithers, *The Music and History of the Baroque Trumpet before 1721* (Letchworth: Syracuse University Press, 1973) 230.

> such as balls and masquerades, religious and state celebrations, special military events, and at any other times when music was desired by the king.[62]

The extensive list of responsibilities above shows not only the importance of kettledrummers to the French court, but also the close relationship between the instruments and royal decree. In a way, this group of musicians, which generally consisted of

> twelve trumpeters, four fife players, four drummers and timpanists, twelve musicians who were 'joueurs de violons, hautbois, saqueboutes et cornets . . .,' as well as five krumhorn and *tromba marina* players, and six players of the musette and hautbois du Poitou,[63]

may be seen as an extended voice for the King of France. When ordered, no matter the occasion, they played in order to produce a visual and aural spectacle befitting the power of the court. This would have been especially true of the music for trumpets and kettledrums, which would have been bright and loud, given what we know of the construction of these instruments:

> [M]ost drumsticks then in use produced a harsh sound, having heads of ebony or similar wood, sometimes disc-shaped. Moreover, the drums themselves appear to have been equipped with very stout heads, no doubt because of the use of hard headed sticks . . . .[64]

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[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Blades, "The World of Percussion" 505.

Arbeau described these drums in *Orchésographie,* which further persuades us of the power of their sound:

> Le tambour des perses (duquel usent aulcungs allemands le portans à l'arçon de la selle) est compose d'une demye sphere de cuyvre bouché d'un fort parchemin, d'environ deux pieds & demy de diametre : & fait bruit comme d'un tonnerre, quant ladicte peau est touché avec batons.[65]

The great size and loudness of these drums helped them transition from cavalry and royal accoutrements to part of what would eventually become the Classical orchestra in the 17th and 18th centuries, in which they played the bass lines, "confined to the notes G and *c*",[66] what would be termed a *toccata*.[67]

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[65] Thoinot Arbeau, *Orchésographie, Metode et teorie en forme de discours et tablature pour apprendre a dancer, battre le tambour en toute sorte & diversité de batteries, jouer du fifre & arigot, tirer des armes & escrimer, avec autres honnestes exercices fort convenables à la Jeunesse* (Lengres : Jehan des Preyz, 1589), 6v.

[66] These would be the C one octave below middle C, and the G one fourth below that; i.e., the notes on the bottom line and second space in the modern bass clef.

[67] Titcomb 76.

Side Drums

Throughout the Middle Ages we see the rise of another kind of drum, the tabor. This drum came in a variety of sizes and shapes but was always "double-headed cord-tensioned drum with a single snare on the struck (batter) head."[68] In the figure to the right, this snare can be clearly seen. It was used "to add a buzz or rattle" to the sound as the snare – a strand of gut – vibrated vigorously against the struck hide.[69] This instrument, often accompanied by a pipe, was used to play dance music. Although we do not have surviving examples of medieval music composed specifically for pipe and tabor, Montagu extrapolates that "it is probably that the tabor rhythms were simple and steadily repetitive as they certainly were in the late sixteenth century and as they are in many parts of Europe today."[70] Mentions and depictions of the pipe and tabor can be found in many literary and artistic texts, including *Orchésographie* and *La Danse macabre*, two texts that I will discuss later in the first, second, and third chapters.

Figure 3: A pipe and tabor player pictured in Morley, H. (1892). *Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair ... Fourth edition*. Glasgow: G. Routledge & Sons. Image Credit: The British Library.

Over time, starting in the 13th century,[71] the tabor underwent an evolution, becoming larger and more often associated with martial music, a change often

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[68] Blades, "Percussion Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance" 12.

[69] Montagu, *World of Medieval and Renaissance Musical Instruments* 45-6.

[70] Ibid. 46.

[71] Blades, "Percussion Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance" 12.

attributed to a growing familiarity with Eastern military music traditions.[72] In this time, the new, larger side-drum apparently became a cornerstone of French musical identity:

> Le tambour duquel usent les François (assés cogneu par un chacun) est de bois cave long d'environ deux pieds & demy, estoupé d'un cousté & d'aultre de peaulx de parchemin, arrestées avec deux cercles d'environ deux pieds & demy de diametre, bandées avec cordeaux affin qu'elles soient plus roides & faict (comme vous pouvez avoir ouy plusieurs fois) un grand bruit, quant lesdictes peaux sont frappées avec deux battons que celluy qui les bat tient en ses mains.[73]

Contrast this massive size with the earlier illustration of the tabor, and it becomes clear that the once soft-toned instrument has now become a powerful instrument of war. [74]

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[72] Ibid.

[73] Arbeau 7r.

[74] Blades, "Percussion Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance" 12.

Timbres

Another common instrument in the medieval period was the *timbre*, which we would recognize today as a timbrel or a tambourine.[75] This instrument, like the *naqqara* and the timpani, originated in the East.[76] These drums are quite shallow, with a single skin, and a frame often decorated with metal jingles or miniature cymbals. Some of them may have been snared, like the tabor.[77] In the figure to the right, the woman in front on the right, who represents Miriam in Exodus 15:20, appears to be playing a timbrel. Although the metal discs are difficult to discern in this image, they are there, and the instrument is being played in the customary manner for the time:

Figure 4: The woman in front is playing a timbrel. Image Credit: The Golden Haggadah (?) Barcelona, c.1320 Manuscript on parchment, Author Unknown.

> The instrument was always held in the palm of the hand, held upright with the hand below the drum, with the fingers on the skin, not held from the side with the thumb towards the skin, as we play the tambourine in the orchestra today. . . This would suggest that fairly complex rhythmic patterns were used with, as today in the east, considerable tonal variety.[78]

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[75] Montagu, *World of Medieval and Renaissance Musical Instruments* 46.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion* 25.

[78] Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion* 25.

In addition, this playing position likely means that the *timbre* was a relatively soft instrument, unlike today's tambourine, which often sounds brash. Finally, the *timbre* was the primary instrument used to translate the Latin *tympanum* to readers of Christian religious texts,[79] thus rendering it a familiar, popular, and faith-aligned instrument.

Bells, Rattles, and Other Percussion Instruments

Other percussion instruments certainly existed in medieval and Renaissance Europe, from cymbals to bells to xylophones, although there is some dispute about whether cymbals as we know them were played in the medieval period.[80] In Book Seven of his *Harmonie universelle*, Mersenne describes "des cloches, & autres vaissaux semblables, des Castaignettes, des Cymbales" in addition to drums and "Rebubes,"[81] which we would call a jaw harp or mouth harp today.

One of the most important groups of percussion instruments, bells, is the first one that Mersenne treats in this text, immediately telling his readers that, despite the popular belief that Pope Sabinian[82] was the inventor of the bell, it was more likely that he and his contemporaries "les ont seulement introduites dans les Temples."[83] In fact,

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[79] Montagu, *World of Medieval and Renaissance Musical Instruments* 8.

[80] Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion* 17-18.

[81] Marin Mersenne *Harmonie Universelle, contenant la théorie et la pratique de la musique. Livre septiesme: Des instruments de percussion (Edition de 1636).* (Paris: Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, 1965) 1.

[82] Pope from 604 to 606 AD. See "Sabinian." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online.* 22 Sept. 2018. Available FTP: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Sabinian.

[83] Mersenne 2.

bells of all kinds – those hit with hammers, those with clappers, and pellet bells – existed throughout the ancient world and would have been used for a variety of purposes, from religious to domestic.[84] By the ninth century, cast clapper bells used in church towers (for religious or municipal/civil purposes) were common, and our first evidence of bells as dedicated musical instruments in Europe does not appear until the end of the eleventh century.[85]

Figure 5: King David plays the bells. Queen Mary Psalter BL (14th century), Image Credit: The British Library

Other instruments discussed in this dissertation, such as rattles and xylophones, are not often shown in European art or texts, although xylophones were certainly known throughout Europe by the 16th century, after being imported from East Africa.[86] The full extent of percussion use in Europe in the medieval and early modern periods may never be known, but their relative simplicity and versatility increase the probability that people experimented with different shapes, materials, and construction techniques in order to create unique sounds.

Percussion instruments are used in literature in order to give additional grounding to a text, much as they do in music. They may be symbols of what it means to

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[84] Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion* 12-14.

[85] Ibid. 18-19.

[86] Ibid. 51.

be a king, a soldier, or a priest. They provide physical cues through which a courtier can learn grace or the proper pursuit of a lover. They create tension between life and death, worship and war, familiar and exotic. Their status as largely rhythm (not melody) instruments puts them in the curious position of being both fundamental to many musical traditions while also easily ignored; after all, who sees the foundation once the whole house is finished? Exploring the use and representation of percussion instruments in a variety of Francophone texts from the medieval and early modern periods, reveals that, far from being frivolous details, curiosities, or embellishments embedded in a story, a chronicle, or a prayer, percussion instruments in literature enable the reader's understanding of a text and its broader context. Furthermore, as the wide range of texts and time periods included in my project demonstrates, I wish to call attention to a previously sidelined element of European musical culture. Because music, particularly percussion, has been an integral part of human societies since prehistory, analyzing the representations of percussion music will help modern scholars form a deeper understanding of the ways that authors incorporate elements of prevailing social influences that exist outside the world of the text (such as music, visual art, or performance art) to explain a custom, describe a culture, or introduce a character. In this way, we can recreate a multi-media experience of reading and recenter the act of listening in the study of medieval and early modern texts, whose reception relies so heavily on more than the static, solitary, silent experience of reading words on a page.

Chapter 1

Music of Death: Funeral Music and the *Danse Macabre*

Death and Everyday Life

The medieval and early modern periods in Europe were marked heavily by death; ordinary life was often overshadowed by extraordinary hardships. Perhaps the most obvious are the devastating bouts of plague that swept through periodically from the 14th through the 17th centuries. The first recorded instance of the plague in Europe was in 1347, when it reached the shores of Italy, and over the next four hundred years it decimated the European population. Although the final death toll is hard to pinpoint, anywhere between 30 and 60% of Europe's populace died during this time.[1] The incredible virulence of the disease forced survivors to change burial traditions. Mass graves for poor plague victims were recorded to have been dug in the Hôtel-Dieu's Trinité cemetery in 1587, a departure from the normal practice of single graves in local parishes.[2] Even when burial rituals remained intact, the careful rotation of grave sites within parish cemeteries and the efforts of the *fossoyeurs* to accede to individual burial wishes were affected by the new influx of plague dead.[3] This literal upheaval of earth - as new graves were dug and slightly-older ones reopened - and figurative overturning of

[1] Ole J. Benedictow, *The Black Death 1346-1353: The Complete History* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004) 27, 32.

[2] Vanessa Harding, *The Dead and the Living in Paris and London, 1500-1670* (Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 2002) 114.

[3] Ibid. 81.

accepted burial customs may have added another layer of complexity to the medieval and early modern periods' awareness of and perspectives on death.

Plague was not the only scythe wielded by death during this time; war also claimed many lives, both at home and abroad. The massive, pan-European conflicts of first the Hundred Years' War and then the Thirty Years' War contributed to a staggering death toll. France alone lost about half of its population during the Hundred Years' War, to a combination of disease and battle,[4] and estimates of the casualties of the Thirty Years' War range from three to nearly 12 million dead.[5] France's own wars of religion also decimated the population, with anywhere between two and four million killed between 1562 and 1598.[6] These wars left deep scars on the country, especially in the case of the wars of religion, when death represented an even more final divide between Catholics and Huguenots. Not only were burial sites for Huguenots separated from those of Catholics,[7] but the confessional differences meant that a heavenly afterlife may have been denied one's enemies. For example, Huguenots rejected the Catholic tradition of last rites, and thus were deemed heretics; Huguenots buried in "sacred" churchyard ground were, according to Catholics, a source of pollution, and it was not uncommon for them to be disinterred.[8] Certainly, the social and economic pressures on the Huguenots

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[4] Peter Turchin, *Historical Dynamics: Why States Rise and Fall* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003) 179-80.

[5] Peter H. Wilson, *The Thirty Years War: Europe's Tragedy* (London: Penguin, 2009) 787.

[6] Robert J. Knecht, *The French Civil Wars 1562-1598* (Harlow: Longman, 2000) 91.

[7] Harding 277.

[8] Ibid.

made following their own burial traditions difficult, a sign of their inability to be fully accepted into French society, where there was no previous tradition of religious coexistence.[9] From the Calvinist perspective, Catholic calls for intercession from the living on behalf of the dead were "diabolic"[10] and completely contrary to the Huguenot doctrine of *sola fide*.[11] Calvinism also "emphasized the numerical restrictions on those who would enjoy posthumous survival of the happy kind", in direct contrast to the Catholic beliefs that greater care during the burial ceremony, including elaborate masses and church burial, could positively influence a soul's eventual fate.[12]

A final destabilizing force on France acted more indirectly on its people: the deaths of kings. During the tumultuous period of the Protestant Reformation, France lost five kings: François I, Henri II, François II, Charles IX, and Henri III. For each of these monarchs, death had to be observed with the greatest attention to ritual; the funeral ceremonies of the first four lasted approximately two months each.[13] This relatively quick turnover may have increased the sociopolitical impact of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation, as the country tore itself apart and knit itself back together under the aegis of uncompromising Catholicism, with the eventual

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[9] Ibid. 277-78.

[10] Neil Kenny, *Death and Tenses: Posthumous Presence in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) 39.

[11] Timothy Chesters, *Ghost Stories in Late Renaissance France: Walking by Night* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 23.

[12] Kenny 53.

[13] Ralph E. Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony in Renaissance France* (Geneva: Librairie E. Droz, 1960) 17.

repeal of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV's Edict of Fontainebleau in 1685. Additionally, the pomp that accompanied a royal funeral provided yet another spectacle of death at which to marvel, albeit a much loftier and more sanitized one than what was seen at the huge burial pits of the Trinité during times of crisis – such as during difficult plague years[14] – or the horror of death on the battlefield, "sans prêtre et sans sepulture."[15]

Death, then, appeared at every turn, a constant in the lives of everyone, from every social stratum. Its effects were strictly recognized by all, both in burial rituals and in other cultural spheres, so that, although commonplace, it never became banal. One method of observing death was the incorporation of music into death rituals and the association of music with death in the popular psyche.

During the early medieval period, death was understood to be part of Satan's work in the world, and instrumental music was intimately connected with vice. Instrumental music was thus, through the Devil, symbolically linked with death.[16] This strict relationship began to break down over time, as images of angel consorts became more and more common in medieval and early modern art.[17] Image after image of angels playing musical instruments and even dancing eroded the idea of inherently-

[14] Harding 113.

[15] Edgar Morin, *L'Homme et la mort* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1970) 39.

[16] Kathi Meyer-Baer, *Music of the Spheres and the Dance of Death: Studies in Musical Iconology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970) 291.

[17] Ibid. 130.

devilish instrumental music, and death became less aligned with the devil.[18] The conception of death as evidence of Satan's involvement in the world stemmed from the Christian doctrine of Original Sin: "La réalité humaine y est définie en fonction d'un péché qui reçoit la mort en salaire, mort qui, à son tour, remémore son inseparable compagnon: le péché."[19] Death was a sign of the Devil's power over sinful humanity, and thus dying was a reminder not only of the Fall but also of the individual sins of each person.[20]

However, the thirteenth century (heretical) Averroist revival of Aristotelian philosophies of time and eternity may explain the de-stigmatization of death.[21] Time changed from fully human and mundane – representing mortality born from human sin – to "the symbol of the eternal continuity and immortality of the great collective called the human race."[22] This kind of eternity, called *aevum* by Thomas Aquinas, is the domain of the angels, whose nature remains good and unchanged even though their temporal domain does alter around them.[23] Angels are a reminder that the passage of time is *not* necessarily linked to mortality and sin. The erosion of this relationship opens the way for a milder interpretation of death as simply a continuation of our time in

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[18] Ibid. 291.

[19] Claude Blum, *La Représentation de la mort dans la littérature française de la Renaissance* (Paris : Librairie Honoré Champion, 1989) 26.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz. *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Ann Arbor: MPublishing, University of Michigan Library, 2014. Digital Edition) 273.

[22] Ibid. 277.

[23] Ibid. 281.

creation, not punishment for our humanity. Therefore, souls in heaven can mingle with joyful angels, all dancing to celebrate God. These changes opened the door to musical rituals as part of the remembrance of the dead.

On one level, musical performance was a way to commemorate the dead and emphasize their continued relationships to the living, for the spaces occupied by each were not always clearly demarcated. In medieval France, those who had died remained, in some way, part of the living world – the popular view was that their surviving family members and friends could use prayer in order to influence the fate of the newly-departed soul.[24] In other words, the prayers of the living could help elevate a soul to heaven, consign it to a long wait in purgatory, or condemn it to hell. The Reformation brought a change into these beliefs; souls were sharply cut off from the world of the living at the moment of death, as Protestants firmly rejected the idea of Purgatory and the tradition of offering prayers to help speed a soul's passage to heaven.[25] However, the need of the living for socially- and liturgically-appropriate ways to recognize the dead remained.[26]

The spiritual spaces of the dead and the living were mirrored by the physical spaces they occupied during this period. In large cities, such as Paris, burial space – or, more accurately, any space – was at a premium. The acreage of graveyards maintained by many parishes, as well as the larger cemeteries of the Hôtel de Dieu, was begrudged by the living. Neighbors of the churches used these burial grounds for much more

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[24] MacCulloch 576; Kenny 38.

[25] Kenny 43.

[26] MacCulloch 577.

profane purposes, such as drying laundry or dumping waste,[27] and the Cimetière des Innocents was eventually closed and cleared out by the city of Paris in the 1780s because of fears of disease due to the high concentration of bodies.[28] This encroachment of the living upon the dead was not unreciprocated, however. The rich often exercised their right to be buried within church buildings themselves, either in specially-constructed crypts or under the very floor of the church.[29] Thus, the dead were ever present for the living, crowding into just as much space as they used in life, rendering ideas of "presence" and "absence" vague. Physically and metaphysically separating the dead from the living would have been impossible. Therefore, burial rituals, and particularly funeral music, provided a different way for the living to mark the boundary between life and death. It recognized and encouraged the individual emotional impact of a loss while also emphasizing the communal aspect of death.

One of the most well-known examples of communal, musical death ritual in the late medieval and early modern periods is the genre of the *déploration* composition. These intricate pieces grew out of a long tradition of musical laments for the dead: a *planctus*, a kind of monophonic chant in Latin, was sung to mark the deaths of both Charlemagne and his son in the ninth century, and Richard I's death was honored by a Galician *planh* written by Gaucelm Faidit in 1199.[30] They became steadily more complex, adding additional vocal lines and texts to become the polyphonic, polytextual

[27] Harding 74.

[28] Ibid. 113

[29] Ibid. 140-41.

[30] Sean Hallowell, "The Déploration as Musical Idea." Diss. Columbia University, 2013, 41.

compositions we recognize today as vibrant tributes to the genius of long-dead composers.[31] These pieces "originated from a communal desire to honor the memory of a departed individual", but in a specific context, since the communities who maintained this method of honoring the dead "were at once concerned with rendering tribute do a composerly legacy and pledging homage to a vocational dynasty."[32]

Death and Funeral Music

The communal aspect of the *déploration* genre is mirrored in a much less complex kind of funeral music: bell-ringing. It is no surprise that bells, a kind of percussion instrument, were an important part of the medieval and early modern funeral ritual. At the time, bell-ringing was closely associated with death; bells were often believed to have the ability to drive away evil or even raise the dead.[33] This connection between bells and death can be seen as part of a wider relationship between percussion instruments and changing between stages or states, as Needham explains:

> …[this] class of noise-makers [percussion instruments] is associated with the formal passage from one status or condition to another. […] What I am proposing, namely, is that there is a significant connexion between percussion and transition.[34]

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[31] *Déploration de la mort de Johannes Ockeghem*, etc.

[32] Hallowell 8.

[33] Jennifer Woodward, *The Theatre of Death: The Ritual Management of Royal Funerals in Renaissance England 1570-1625* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997) 55.

[34] Rodney Needham, "Percussion and Transition." *Man*, n.s. 2.4 (1967): pp. 606-14; 611.

This idea of percussion instruments as somehow linked to transition is a feature of many cultures throughout the world, especially during death rituals.[35] For what is a more transitional event than the passage from life into death? Bells, therefore, played an important role in nearly all French funerals throughout the medieval and early modern periods. During the medieval period, bells were rung copiously to signal death, but the Reformation's more constrained codes called for only a single short peal at the time of death and before and after burial.[36]

One of the best ways to learn about the role of bells and other percussion instruments in medieval and early modern French funerals is to study accounts of royal funerals. The French royal funeral ceremony is a masterpiece of transition ritual, as it both honors the departed and recognizes the passing on of power to the new king:

> The French royal funeral ceremony emerged as an attempt to resolve the dilemma of two conflicting traditions of kingship: one, the very old mediaeval Christian theory according to which the new king was not fully empowered until he was crowned; the other, the late mediaeval and modern theory holding that the new king exercised full sovereign power from the moment of his predecessor's death. In the late 15th and 16th ceremonies, the royal funeral provided a ritualistic compromise between these two theories by situating the moment of transference of sovereignty neither at the death of the old king nor at

[35] Woodward 60.

[36] Ibid. 55.

> the coronation of the new one, but midway between – that is, at the funeral and burial of the deceased.[37]

This decision demonstrates the contemporary political and philosophical decree of a king's dual embodiment, explained best as the king's "Body natural" and "Body politic."[38] The natural body – subject to illness, injury, and death – is contained within the political body, which is ageless, immutable, and perfect – the personification of kingship which is passed from ruler to ruler and thus guarantees political continuity.[39] The royal funeral ritual is the perfect occasion to demonstrate the immortality of the Body politic by giving the king's subjects a chance to participate in the transfer of the Body politic from the Body natural of the old king to that of the new. As befits a ritual of such importance to the sociopolitical structure of the time, the whole ceremony, from the time of the old king's death to his burial, was an incredibly elaborate affair, with both liturgical and social, secular requirements: "the conduct of the deathbed, watching the corpse, the procession to bring it to church, bellringing, lights, the distribution of alms, and drinking and eating."[40]

While all these parts of the funeral ceremony were common to each funeral that took place, not just royal ones, they signified the social status of the deceased and allowed for wide participation in the rituals surrounding death. Funerals – especially royal ones - were not just a simple ceremony for family and friends of the deceased; they

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[37] Giesey v.

[38] Kantorowicz 7.

[39] Ibid. 13.

[40] Harding 179.

were "performance[s] with concentric circles of participation."[41] Instrumental music, in particular bellringing and the occasional drum, muffled with black shrouds, were audible records of the status of the deceased; audience members did not need to be physically close to a funeral procession to be privy to this information.[42] Although the standard for bellringing was a single church bell, tolled after death, and slightly longer peals before or during the funeral service "to attract attention and prayers", even more bells could be included in a service, for a price: "…several [churches in Paris] prescribed rates for 'la grande sonnerie', and for the second, third, and fourth *sonneries*. These were probably peals . . . ."[43]

One of the most detailed accounts of a royal funeral is Pierre du Chastel's 1547 description of François I's funeral proceedings, which lasted from March 31, 1547 when he died, to May 21 of that same year, when he was buried.[44] Du Chastel noted with great precision the composition of François I's funeral procession, which included not only nobles and members of the court, but also "cinq cens poures vestuz de dueil" bearing torches[45] and twenty-four bellringers:

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[41] Ibid. 235.

[42] Woodward 8; Harding 203.

[43] Harding 203-204.

[44] Pierre du Chastel, *Le trespass, Obseques & Enterrement de tres hault, trespuissant & tresmagnanime François, par la grace de Dieu Roy de France, treschrestien, premier de ce nom, prince clement, pere des ars & sciences: les deux sermons funebres pronõcez esdictes obseques, l'ung a Nostre dame de Paris, l'autre a Sainct Denys en France* (Paris : Robert Estienne, 1547) 3, 10.

[45] Ibid. 11.

> Les XXIIII Crieurs de la ville de Paris sonnans continuellement leurs clochettes ; sinon que es endroicts des carrefours ils sarrestoyent pour dire, Priez Dieu pour l'ame de treshault, trespuissant & tresmagnanime Francois par la grace de Dieu Roy de France treschrestien, premier de ce nom, prince clement, père des ars & sciences.[46]

Figure 6: A youth holding two large hand-bells. Image Credit: *The Romance of Alexander,* MS. Bodl. 264. 120v.

By continually ringing their *clochettes*, hand-bells like those pictured in Figure 6, the bellringers were signifying two things to the onlookers. First, the unending noise alerted everyone within earshot of the procession, even if one were too far away to see. The large number of bells signals the great importance of the deceased, an audible sign of his social status and the concern of his subjects for the state of his soul. Second, the sound of the bells escorted the funeral party through a physical transition (the procession into the church), a spiritual transition (a call for prayers for a king whose life had ended and whose soul needed to be supported on its journey to heaven), and a sociopolitical transition (the final moments of François I's reign).

Once the procession reached the church, Notre Dame de Paris, du Chastel describes the splendor of the setting:

> Et pour lassiette & receuil desdictes trois effigies, y avoit au milieu du cueur une grande & singuliere chapelle ardant, de quinze pieds en carrure: l'amortissement

[46] Ibid. B.iii.21.

de laquelle montoit a six toises de hault, garnie de treize clochers tous croisez & recroisonnez avec une extreme quantité de luminaire.[47]

François I's funeral was actually a joint affair: his two sons, who had died earlier in the year, were buried at the same time. Their bodies, which were "mis en bois et plomb"[48] were accompanied by effigies which were remarkable in their resemblance to the three men in life. Richly dressed in fine clothes, wearing symbols of their rank, and displayed throughout the period before and during the funeral procession, these effigies took the place of the actual bodies of the three royals, which had been "ouuert[s] & vuidé[s], ainsi que lon a de costume faire en tel cas" by the *medecins et chirurgiens* of the court.[49] Their prominent display in a *chapelle ardant* or catafalque in the church renders the funeral a spectacle of sorts, emphasizing their power and obscuring what was happening to the actual royal bodies: decay and dissolution within wood and iron encasements. The elaborate frame of the *chapelle ardant* literally surrounded the effigies with light and music – the thirteen bell towers that decorated this setting called to mind the bells of the church itself, whose peals invited further prayers for the dead king and his sons.

The pealing of bells for the dead not only calls for prayers, but also emphasizes the ephemerality of life. Included in du Chastel's account of the funeral are the sermons

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[47] Chastel 28-29.

[48] Chastel 3.

[49] Ibid. A.ii.3.

pronounced during the ceremony, which serve the purpose of both celebrating the deceased and calling the audience to contemplate their own mortality:

> La mort introduicte par le peché d'ung homme, & consequemment le regne de la mort : soubs lequel l'homme, qui tend perpetuellement & court touiours incessamment a ceste fin, vient en ce monde, & sespanouit comme une ombre, & ne demeure iamais en ung estat.[50]

In the same way that souls vanish like shadows after a comparatively short time, the pealing of bells soon fades away as soundwaves spread ever further from their source. However, just as the actions taken by a human being before death can have far-reaching effects, the beauty of the sound and the importance of the message of tolling bells reaches many. Therefore, although neither life nor sound can last forever "en ung estat", they can still affect the world, even though those effects may be small.

Another important funeral of the time that of Anne de Bretagne, queen of France, in 1514. The description of the funeral ritual held for her opens with a *complaincte* on her death, in which the narrator bemoans his inability to fully express his grief:

> Noblesse, hélas ! si je n'ay bouche ou langue
> Pour faire ici suffizante harangue
> Et pour former en riches oraisons
> D'armes et timbres les triomphans blasons,
> Pardonnés moy . . . .[51]

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[50] Chastel 42.

[51] Pierre Choque, *Récit des funérailles d'Anne de Bretagne : précédé d'une complaincte sur la mort de cette princesse et de sa généalogie [Reproduction en fac-similé] le tout*

Figure 7: Detail from Andrea Bonaiuti's *Chiesa militante e trionfante* (1365). Image Credit : *Chiesa militante e trionfante* (1365). http://www.travelingintuscany.com/arte/andreabonaiuto/cappellonedegli spagnoli.htm

The *timbres* which he mentions in these lines can be construed either as small drums or tambourines (Figure 7) or as clapperless bells played with small hammers, also known as cymbala (Figure 8). Based on the context – the inclusion of "armes" and the adjective "triomphans", which indicate a more martial feel to the poem, the author may be alluding more to a kind of drum, an unusual inclusion in a civilian funeral[52], and perhaps a reference to her unceasing – if ultimately unsuccessful - fight to preserve Brittany's independence from France.[53] In any case, regardless of their actual forms, percussion instruments are once more associated with a funeral, and, in this case, would be part of a spectacle of "riches oraisons" and "triomphans blasons" for the deceased queen. But, these instruments are figurative, and are associated directly with parts of the narrator's body: his "bouche" and "langue" are missing, and thus he does

Figure 8: King David playing a cymbala with small hammers. Psalter, France c. 1228-1247. MS M.283 fol 94v, detail. Image Credit: British Library.

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composé par Bretaigne son hérault d'armes ; publié pour la première fois avec une introduction et des notes par L. Merlet et Max de Gombert (Geneva : Slatkine Reprints, 1858) 5.

[52] "Fifes, and drums draped with black cloth, were a feature of military funerals . . . . They did not appear in civilian funeral processions, including those of royalty" (Woodward 8).

[53] Elizabeth A. Brown, "Order and Disorder in the Life and Death of Anne de Bretagne." *The Cultural and Political legacy of Anne de Bretagne: Negotiating Convention in Books and Documents*. Ed. Cynthia J. Brown (Suffolk: D.S. Brewer, 2010) 182.

not have the *armes* or the *timbres* to praise and lament the queen. This bodily failure, translated into a musical lacuna, is a telling sign of the effects of death and mourning, both on this poet as an individual and on society as a whole.

Bells are also important in the procession and display of the queen's body, as they were for François I's. Anne de Bretagne's body, unlike François I's, was buried in several places: her body at Saint-Denis, and her heart in Nantes.[54] Thus, the ceremonies were of great complexity and lasted for a long time, from her death in early January to the interment of her heart in mid-March.[55] Her body was displayed on a "chapelle ardante, qui fut faicte à cinq clochers et croix recroisetées,"[56] the elaborate structure again signaling her high rank. The procession escorting her heart also featured bells:

> Premier, marcha un crieur ayant une robe de velours noir, et à son doz et poictrine et sur les deux espaulles avoit quatre escussons aux armes de la dicte dame. Il portoit deux cloches qui sonnoit, et à chascun carrefour cryoit moult hault et piteusement, disoit ce qui ensuyt : 'Dites vos patenostres à Dieu : c'est pour l'ame de la très crestienne royne et duchesse, nostre souveroine dame naturelle et maistresse, de laquelle on porte le cueur aux Carmes. Priez Dieu pour son ame.'[57]

The crier's costume, which displayed the marks of the queen over most of his body, is a visible reminder of the purpose of the procession, while his voice and instruments

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[54] E. Brown 191.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Choque 49.

[57] Ibid. 95-96.

spread the information audibly to a wider audience. Once again, Anne de Bretagne's funeral arrangements are not nearly as spectacular the funeral of François I, which took place 33 years later. However, the use of a bellringer, as well as the clearly formulaic announcement calling for prayers and praising the deceased, are still a firm reminder to the living of the importance of the body that was being buried.

Danses Macabres

The focus on bodies in death did not just apply to the elaborate funeral rituals of the nobility but were the key element in the genre of the *danse macabre*. These works, usually illustrations accompanied by text of some sort, emphasize the transitory state of dying and the power of death in the world of the living. As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, a neat separation between the living and the dead in medieval and early modern France did not exist. The intertwining of the dead and the living exists both because of the particular spatial constraints of the time and the religious beliefs of the people:

> Intimacy between the living and the dead was possible because death was not envisaged as a full extinguishing of either body or spirit. In doctrinal terms, the body awaited resurrection even as it decayed, while the soul entered one realm of a tripartite afterlife.[58]

Thus, body and soul, after death, were separate entities, even though they remained closely linked – resurrection of the body cannot, after all, be accomplished without the soul. According to Christian doctrine, until Jesus Christ returns to Earth to resurrect the

[58] Nancy Caciola, "Wraiths, Revenants, and Ritual in Medieval Culture." *Past and Present,* 152 (August 1996): 3-45; 7.

dead into new, eternal bodies, the soul is an incorruptible substance, while the body is subject to the corruption inherent in all living things. Furthermore, this separation of a person into soul and body, the body being just a sort of outer garment, must have created some tension in the medieval and early modern psyche. Once the soul had left the body, that body was still present in the world, to be dealt with by the living. Thus, the most disruptive interaction with that dead body was the possibility that it would be somehow subverted; that it would walk among the living possessed by the Devil:

> Manente adhuc mortui corporis organismo, velut vestem homo, corpus organizatum potest diabolus subintrare, & ad voces ac verba fauces, reformare, arteriasque ad motum membrorum revocare.[59]

This horrifying image, of a dead and decomposing body walking the earth, can be seen in the *danses macabres* that were created throughout the late medieval period, where partially-decayed intermingled with people who were just crossing the boundary between life and death.[60] Each of these illustrated texts are linked by the presence of skeletons or withered corpses that lead the recently dead, emphasizing the "doubling and repetition" of bodies and "the physicality of the decomposing body" within a series of grim *tableaux*.[61] The uncomfortable proximity of the dead and the living underlines yet again the incredibly faint barrier between death and life in medieval and early

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[59] Tomás de Cantimpré (ca. 1200-ca. 1270), *Thomae Cantipratani ... Miraculorum Et Exemplorum Memorabilium Sui Temporis Libri Duo* .... (Duaci: ex typographia Baltazaris Belleri sub Circino aureo, 1605) 448, ii.49.7.

[60] Caciola 24.

[61] Elina Gertsman, *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages: Image, Text, Performance* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers n.v., 2010) 23.

modern society. Even once a body was buried, it was not removed from the sight of the living permanently. Not only were gravesites frequently opened in order to bury another body,[62] but the practice of charnelling put bodies on display in a striking way, especially in the Cimetière des Innocents:

> The surrounding walls were lined with arcades known as the *charniers* . . . in which exhumed bones were stored. [. . .] [T]he piled up skulls and bones were clearly visible [there]. Bones had been stored this way since at least the late fourteenth century, and it remained one of the most remarked features of the Innocents.[63]

Of course, this cemetery was also the site of one of the most famous *danses,* later immortalized by Guy Marchant's printed reproductions in the fifteenth century. The 1486 printing of this *danse macabre* features four death musicians (Figure 9) to help the *Acteur* create a dialogue with the character of Death and forty unfortunates from all ranks, from king to drunkard. These death musicians overturn the viewer's expectations: instead of music and dancing being a joyful expression of life, the death minstrels and the skeletons who lead the dance underline the ascendancy of death.[64] As one can see

Figure 9: Les quatre morts, *Danse macabre*, p. 14, Ed. Edward F. Chaney.

[62] Harding 64.

[63] Ibid. 102

[64] Susanne Warda, "Dance, Music, and Inversion: The Reversal of the Natural Order in the Medieval *Danse Macabre*." *Mixed Metaphors: The* Danse Macabre *in Medieval and*

in Figure 9, each death minstrel holds a different instrument, from left to right, a bagpipe, a portative organ or regal, a harp, and a pipe and tabor. As Hammerstein points out in his chapter on the *Todesmenestrels*, each instrument is clearly illustrated and held in a realistic playing position,[65] which gives the viewer the impression that each *mort* is ready and waiting for the cue to start the dance. The gaping holes in their bodies stand in stark contrast to the beautifully-intact instruments, especially the harp and the tabor, whose tightly-stretched strings and skin foreshadow the music they will make. Their physical integrity assures the viewer of the strength of the music they can produce, as it will literally lead souls across the barrier between the world of the living and the realm of the dead. This music has an enduring power, even though the notes themselves fade away, since a human soul cannot truly return to life. Meanwhile, the withered and torn skin of the dead players seems to have split under too much strain due to decay, indicating the overall fragility of the body and the imminent end of its usefulness on earth, not to mention its unsuitability for such an activity as dancing.

The text associated with each corpse underlines this theme of constant and unavoidable decay, with the first *mort* instructing readers: "regardes nous / Mors, pourris, puans, descouvers ; / Comme sommes, telx seres vous".[66] The fourth adjective, *descouvers*, recalls to the modern reader the fact that this *danse macabre* was originally a fresco on the arcades surrounding the *charniers* of the *Innocents*, where bones were

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Early Modern Europe. Ed. Sophie Oosterwijk (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011) 73.

[65] Reinhold Hammerstein, *Tanz und Musik des Todes : die mittelalterlichen Totentänze und ihr Nachleben* (München: Franke, 1980) 73.

[66] *La danse macabre* (Paris: Guy Marchant, 1486) vv. 22-24.

regularly and customarily exhumed and displayed in ever-growing piles. Far from being a disrespectful practice, however, the act of uncovering the dead in this context changes bones into "safe and even sacred relics" that "satisfied the need to value and respect the dead, and to feel their continuing presence in the community".[67] The *danse macabre* that surrounded the *charniers* redoubles the messages that the bones and bodies of the dead should bring to the living: the certainty of mortality, the ambiguity of one's time of death, and the truth that even "cent ans seront tost passés".[68] The fourth *mort,* who plays the drum, gives the most frightening warning, that, while heaven and hell are the two choices for the souls of the dead, « Peu de gens sont qui aient cure / Des trespassés ne de noz dis; / Le fait d'eulx git en adventure."[69]

This gravity on the part of the fourth dead musician befits one of the symbolic aspects of the tabor he plays: the drum as a sign of penitence, especially the mortification of the flesh. This understanding of the drum is aptly expressed in the writings of Gregory the Great, specifically, three passages in his *Commentaire sur le premier livre des rois*. The first one explains exactly why we should associate the drum with fleshly punishment for our sins: "Tympanum vero, quia de mortui animalis corio tenditur, in eo non inconuenientur carnis nostrae mortificatio figuratur."[70] The strong link between flesh – albeit non-human flesh – stretched tightly over some kind of

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[67] Harding 112.

[68] *La danse macabre* vv. 40-51.

[69] *La danse macabre* vv. 41-48

[70] Grégoire le grand, *Commentaire sur le premier livre des rois,* t. IV. Trad. Adalbert de Vogüé (Paris : Les éditions du cerf, 2000) Ch. 175.2, vv. 11-13; "The drum in truth, because it is stretched with the leather of a dead animal, not unfittingly symbolizes the mortification of our flesh" (my translation).

wooden frame and atonement through physical punishment brings to mind not only the Crucifixion but also the prevailing view of the body as the source of many sins. Gregory invokes these sins as well, which are combatted by those who beat a drum (and by extension, their own flesh): "Tympanum sonabat, qui dicebat: *Mortificate membra uestra, quae sunt super terram, fornicationem, immunditiam, libidinem, concupiscentiam malam*."[71] Thus, the drum can be taken as a reminder of the Crucifixion – and thus the salvation of humanity, as well as a metaphor for spiritual redemption through physical suffering for individual humans:

> "Possunt haec instrumenta [psaltery, drum, flute, and harp] ad praedicationem redemptoris referri. Et quia non ualde superius collem domini ipsum esse redemptorem diximus, organorum conuenientiam intueamur. […] Et qui disciplinam mortificationis nostrae in eo asserit, uelut tympanum ferit.[72]

However, the drum may also imply a more troubling belief that because death was thwarted by the Crucifixion and Resurrection it can also be manipulated in other ways. Therefore, the overall visual of the *Danse macabre* – as already mentioned – a representation of the intermingling of reanimated dead bodies and slowly-de-animating live ones, is now doubled in this illustration of *Le Quart Mort*. The thin flesh stretched both over his bony frame and over the wooden one of his tabor invoke a tradition of folk beliefs that "elaborate the notion of vitality as inherent in the material components of the body."[73] That is, life is present in the bones and flesh of a creature, a notion that is

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[71] Ibid. Ch. 175.7 vv. 50-52"

[72] Ibid. Ch. 177.1, vv. 1-6.

[73] Caciola 34.

represented in the "mythic motif of the animal that is re-enfleshed after having been eaten."[74] Furthermore, bone and wood seem to be analogous in these stories, so that they can be interchanged in the body of an animal without affecting the newly-revitalized body:

> Witnesses explain to their interrogators that they occasionally attend feasts, after which the bones of one of the oxen slain are placed in its skin and revivified when the 'lady' who presides over the festivities touches them with a magic twig. If a bone were lost or broken, it could be replaced by a little piece of wood, which would serve just as well.[75]

Therefore, we arrive at a new definition of life "as located within the conjunction of flesh and bone (or their substitutive equivalents)."[76] So, this illustration shows bodies that are simultaneously dead and alive, or perhaps in the transition state between life and death – a suitable image for the *danse macabre*, which "translat[es] the dying and the transitory into the eternal and lasting."[77] Death becomes life, or perhaps life becomes indistinguishable from death, as the *danse macabre* subverts the familiar order of the world.[78]

This order is nowhere more apparent than the strict social hierarchy of early modern French society. The vast divide between noble and commoner, rich and poor, is

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[74] Ibid.

[75] Caciola 35. These stories are, according to Caciola, part of confessions of witchcraft in 14th-16th century Italy.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Gertsman 34.

[78] Ibid. 35.

Figure 10: Le Pape et L'Empereur, *La Danse macabre*.

easily seen in the literature and art of the medieval and early modern periods, and the tableaux of the *danse macabre* are no exception. Contrast the depiction of the Pope and the Emperor (Figure 10) with that of the Monk, the Usurer, and the Poor Man (Figure 11). Despite its unfamiliarity, the rich details of the clothing of the two men in the first illustration clearly conveys their high social status and rank. The ornaments they carry, too, such as the Pope's staff and the sword and *orbus crucifer* of the Emperor, are symbols of their power. Interestingly, both skeletons in the image seem to be reaching equally toward the men and their signs of office. The skeleton leading the Pope grasps the wrist of the hand holding the staff, as if to lead the Pope by his staff, while the one leading the king grips the elbow of his sword hand, like he's making sure the king won't try to fight him. The attitudes of both skeletons seem rather respectful; the one with the Emperor even appears to be bowing slightly, as if to acknowledge his rank. In contrast, the three men in Figure 11 are being pulled by their skeletal guides in the dance. Their physical positions, as well as their clothing, thus clearly demonstrate their lower social status. However, even with these small differences, the motif is the same: a skeletal messenger whose physical touch indicates the universal reach of death that

Figure 11: Le Moine, L'Usurier, Le Povre Homme, *La Danse macabre*.

cannot be escaped.[79] It is the skeletons who have the most agency here in the *danse*; their bodies, grotesque and decaying though they may be, are ironically the most vital. Their faces grin, their hands clutch, and their feet kick – they enjoy the dance. On the other hand, the living, or rather, the dying, seem "like statues" – their faces are sad and blank, their legs are hidden, their arms remain close to their bodies, as if to emphasize the difference between the encroaching, enthusiastic grasp of death and the living's need for restraint and propriety.[80] Thus, the dance remains a "tool for differentiation between the immoral, supernatural, demonic, and chaotic domain of death and the ordered world of the living that death disrupts"[81] despite its blurring of the definition of what is considered a vital body.

The widespread applicability of the *danse macabre* is also shown by the creation of the *Grant danse macabre des femmes,* first printed in 1486 by Guy Marchant. I will be using the undated, but certainly post-1486 BNF 995 manuscript for all references, both textual and pictorial, as it has been presented in *The* Danse Macabre *of Women*, edited by Ann Tukey Harrison. This manuscript is beautifully illustrated, in contrast to the simple woodcuts of the Marchant editions of both *La Danse macabre* and the *Grant danse macabre des femmes*. Just as in *La Danse macabre*, four death musicians help

Figure 12: Le tiers et le quart, *Grant danse macabre des femmes*, BNF 995, 24r.

[79] Gertsman 33.

[80] Gertsman 65.

[81] Ibid. 67.

set the stage for the Author and the rest of the dance. In this case, it is *le tiers menestrier* who plays the pipe and tabor, in almost precisely the same pose as *le quart mort* of *La Danse macabre* (see Figure 12). Once more, the cracked and rotting flesh falling off the bones of the skeleton reminds the reader of the inevitable fate of the body, which is explicated in the text:

> …leurs corps sera venaison
> De vers puans ung iour mengee
> et pourroient elles estre gardee
> Pour or argent ne riens qui soit
> Nenny ….[82]

In this case, in contrast to *La Danse macabre*, the bodies that are treated are explicitly female. The *Grant danse macabre des femmes* performs a sort of othering of the female body; the masculine default, clearly meant to be universal, in *La Danse macabre* has to be specifically replaced by references to and illustrations of women in order to create a completely different text. Compare the opening lines of the *premier mort* in each text: "Vous, qui par commune ordonnance / Vives en estatz tant divers"[83] and « Venez dames et damoiselles / Du siecle et de religion. »[84] The neutral « vous » in *La Danse macabre* is supposed to refer to everyone, since it had been previously stated

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[82] *The* danse macabre of women*: ms. Fr. 995 of the Bibliothèque nationale.* Ed., Anne Tukey Harrison (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 1994) 24r.

[83] *La danse macabre* vv. 17-18.

[84] Harrison 23v.

by the *Acteur* that "chascun a danser apprant ; / A homme et femme est naturelle."[85] However, no women are depicted in the illustrations, nor are they evoked in the text of *La Danse macabre* again. Even though death is the universal equalizer, the dancers of *La Danse macabre* remain an exclusively male group. In the *Grant danse macabre des femmes*, the presence of women is central and unavoidable, so one might reasonably expect that everyone depicted in the text and the illustrations be female. However, this assumption is incorrect, as Hammerstein points out: "Da alle Standesvertreter weiblich sind, der Tod aber als männlich aufgefasst wird, erhalten (Paar-) Tanz und Tanzmusik eine zusätzliche Begründung."[86]

Unlike in *La Danse macabre*, this text explicitly pairs Death with a woman for each page, and the dance steps depicted involve far less pulling and violent urging. Rather, each woman participates in the death dance as she might have in life, with one of the most striking examples at the very beginning, the illustration of Death and the Queen (see Figure 13). In this illustration, the queen bemoans her fate, saying, "Cest dance mest bien nouvelle / Et en ay le cueur bien surprise,"[87] yet she also takes Death's hand to help him lead the dance, as is her duty: "Faictes devoir au remanant / Vous qui

Figure 13: La royne, *Grant danse macabre des femmes*, 25r.

[85] *La danse macabre* vv. 6-7.

[86] "While all represented social positions are female, the Death however is understood as masculine, (pair-) dance and dance music receive an additional meaning" (my translation). Hammerstein 74.

[87] Harrison 25r.

vivez ainsi ferez."[88] The Queen becomes a willing, or at least docile, participant in the Dance, a reaction that underscores the truth in her last line, "Contre la mort na point de fuite,"[89] while also normalizing the shocking collision between vitality and decay. In a way, due to this apparent support for the living social order, the *Grant danse macabre des femmes* seems more centered within the living world, while still evoking the transition from life to death; this position lends it a greater sense of liminality, predicated on the clashing of clearly dead bodies with apparently living ones as well as the masculinity of death with the femininity of dying.

In addition to familiar dance images that reflect the real world, the death minstrels for the women's dance also call to mind reality; the instrument pairings – shawm with rebec and pipe and tabor with hurdy-gurdy – are each "eine der realen Praxis entsprechende Gruppierung von Tanzmusikanten"[90], unlike in the unholy quartet of *La Danse macabre*.[91] The evocation of music continues within the text as well, again in a way that would have been well-known to readers of the time, with the dialogue between Death and the Regent (perhaps better translated as "Hostess"). Death calls her with a series of compliments that reference her social prowess: the "renom de bien dire / De dancer fringuer estre gente."[92] The Regent's own lines reinforce the idea that she led a sociable, enjoyable life:

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[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid.

[90] "a realistic [performance] practice-appropriate grouping of dance musicians" (my translation). Hammerstein 73-74.

[91] « Auch ist die Kombination der Instrumente als reales Tanzmusikensemble undenkbar. Sie entspricht nicht der historischen Aufführungspraxis. »

[92] Harrison 26r.

Quant me souvient des tabourins
Nopces festes harpes trompettes
Menestrelz doulceines clarins
Et des grans cheres iay faictes …[93]

This long list of musical instruments (tabourins, harpes, trompettes, clarins) and entertainments (nopces, festes, menestrelz, grans cheres) emphasizes the vivacity of this woman's life. The instruments listed would all have been used to great effect at dances and feasts, to encourage conviviality, and the tabourin in particular would have led the dance rhythms. In these contexts, the music and dancing that the Regent remembers are joyful celebrations, a marked contrast to the dance and music she encounters now. In fact, it is in her lines that the true reason that participants dance in the *danses macabres* becomes clear to the reader. She tells us that she understands

[Q]ue telz entrefaictes
En temps de mort nont point de lieu
Maiz tornent en povres emplaites
Tot se passe fors aymer dieu.[94]

Dance here is "the threshold . . . as it fundamentally separates the world of the dead from the world of those about to die."[95] Instead of denoting a celebration, dance is both "a universal sign of change" and a symbol of temporality or mortality, as it shows the

[93] Ibid.

[94] Harrison 26r.

[95] Gertsman 64.

body in an incessant state of movement, transformation, and transition.[96] For the Regent, this last dance as she passes from the world of the living into that of the dead strips her of the ability to enjoy celebration and music for mundane, human purposes. Through the *danse macabre*, the Regent finds herself passing either into heaven, to dance with "martyrs in the pastures of paradise . . .[and] with angels, Mary, and her handmaidens . . . accompanied by David and his heavenly music"[97] or to join the condemned who, "in a mockery of heavenly dance, cavorted in hell."[98]

While the illustrations in the manuscript of the *Grant danse macabre des femmes* showed energetic participation by both desiccated corpses and the newly dying, it is Holbein's *Les simulachres et historiées faces de la mort* that shows just how violent the *danse macabre* genre can be. Part of that violence is based on the structure of this work, which differs from other *danses* in its encapsulation of the episodes of the *danse* in "a comprehensive view of the history of humankind, from Creation through the Last Judgment."[99] Each illustration of the actual *danse* in the work compounds the themes of sin and punishment that began with the Fall of Adam and Eve. The beginning of the

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[96] Ibid. 69.

[97] Gertsman 64.

[98] Ibid. 59.

[99] Ibid. 170.

danse is the scene of Adam and Eve's banishment from Eden, where they are accompanied by a capering skeleton holding a stringed instrument of some kind, possibly a gittern (see Figure 9). Death enters the world as humanity is cast out of Paradise, and each subsequent appearance of Death and its messengers hammers home a sense of inevitability and brutality. The violence of the work stems also from the dynamic composition of each woodcut, as well the juxtaposition of image and text(s)[100]. Furthermore, the choice of instruments depicted is significant: of the 57 illustrations that appear in the 1562 edition (which, for simplicity's sake, we will call the first "complete" edition), only 14 show musical instruments being played. And, of those 14 illustrations, six of them contain percussion instruments.

Figure 14: Adam and Eve being cast out, *Les simulachres et historiées faces de la mort*, Cv.

Figure 15: The bones of all men, showing a skeletal kettledrum player in the foreground, with other instrumentalists behind, *Les Simulachres et historiées faces de la mort*, Ciiv.

The first of these is a woodcut sometimes entitled "Gebeyn aller menschen" or "the bones of all men", a striking composition showing a crowd of skeletons playing a variety of instruments: two kettledrums, trumpets,

[100] I say "text(s)" because from 1538, when it was first printed, and 1562, when the full set of illustrations was compiled, the texts that accompany each woodcut changed slightly. Some editions translate the Latin Bible verses above each illustration into the vernacular, while others leave them untranslated. In addition, the vernacular quatrains that appear below *were* habitually translated from French into other languages, depending on the language of that edition's printer. This practice necessarily changes the meaning of the text.

crumhorns, and a hurdy-gurdy (see Figure 15). The two large kettledrums in the foreground draw the reader's focus, and the player's pose crackles with unreleased energy; he is poised to strike the drum on his right, having just struck the other, and one can imagine the great noise of the drum and the other instruments behind him. His crouched posture and intense stare at the drum he is about to play increases our awareness of these instruments, further emphasizing their importance in the scene. Instead of resting on a stand or being carried, or even sitting on bare ground, the drums are being supported by assorted bones, as if to emphasize a sort of casual cruelty towards dead bodies.

There are also three texts that surround this image, two Latin Bible verses (in the 1538 edition; they are translated into French in the 1562 edition) and a French quatrain.[101] The first verse, from Apocalypsis VIII, our Revelations 8:13, is "Vae vae vae habitantibus in terra," the mournful cry of the eagle that heralds even more suffering for those who still inhabit the earth. This part of Revelations describes the effects of seven angels, whose seven trumpets each have a devastating effect on the world. These seven trumpets are evoked by the trumpets of the skeletal players, who stand in front of what appears to be a huge pile of bones, evoking the huge death toll described in Revelations, as well as reminding readers of the generations of the dead who came before them. The second Bible verse is "Cuncta in quibus spiraculum vitae est, mortua sunt", from Genesis 7:22. This verse seems to hint that the illustration is not a representation of a literal skeletal musical company, but that readers are seeing the death that overshadows

[101] These verses are an interesting element, since they were not, apparently, part of the original composition of the work. Instead, they were composed later, perhaps expressly for the purpose of giving more context for the woodcuts (Gertsman 179).

each living creature; the illustration shows the future of each person pictured, not their current state. Or, perhaps, it indicates that life and death are seen as two, inseparable presences within each person, such that everyone is simultaneously living and dying. The final text on this page is the French quatrain:

> Malheureux qui uiuez au monde
>
> Tousiours remplis d'adversitez,
>
> Pour quelque bien qui uous abonde,
>
> Serez tous de Mort uisitez.[102]

This text repeats the sentiments of the two Bible verses above it, emphasizing again Death's supremacy over all living beings. Furthermore, death is unequivocally a negative element, contrasted with "quelque bien qui uous abonde"; according to this quatrain, life is a series of checks and balances, but death always outweighs anything else in the end. This sentiment is consistent with the experiences of the European populace during this time, when "famine caused by crop failures, incessant wars between rival factions, and deadly plague and syphilis epidemics marked the beginning of the century."[103]

Figure 16: The Priest, *Les Simulachres et historiées faces de la mort*, Eiiir.

The next illustration in *Les Simulachres* to consider is that of the Priest, who solemnly processes through the street holding a cross decorated with the acronym IHS (see figure 16). He is preceded by a skeleton holding a large lantern and

[102] Hans Holbein, *Les Simulachres & historiées faces de la mort autant elegamme[n]t pourtraictes, que artificiellement imaginées* (Lyon : Gaspard Trechsel, 1538) Ciiv.

[103] Gertsman 165.

ringing a handbell, which presages death, although it is not clear from the illustration *whose* death. Instead, we must turn to the quatrain and Bible verse on the page for clarification. The quatrain appears to be narrated by the priest himself and gives both an explanation of his physical actions and a glimpse into his thoughts:

> Je porte le sainct sacrement
> Cuidant le mourant secourir
> Qui mortel suis pareillement.
> Et comme luy me fault mourir.[104]

This priest tells the reader that his role in the procession is doubled and ambiguous, the verb *cuider* meaning "to believe in vain" or "to imagine". Despite his own impending death, indicated by the words, "comme luy me fault mourir", he maintains his important position in society and the trust placed in him by others to help intercede for their souls He may feel hope that "le mourant" will be helped by his administration of the last rites, but he also knows that he is walking to his own death.

Furthermore, the skeleton bellringer at the head of the procession also does double duty in the announcement of death. As discussed earlier in this chapter, bellringing was used to aurally communicate that a person had died and to encourage listeners to pray for that person's soul. The bell is an audible sign of death that has already happened and a method by which bystanders are urged to participate in the pageantry of death. Meanwhile, the skeleton is a visible sign of death that is yet to come. He leads not only the newly dead but the soon-to-be dying in this particular procession,

[104] Holbein 1538 Eiiir.

warning those who who hear it to show their respect and lending the scene a sense of repetition or timelessness. The procession within *Les Simulachres* is transformed into a frame for another *danse macabre*, a doubling that disorients both the characters and the readers of the text, and the hollowly-ringing bell leads everyone towards the grave.

Figure 17: The Old Woman, *Les Simulachres et historiées faces de la mort*, Eiv.v

Percussion instruments continue to play a part in this dance of death with the entrance of the Old Woman (see figure 17). Her hunched posture and obviously unsteady gait – as evidenced by her use of a walking stick – are mirrored by the xylophone-playing skeleton on the left side of the illustration. This xylophone is a reflection of death and old age – its sound is "an imitation of the noise bones make rattling together,"[105] and its lack of resonance makes any melody played upon it sound jerky and weak, like the movements of the aged and infirm. The player's posture underscores that impression, as his curved spine, graceless movement, and lowered head imply a lack of vitality and even pain. In fact, pain is the theme of this page as, for the first time in this version of the *danse macabre*, death is not an unwelcome occurrence for the person in question. The old woman's body, the skeletal xylophone player, and the eerie music, all communicate pain in a way that is impossible to express verbally. The rhythmic striking of the mallets on the keys of the xylophone can be understood as rhythmically-inflicted pain upon the body of the woman; the player's crouching posture symbolize sympathetic suffering by mirroring the old woman's body,

[105] Meyer-Baer 305.

sensations taken on by a personified Death as part of its stripping-away of worldly things from someone who is dying.

The quatrain, apparently narrated by this woman, makes this focus on pain clear:

En peine ay uescu longuement
Tant que nay plus de uiure enuie,
Mais bien ie croy certainement
Meilleure la Mort que la uie.[106]

The old woman welcomes death as a respite from her painful life, and death in turn welcomes her with a joyful display; the skeleton directly to her right hops gleefully as he looks at her. His right hand is upraised, as if to hail her as his partner in the dance, and the laurel wreath he wears upon his skull indicates his victory over her pain. It may also symbolize death's role in the renewal of life, echoed by the juxtaposition of the barren ground upon which the old woman treads and the vibrant plant life behind her. Thus, the two skeletons with their different roles in the *danse* show a different side of death than previous illustrations. Instead of cruelly dragging an unwilling dance partner across the threshold between life and death, these skeletons offer peace to a weary soul.

Figure 18: The Noblewoman (and her lover), *Les Simulachres et historiées faces de la mort,* Gi.v.

[106] Holbein 1538 Eiv.v.

However, the willing dancers of the *danse macabre* are few and far between, and the next person who is sent off accompanied by a percussion instrument is the Noblewoman (see figure 18). This illustration is introduced by a verse from the book of Ruth, 1:17, “Me & te sola mors separabit.” In its original context, this phrase is part of a larger statement from Ruth to Naomi:

> [Q]uae te morientem terra susceperit in ea moriar ibique locum accipiam sepulturae haec mihi faciat Deus et haec addat si non sola mors me et te separaverit.

I am uncertain whether the differences in the tense of the verb *separare* in each quote are due to a different version of the Bible or a considered choice on the part of Holbein and the other authors of the book. But, in any case, separabit is a future active indicative form, giving us the meaning “Only death *will* separate me and you” (my emphasis); separaverit, on the other hand, is a future perfect, and the verse as a whole is a factual conditional - in this case, Ruth asks God to punish her if *anything but* death will have ever separated her and Naomi. The power of death as the ultimate separator is suspect in the whole verse from the Latin Vulgate Bible, since it is acknowledged that other reasons for separation are possible (although the consequences of faithlessness would be terrible), whereas the fragment above the woodcut casts death as the only way through which the bond between the two people pictured can be sundered. The amorous bond between them is explicated by the quatrain,

> Amour qui unyz nous faict uiure,
> En foy noz cueurs preparera,
> Qui long temps ne nous pourra suyure,

Car la Mort nous separera.[107]

The last line of this poem clearly supports the active indicative version of the quoted verse, as the narrator of the poem assures the listener (and the reader) that death's separation of people from one another is inevitable, despite the revitalizing, unifying power of love. In this poem, death is not cast as the opposite of life, but of love, which fits nicely with the subject of this page: the noblewoman and her lover. The fine clothes of both people, as well as the small drum played by the death minstrel who stands in their path[108], all evoke images of courtliness. The skeleton plays the drum energetically, almost violently, at extreme odds with the relaxed intimacy of the two lovers. The two people appear to glide serenely in a pair dance, while the skeletal drummer impedes their progress with playing that is "jerky and extreme, lacking elegance and grace", speaking more of combat than courtship.[109] That violence is the force that separates the clearly-united pair, and the fact that a musical instrument associated with the nobility is used only affirms that death comes no matter one's social status.

Figure 19: The Soldier, *Les Images de la Mort...*, 48.

Violence represented by the drum continues to run throughout this text, as shown by the next illustration (figure 19), which is also the last one in which percussion is featured. This illustration is one of the ones to be added to

[107] Holbein 1538 Gi.v.

[108] "The small drum and the pipe were the instruments of court pages" (Meyer-Baer 304).

[109] Gertsman 66.

later versions of the text, but the dynamic nature of its composition and the attention to detail clearly mark it as part of the set. As in the illustration of the Old Woman, the instrument in this scene is not necessarily part of the main action; the foreground of the picture is dominated by a brutal battle between a soldier and a skeletal corpse. The two fighters trample heedlessly over the piled-up, splayed-out bodies of other soldiers, while an incoming horde is led by a death minstrel playing a large side drum in the background. The sheer size of this drum would guarantee a very loud sound, perfect for communicating to troops on a large battlefield, as well as for intimidating the enemy with an onslaught of sound. The drum in this case most likely plays both roles: it signals the defeat of the soldier while also sounding the advance of reinforcements for Death's side. Thus, the illustration shows yet another face of death – death as a violent struggle with only one possible ending:

> Le jeune armé en jeune corps
> Pense avoir seure garnison :
> Mais Mort plus forte, le met hors
> De sa corporelle maison.[110]

The repetition of the word "jeune" emphasizes the strength and potential of the soldier who fights death. His obvious youth should give him protection against even the most fearsome foe, but death is always stronger. His defeat is couched in spiritual terms as well as physical – the body vanquished by death is only the armor ("garnison") or dwelling ("maison") for his spirit. Once he is killed, the spirit is ousted, although its

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[110] Hans Holbein, *Les Images de la mort, auxquelles sont adioustees dixsept figures.* (Lyon: Jehan Frellon, 1562) 48.

destination – "hors" – remains ambiguous. This sort of limbo is, of course, consistent with the religious underpinnings of the *danse macabre*; the final resting place of a soul is not known by humans. Furthermore, this quatrain paired with Luke 11:21-22, the verse above the illustration, strongly implies that death may also be a cleansing power. In the quoted verse, Jesus speaks of a strong man who is defeated by someone stronger, who « luy oste toutes ses armures, ausquelles il se confioit. » He then goes on to say that, « Qui n'est avec moy, il est contre moy, et qui ne cueille avec moy, il espart. » Based on this larger context, it is therefore unclear whether the warrior depicted in this woodcut is a virtuous man, who is simply defeated by death as a natural consequence of humanity's imperfection, or a sinner who has rejected Christianity and is thus cast out because of this act. Regardless, death and violence are clearly intertwined in this episode, which highlights the instinct to fight bitterly against death, even when the odds are unfavorable.

Percussion instruments, as they are illustrated and described in the texts I discussed in this chapter, offer modern readers another window through which to contemplate medieval and early modern "death culture". But, perhaps "window" is too narrow a term – evoking only sight - given the auditory and tactile elements of musical instruments, for it is impossible to separate the form of these instruments from their functions. Furthermore, the music made by these instruments, although long since silenced by time, can still be imagined and even imitated now; our modern drums, bells, xylophones, and tambourines are not so different from their medieval and early modern ancestors.

In fact, by focusing both on their sound and musical significance and their material construction in this chapter, I offer a deeper understanding of the tensions between life and death that medieval and early modern people faced. In a way, percussion instruments are the embodiment of those tensions. From a purely physical standpoint, they double human bodies in *danse macabre* illustrations, emphasizing the importance of the flesh or material of the body in definitions of (Christian) life. Their link with vitality, through dance music, violence, through military music, and veneration, through funeral rituals, makes them ubiquitous. Their generally-pristine condition, compared to the associated human bodies, merely hammers home to readers both past and present that our bodies will eventually die, that our current "completeness" – a living body – is fleeting. This truth is part of the horror of death, a horror that, according to Morin, "englobe . . . la douleur des funérailles, la terreur de la décomposition du cadavre, l'obsession de la mort", all part of what he calls "*la perte de l'individualité.*"[111] This loss is, indeed, an inevitable outcome of death, shown by the sexless, undifferentiated skeletons in the *danses macabres* and combatted, futilely, by the use of royal funeral effigies and the conception of the king's Body politic. However, percussion instruments also offer an acceptable means through which we can deal with this horror, because they are not *only* material bodies – they are important tools within medieval and early modern death rituals.

Although we cannot experience the sounds of the time, it is impossible not to acknowledge that most of these instruments in the percussion family would have been

[111] Morin 28.

recognizable for their "very loud or strident sounds,"[112] which are useful for sending information over long geographical distances as well as for influencing the human body by encouraging us to fight or dance, or by calling forth emotions such as grief, compassion, and fear. These percussion instruments also, in the perspectives of the times, have power over our souls, luring them into the death or hastening their journey into heaven from Purgatory. Sometimes disturbingly, they provide a contrast for the reader – unavoidable noise, affirming either continuing life or the supremacy of Death against the silence, absence, and immobility of the dead.[113] This noise, in some cases approaching the level of an aural attack, is another way that readers are reminded of human mortality and fragility, as sound, like life, eventually fades away, regardless of its initial strength. The dual nature of percussion music – its capacity for communicating violence, pain, and emotion as well as the short duration of each note – makes it not only perfect for death music but also for the music of war (the subject of the following chapter), where attacks, retreats, intimidation, and courage have a musical, emotional, and physical rhythm of their own.

[112] Warda 78.

[113] Gertsman 69.

Chapter 2

Deadly Marches: Martial Drums

A Culture of Conflict

Paien et Sarrasin font soner lor apel ;

Sonent graisles d'arain,[1] timbres[2] et calamel. [3]

Ainc ne fu tel bataille dès le tans Israel,

Comme Crestien soffrirent : là n'ot point de revel.[4]

The call to arms, however briefly evoked in the excerpt above, makes it impossible to ignore the strong connection drawn between the sounding of musical instruments and the suffering of soldiers in combat. In the passage, as in real life, one follows right on the heels of the other; instruments sound the charge and then soldiers die. It is the violence of war music, particularly when it involves drums or other percussion – such as the timbres named above – that is the focus of this chapter. How do drums appear in accounts of battle or other military contexts? What do texts – literary and otherwise – share about drums? What do they leave out, for modern readers to piece together on our own? Can we use literary references to drums in order to learn

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[1] As the name "graisle" indicates, these horns would have produced a sharp, relatively thin sound.

[2] The text does not clarify whether these small, handheld percussion instruments are more like modern-day tambourines or are simply small, shallow, single-headed drums.

[3] Single-reed woodwind instruments.

[4] Richard le Pèlerin et Graindor de Douai, *La Conquête de Jérusalem, faisant suite à la Chanson d'Antioche*. Ed., C. Hippeau (Paris : Chez Auguste Aubry, 1868) vv. 8400-8403.

more about the details of armed conflict and martial exercises and how they affected people?

From the perspective of modern readers, war was a daily reality for people in the medieval and early modern periods, much as it is in our own time.[5] In this chapter, I focus on literature written during four major conflicts, but from the twelfth century to the end of the seventeenth, France – or parts of it – was embroiled in many more, both at home and abroad. The most famous of these early conflicts were the waves of Crusades that took place throughout Europe and in the eastern Mediterranean, which were in part a backlash against the expanding power of Muslim cultures in the seventh and eight centuries. The First Crusade, called by Pope Urban II in 1095, in the midst of a tense political climate, was an unparalleled opportunity to reunite the Christian church as well as dissipate the religious and political conflicts that were tearing Europe apart.[6] It turned out to be the first in a series of religiously-motivated wars (crusades) that stretched nearly to the end of the 13th century. Frankopan argues that

> [t]he First Crusade defined the Middle Ages. It established a common identity for the knighthood of Europe, pinned firmly on the Christian faith. […] Out of the First Crusade grew the ideas and structures which shaped Europe until the Reformation.[7]

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[5] As a limited example, the United States has been almost continuously involved in armed conflict abroad since 1980.

[6] Peter Frankopan, *The First Crusade: The Call from the East* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012) 15.

[7] Ibid. 13.

The Crusades as a whole were expensive, consuming incredible amounts of money and numbers of fighters on both sides.[8] But they were also part of the foundation of European (and therefore French) Christianity. The ideals of Christian knighthood that were created and perpetuated by the Crusades became part of French identity, as those who fought in the crusades were often hailed as saints or heroes of their time, for protecting Christianity and France against the (exaggerated) ravages of the Muslims.

These wars created a society that expected a level of military involvement from citizens of all orders of society, although the idea of providing more arms and training to the populace met a certain amount of resistance.[9] However, with the rise of more reliable and portable firearms in the fourteenth century, the scale of war changed dramatically.[10] Now, the "apprenticeship" model of squire and knight was becoming obsolete and ineffective. New knights could not be trained fast enough to keep up with the demands of this new kind of warfare, which required larger and larger forces. However, conscription was an ineffective method of raising troops, due to a lack of accurate records as well as enforcement.[11] The use of mercenary troops was one way to supplement a native army, which would not increase the likelihood of a popular rebellion, but it was still an unpopular option.[12] And, outside of the *noblesse d'épée*,

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[8] Masoumeh Banitalebi, Kamaruzamen Yusoff and Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor "The Impact of Islamic Civilization and Culture in Europe during the Crusades," *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization* 2.3 (2012): 182-87; 184.

[9] J.R. Hale, *War and Society in Renaissance Europe, 1450-1620* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985) 73, 75.

[10] Ibid. 46.

[11] Ibid. 69.

[12] Ibid. 73.

until Louis XIV's military reforms in the 17th century, there was no such thing as a military career for a commoner; they did not hold officer commissions, as those were reserved for noblemen who could pledge the most resources to a military campaign, and thus could not systematically rise in the ranks the way today's soldiers can, through a combination of time served and undertaking increasingly-specialized training.[13] Furthermore, France saw a rise in the popularity of systematic training of soldiers, with drills, formations, and a new emphasis on military music and martial displays of power "in imitation of the ancient Spartans and Greeks."[14]

Military academies and treatises on the art of war attempted to provide the necessary training for new soldiers, but the realities of war and the caliber of fighter available made the training programs they espoused a mere "aspect of pageantry . . . entertainments performed by guard units for the delectation of visiting dignitaries."[15] Although France had taken part in a variety of successful military campaigns under Louis XIV, by the end of the seventeenth century, the art or spectacle of war was equally, if not more, intriguing. No longer was France full of defenders of the Church and the nation; rather it was preoccupied with what Hale calls the "spurious, 'romantic' imagery of upper-class street theatre: tilts, progresses, the ceremonial 'entries' of rulers, escorted by their local nobility, into provincial capitals."[16] Military music, in particular drums,

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[13] Ibid. 130.

[14] Van Orden 189.

[15] Hale 167.

[16] Hale 91-92.

played an essential role in both the practice and spectacle of war, and I will explore the development of this role over the course of the late medieval and early modern periods.

The Art of War

Drums are widely recognized instruments of war in a variety of cultures, and they would have been a common sight on battlefields both in Western Europe and elsewhere, such as in the lands invaded by would-be defenders of the Church. The people who lived there, whether invaders themselves or indigenous to the area, were familiar with the significance of drums accompanying organized troops. In fact, drums – as well as other paraphernalia – were sometimes adopted by certain groups in order to emphasize the legitimacy of their power.[17] Drums were therefore not only a tool of war but also a symbol of rule, so their presence in chronicles of war should be read not only as a factual detail of battle but also as a political statement, a signal of the intention to stake a claim or seize power.[18]

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[17] "Of particular interest is how Marīnid chiefs made the transition from tribal leaders to Islamic monarchs by adopting existing accoutrements of rule during . . . troop movements. Their monarchical, as opposed to tribal, character was signaled by the use of items associated with royalty such as banners, drums and a luxuriously appointed caravan." (Bennison 196); "By the early thirteenth century, a clear set of royal appurtenances had emerged that included banners, drums, magnificently decorated tents and pavilions, and finely caparisoned thoroughbred horses" (Ibid. 207).

[18] In the case of Western nobility, I believe a parallel example can be found in the rise of heraldic symbols, especially those depicted in illuminated manuscripts such as the MS Bodley 264 *Roman d'Alexandre*. According to Mark Cruse, banners and pennants, both carried separately and hung from trumpets, seem to be used in this manuscript to both identify the actors and signify their importance to the narrative. Mark Cruse, "Costuming the Past: Heraldry in Illustrations of the 'Roman d'Alexandre' (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 264)." *Gesta* 45.1 (2006): 43-59; p. 45.

In addition, the practice of using percussion instruments in battle was one that greatly impressed the Europeans during the Crusades, who promptly adopted kettle drums as instruments both of war and of nobility. Bruce P. Gleason, "Cavalry Trumpet and

Overseas Encounters with War Drums

In *La Conquête de Jérusalem*, a *chanson de geste* thought to have been composed by Richard le Pèlerin in the 12th century, drums communicate the clashes between two cultures during the First Crusade. The battle for Jerusalem, after which the conquering crusaders – led by the Frankish knight Godefroy de Bouillon – massacred the defenders, was punctuated by the music of many instruments, played by both sides. This music, which by turns directs battle and fills interludes of rest, is a counterpoint to the horrific violence of this campaign.

The graphic descriptions of battle are heightened by the presence of musical instruments – they begin the fighting as well as reflect and influence the emotions of those who listen and play them. Furthermore, they establish for the audience of the *chanson de geste* the identity of the players. This identity development begins in the very first *chant* of the work:

> Moult fu grande la proie que Franchois ont acoillieent.
>
> Le val de Josaphas arriere revertirent.
>
> Chil de Jherusalem à bataille en issirent,
>
> Paien et Sarrasin qui moult fort s'esbaudirent ;
>
> .L. mile furent qui Damledeu haïrent.
>
> Sonent tabors et timbres, cil cor d'arain tentirent.
>
> Ches valées resonent et cil tertre bondirent.[19]

Kettledrum practice from the Time of the Celts and Romans to the Renaissance." *Galpin Society Journal*, 61 (April 2008): 231-39, 251; 235-36.

[19] Richard le Pèlerin vv. 62-68.

The Franks are portrayed as consummate victors – their acquisitions practically carpet the whole valley in which the troops stand – while their opponents are "li felon" and "li orgueillox gloton"[20] for wanting to reclaim what the Franks have taken. They stand against the Christians as the ".L. mile . . . qui Damledeu haïrent", who "sonent tabors et timbres" that make the ground shake and the air reverberate.[21] This display of troops and physical power, combined with the overwhelming musical power of the "Paien et Sarrasin" position the Franks as the embattled underdogs, fighting a voracious enemy who wants not only their material wealth but the very center of their faith: Jerusalem. The hyperbolic description of the drums' noise inflates the threat posed by the non-Christian troops, leading to a sense of trepidation at the events to come.

Even when the *chanson* speaks from the potentially-sympathetic perspective of the Turcs, Saracens, and other groups who are being besieged by the invading Franks, "une gent de malaire / Si covert de fer, ne crient lanchier ne traire",[22] the Christians remain the virtuous force. They are cutting swathes through Cesarea and its surroundings, steadily advancing toward Jerusalem. Their armor makes them almost superhuman, remaining impervious to lances and arrows, which only cements their divine right to the holy city. When the emir hears of the ravages wrought by the Franks, he "fait soner son timbre et en graisle et en gros" and armed himself with elaborately-decorated weapons and armor.[23] The description of the drum's sound – "en graisle et en

[20] Ibid. vv. 1-2.

[21] Ibid. vv. 66-68.

[22] Ibid. vv. 526-27.

[23] Ibid. vv. 532-35.

gros" – can be interpreted in a couple of ways. On one hand, the combination of light sounds and heavy ones may evoke a richness of tones and overtones. Alternatively, the text could be referring to a combination of light strikes and firm ones, such that the loudness of the sound varies or grows in intensity. I favor the second interpretation, as it seems to reflect the growing intensity of the conflict and the build-up to the climax of the battle in Jerusalem.

Tension grows further between the two opposing forces as the *chanson* continues. The Franks, camping outside of Jerusalem, hear the celebrations and battle rituals of the Muslim troops, who are bracing to defend their city:

> En la grant tor David ont .i. timbre soné ;
> En apres icel timbre .i. cor d'airain corné.
> Sus el mont de Calvaire sont paien assamblé . . . .[24]

We don't have any information about how these instruments sounded to the listening "paiens" and Franks, but we can assume that everyone recognized them as a call to arms to the whole community of Jerusalem, just as the drums in verses 532-35 called the emir and his noble followers to arm themselves against the Frankish army. The position of these instruments, in the high tower of David, is symbolic. The tower, a citadel overlooking the Jaffa entrance to the city, would have allowed the sounds of the drum and the horn to carry over the entire area, informing everyone of the impending battle.

[24] Ibid. vv.1720-22.

As this battle drew ever closer, the author of this *chanson* continues to describe the gatherings of fighters and the preparations they take. Directly before the fighting began, the two armies see each other in full readiness:

> Sarrasins les esgardent del mur et del cretel.
> Or sachiés n'i à cel n'ait machue ou flael,
> Ou gisarme acherée, molue de novel,
> Ou plomée a caaine, que on tient à noiel,
> Por Jursalem deffendre, le mur et le castel.[25]

The Saracens are armed with a striking variety of weapons and line the walls and parapets of Jerusalem, no doubt posing a rather intimidating sight for the invaders. The battle would be a bloody one: "Anqui i feront corre de sanc si grant ruissel / Dont on feroit bien molre .i. petit molinel."[26] But Jerusalem's defenders were ready for whatever happened, and the instruments sounded loudly over the assembled forces: "Aval Jherusalem sonerent mil frestel, / Et timbres et buisines et cors et calamel."[27] Clearly, after the last passage, in which we saw the inhabitants of Jerusalem beginning their battle preparations, their forces had swelled, reflected by the increase from a single drum and horn to the "mil" flutes, drums, trumpets, horns, and chalumeaux of this moment before the final battle for the city.

The troops within the city were not alone, however. Their allies, a group of purported Turks led by King Gracien, were bringing sorely-needed supplies to the

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[25] Ibid. vv. 1825-29.

[26] Ibid. vv. 1830-31.

[27] Ibid. vv. 1832-33.

besieged city. However, this group was intercepted by the Franks. The fighting was intense, and the Franks captured the Turks. Those who refused to convert to Christianity were brutally slaughtered, their bodies flung over the walls of Jerusalem to show the rest of the defenders their fate. The ones who saw the corpses were horrified, and the dead were honored and mourned with drums: "Et ca cil de Jhersalem ont les timbres sonés, / Por les Turs c'om lor ot balenchiés et rués."[28] The whole city was horrified, so the battle drums became, for a time, funeral drums. By playing the drums, Jerusalem's leaders spread the news of this atrocity throughout the city and created an outlet for the anger and grief felt by all. However, the drums also served to remind Jerusalem's defenders that their fight was not over. And indeed, the siege continued to absorb human lives at a frightening rate:

> Corbadas se leva quant jors fu esclairiés
> Et fait soner .i. timbre s'a paiens raliiés,
> Droit devant le saint temple en une place viés.
> Iluec fu Lucabaus et Malcolons, ses niés ;
> Si fu Cornumarans en estant sor ses piés.
> Ja orra tex noveles dont il iert corechiés.[29]

The « noveles » here is a message telling Corbadas, the king of Jerusalem, that the Muslims were in real danger of losing the city after the Franks' attack on the Turkish troops coming with provisions. Upon hearing this, Corbadas « commencha à plorer, /

[28] Ibid. 2357-58.

[29] Ibid. 2691-96.

ses cheveux à derompre et sa barbe à tirer ».[30] The drum, again a call to assemble, here foreshadows the fall of the city, as its inhabitants face a slow death by starvation.

This event shows the beginning of a definitive upswing for the Franks, who, until now, had no real advantage over the defenders. Their fight was eventually successful, and Jerusalem was overwhelmed, the Saracens slaughtered. However, the "moult grans paines et grans maux" endured by the Franks at the hands of the *paiens* took a toll, and the night before the final battle required everyone to rally all of their energy:

> La nuit est revenue, li jors prist à passer,
> Et defors et dedens oïssiés cors soner,
> Grailles et calimels et buisines[31] corner,
> Et timbres et esquieles et flagos flajeler,
> Et rotes[32] et flahutes, et viieles vieler ;
> Sarrasin et paiens et glatir et uller.[33]

The multitude of musical instruments, apparently present in both camps, evokes a sense of revelry, although the real purpose is to raise the spirits of each side before the fighting begins in the morning. We can only imagine how raucous this music would be, with two kinds of percussion instruments (timbres, drums – likely small kettledrums - and esquieles, a sort of metal bowl or platter, presumably struck with a stick or played

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[30] Ibid. 2715-16.

[31] Likely a kind of curved trumpet.

[32] An instrument resembling a cwrth, a kind of straight-sided lyre, often played with a bow.

[33] Ibid. 4342-47.

against each other, like cymbals), three kinds of horn (cors, grailles, and buisines), two kinds of pipe (flagos and flahutes), and two kinds of stringed instruments (rotes and viieles). I find it odd that the other groups of instruments – horns, pipes, and strings – get their own descriptive verbs: *corner* (to play the horn; to trumpet)*, flajeler* (to pipe), and *vieler* (to play the vielle; to fiddle), respectively, which create a polyptoton that leaves out the percussion entirely. Perhaps this exclusion of the drum-playing from being described by a specialized verb – *tambouriner* comes to mind – indicates something about the status of the percussion family. That is, the drummers don't need a special verb to indicate their playing because drumming is so fundamental to music that its inclusion is expected. However, it is more likely that the absence of the verb "to drum" is a stylistic necessity to preserve the meter of the *chant*. In addition, the narrator describes the noises that the Saracens and *paiens* make as howling and and wailing, painting them as somehow savage and animalistic despite the impressive instrumental ensemble, and denigrating the music that they make.

This Othering of the defenders of Jerusalem further asserts the superiority of the Frankish crusaders, and from this point on it becomes clear that the Christians will win this battle. During the battle, Cornumarant, the son of Corbadas, is captured by the Christians, a huge psychological blow to the Muslim forces. In reaction, they "sonent lor graisles, s'ont lor tabor bondi" as they continue to fight bitterly.[34] Their efforts were unsuccessful, and the Muslims continued to suffer losses. At this point, "soner lor graisles, lors tabors ont bondis" becomes a desperate cry for courage and victory.[35] But

[34] Ibid. v. 5267.

[35] Ibid. v. 7670.

the Franks kill Corbadas, Cornumarant, and other important leaders of the *paiens*. The Franks broke through the defense and took Jerusalem, slaughtering their opponents indiscriminately. The drums of the Muslims failed to assert their power, instead becoming a symbol of first their exoticism and finally, their deaths. However, this exoticism was not so strange to the Franks that the drums went completely unrecognized; the strangeness of the non-Christians was both amplified and mediated by their musical instruments, so that drums became both a point of contact between cultures and a reminder of their fundamental differences. The music of battle was mutually understandable in a way that language was not, but it remained singular and "foreign" to the ears of the Franks.

The exotic nature of battle drums is also apparent in Marco Polo's *Description du monde*. But the very first mention of drums in the work is not actually part of a battle scene, although the violence of the context is still quite striking. These drums seem to be echoes of potentially-malevolent spirits who inhabit the desert that we now call the Gobi:

> [Q]uant l'en chevauche par nuyt par ce desert . . . et il se desvoie de ses compaignons . . . quant il cuide retourner et trouver la compaignie, si ot parler ung esperit qui semble estre l'un de ses compaignons et telle foiz l'appelle par son nom . . . si que plus ne se retreuvent ; et en ceste manière en sont ja maintz mors et perduz. Et vous dy que de jour meismes parloient les esperiz et orez aucunes

> fois sonner de maintz instruments et proprement tabours plus que autres instruments.[36]

These drums, along with mysterious voices, lead unsuspecting travelers to their deaths, showcasing the Orient as a dangerous place for outsiders. The fact that Polo tells us of the stronger presence of drums, perhaps overwhelming the sounds of other instruments, is intriguing. It may be that the sharper sounds of drums became less confused by echoes in the rocky, barren desert, or that the desert itself amplified the beats. In any case, it seems as though the land itself was in conflict with anyone who dared to venture into the desert. Of course, the land is not the only aggressor that Polo encountered during his (somewhat apocryphal) travels.

As an agent of the Grand Khan, Polo was able to venture safely throughout the Mongol empire, where he encountered many different cultures. But he also saw his fair share of battles between the Khan and his rivals. The first of these was against the forces of Naian, a relative of the Khan who attempted to rebel. Polo seems to have been quite impressed by the battle music tradition of the Khan's soldiers. He described how, lined up in an orderly fashion, « chascun chante et sonne ung de leurs instruments a .II. cordes moult plaisans a oïr . . . jusques atant que le nacaire du Grant Seigneur sonne ».[37] This *nacaire* acts as the voice of the Khan, and it gives his troops the signal to start fighting. Its power over the soldiers is considerable; no one dared to move against the

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[36] Marco Polo, *La Description du monde* (Paris : Librairie Générale Française, 1998) 140-42.

[37] Polo 194.

enemy line until they heard its beat: “devant le son du grant nacaire du Grant Seigneur nulz n’oserait commencer la bataille”.[38]

This display of discipline and organization, and Polo’s appreciation of it, contrasts strongly with the descriptions of the troops defending Jerusalem in *la Conquête de Jérusalem,* who are portrayed as disorganized, chaotic, and devilish. In contrast, the Khan’s soldiers look to the drum as a source of order and information, and everyone on the battlefield clearly uses the same rulebook: “si commencierent a sonner le grant nacaire du Grant Kaan et l’autre de Naian commença aussi a sonner et maintenant commença la bataille d’une part et d’autre”.[39] In this passage, it seems as though the two drums must both begin beating before the fighting can truly begin. The Khan’s drum calls to Naian’s, which answers in the affirmative. In this way, the two drums play a metonymic role in the text – they signal the collective readiness of both groups of soldiers, as well as announcing the intentions of each leader. They are, in fact, a kind of audible contract between the two sides, assuring everyone that the usual battle traditions will be followed.

The description of this battle makes it clear to readers that all on the field were ready and passionate:

> Il y avait si grant cry d’une part et d’autre que l’en n’y oïst pas Dieu tonnant, car la bataille fut moult aspre et moult felonnesse et ne s’espargnierent de riens d’occire l’un l’autre.[40]

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[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Polo 196.

The yells of the soldiers echo the rolling drums, and they create such a din that even God's thunderclaps would be inaudible. At this point, Polo's admiration shifts towards horror, as he sees the cruelty and bloodlust demonstrated by the fighters. Although the fighting was preceded by a clear, clean ritual, the drums' calls release all restraint, and their deliberate sound is in direct opposition to the desperate, chaotic, and deadly noises of combat. The drums, in addition to indicating the status of the Tartars as an orderly society with "civilized" warfare, are thus also an agent of terrible violence.

The second description of warfare that Polo provides is of a battle between the Khan and his nephew Caïdou. This description proves that the drum ritual before battle is universal in the Khan's empire:

> Quant il furent endeus bien appareilliez, il commencierent les nacaires a sonner grandement de chascune part un, car tel est leur usage que nul ost n'assembleroit jusques atant que le grant nacaire sonne.[41]

Polo's use of the collective "nul ost" makes it clear for readers that it is not only among the troops of the Khan and his rebellious family members that soldiers wait to attack until the beating of the great drum. Here, it is clear that every army in this part of the world is bound by the same kind of contract, and that the soldiers in these armies act as one; no individual dares break it. The universality of this custom is confirmed by more

[41] Polo 472

modern research, and extended not only through the Mongol Empire, but over most of the continent.[42]

Another difference between this description and that of the battle with Naïan is the additional adverb that Polo uses, "grandement." In this case, Polo is emphasizing the loudness of the sound – an overwhelming beat. As the description continues, the drums appear to play a slightly different part than they did in the first battle. Here, Polo states, "Et quant les nacaires commencierent a sonner, si commença adonc la bataille moult grant, moult aspre et moult fiere ».[43] The chronology of events in this sentence seems to imply that the drumming and the fighting begin simultaneously, whereas the previous description gives the impression that the drumming precedes the fighting by a noticeable interval. The drums are thus even more closely linked to the chaos of fighting in the battle between the Khan and Caïdou, as if their ordered beats, contrasting with the « moult aspre et moult fiere » combat, lead everyone to « male eure ».[44]

The final battle description containing drums given to readers in Polo's account is that of a battle between Argoun, the son of the Lord of the East, and Caïdou, that same rebellious nephew of the Khan. Again, the drums don't sound until everyone « furent bien appareilliez et d'une part et d'autre ».[45] At this point, the drums signal an immediate and terrifying start to the fighting: « de maintenant commença la bataille des uns aus autres et s'entregeterent tant de saietes que tout l'air en estoit couvers comme

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[42] Ernst Emsheimer and Robert Carroll, "Earliest Reports about the Music of the Mongols." *Asian Music* 18.1 (Autumn-Winter, 1986): 1-19; 10.

[43] Polo 472.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid. 480.

de pluie ».[46] In this way, Polo recalls to readers the first battle, in which he states that the cries of the soldiers drown out even God's thundering; now, their arrows take the place of rain, while the drums are the peals of thunder that herald a deadly storm. Humans have, perhaps, perverted the beauty of the natural world with their warfare, and the drums have become the symbol of that twisting. Polo also seems to neatly evoke Biblical descriptions of disaster, notably the plagues on Egypt, with this language; the rain of arrows beating down on the solders is just as deadly as the plague of hail that destroyed the crops in the fields. Here, the drums indicate the beginning of destruction and the end of pretty illusions of civilization; any differences of identity on the battlefield end once the drums sound and two neatly-organized armies become a seething mass of limbs, blood, and weapons.

This question of blurred identities continues to be important in Jean de Joinville's *La Vie de Saint Louis*, a chronicle of Louis IX and his involvement in the Seventh Crusade (1248-1254). Louis and his forces were attempting to take Egypt and from there reclaim Jerusalem, which was once again under Muslim control. They were ultimately unsuccessful, but over the course of the chronicle, Joinville's observations of the instruments of war give us some insights into the role of drums in this conflict.

The very first appearance of drums occurs when the king and his forces, sadly diminished by the winds at sea, arrive at Damiette and are met with the defending forces of the sultan, "moult beles gent a regarder".[47] In addition to being beautifully armed and armored, they make an audible first impression on the Crusaders: "La noise que il

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[46] Ibid.

[47] Jean de Joinville, *La Vie de Saint Louis* (Paris : Librairie Générale Française, 2010) 234.

menoient de leur nacaires et de leurs cors sarrazinoiz estoit espouentable a escouter".[48] Joinville clearly means to highlight the exotic nature of the "foreign" soldiers to the Crusaders in this passage: the sultan's soldiers are a beautiful enemy whose musical instruments produce terrifying sounds as a torment to French ears.

The second appearance of drums in the text is an even more dramatic one, as Joinville describes the arrival of the Count of Jaffa and his troops into Damiette alongside the other Crusaders:

> Ce fu celi qui plus noblement arriva . . . Endementiers que il venoient, il sembloit que la galie volast, par les nageurs qui la contreignoient aus avirons, et sembloit que foudre cheïst des cieux au bruit que les pennonciaus menoient, et que les nacaires, les tabours et les cors sarrazinnois menoient qui estoient en sa galie.[49]

The first impression that Joinville conveys is that the ship is almost otherworldly, flying across the waves. The most overwhelming part of the arrival is the fact that it is the musical instruments – *nacaires, tabours* and *cors sarrazinnois* – and brightly-colored pennants that seem to almost rip the sky apart with their noise. The fighters who carry these instruments are not even mentioned; the musical instruments metonymically represent the Crusaders, and their powerful sound is akin to the physical might of the men, who will strike the Muslim forces like lightning bolts. We should assume that the drums, at least, were playing rhythmically, in order to direct the rowers responsible for moving the *galie*; the regular downbeat creates order and conveys the organization, and thus civilization, of the soldiers. Joinville, thus, uses the drum in this passage for the

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[48] Ibid.

[49] Joinville 240.

same reason as did Polo in his work: to emphasize the status of the troops as accomplished, efficient, and ready for battle.

The next instance in the text where Joinville mentions drums is in a description of the Saracens, whose troops, along with a significant number of Turks and Bedouins, had completely surrounded the Christian encampment. According to Joinville, the chief of the Saracens, described elsewhere as "vaillant",[50] "en ces choses [the placement of his troops] mist il jusques a midi".[51] Given that the troop movements began "a solleil levant tout droit",[52] the final disposition of troops must have been a vast undertaking. However, once the Saracen leader had arranged all his soldiers, there was no wait for the battle to begin: "Et lors il fist sonner ses tabours, que l'on appelle nacaires, et lors nous coururent sus et a pié et a cheval".[53] Once more, drums herald the onset of fighting, but here they are clearly not part of a mutual contract of traditional battle rituals. From Joinville's description, the Crusaders are not given a chance to beat their own drum – they are simply attacked from all sides as soon as the *nacaires* sound.

Interestingly, despite having used the term "nacaire" before, without any kind of clarification for Western readers, Joinville chooses to define it here as "*ses* tabours" (emphasis mine). *Nacaires*, therefore, become not just a type of drum, separate from a tambourine or tabor, but the drum of the Saracens. This distinction is an important indicator for the status of the *nacaire*, or naker, in Europe during this time. Given the already long association between the European crusaders and the inhabitants of the

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[50] Ibid. 300.

[51] Ibid. 302.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid.

Levant, Joinville's apparent familiarity with the *nacaire* confirms that it must have already been relatively well-known by this time. In fact, the *nacaire,* along with a straight trumpet, was one of the more popular acquisitions brought back by the crusaders: "these instruments enjoyed special favour [in Europe] for many years."[54]

This familiarity with a "foreign" instrument is not present in *La Conquête de Jérusalem*, which makes sense: as a chronicle of the First Crusade, it describes the beginning of Europe's bloody relationship with the Levant, and the less-specific vocabulary for musical instruments is a symptom of the Franks' lack of familiarity with the finer elements of Levantine culture(s). It is thus unsurprising that a text written approximately two centuries later, after many other encounters between eastern and western culture, demonstrates more familiarity with these cultural details. Of course, the name of the instrument and the instrument itself are not the only things that have traversed cultural boundaries.

Figure 20: Medieval kettledrums (nakers/*nacaires*/*naqqara*). Unknown - Encyclopædia Britannica, 11th ed., Vol. 15, p. 765 Adapted from British Library Add MS 27695, f.

In each of the passages I have presented in Joinville's text so far, there is a common thread beyond the presence of percussion instruments: rank. The *nacaires* are always associated with some level of nobility in these passages. That is, they are only

[54] Titcomb 56.

played by members of the forces of people of high rank: The Sultan, the newly-chosen king of the Saracens, the Count of Jaffa. So, we can see that the Franks have not only appropriated the *nacaire*, but also its context: it is not an instrument for the masses.[55] This context extends back to Polo's work, mentioned earlier in this chapter, in which *nacaires* mean that men of rank – the Khan and his royal family members - are present. However, I have reason to believe that the *nacaires* mentioned by Joinville are not quite the same as those mentioned by Polo. In several of Polo's passages detailing battles he observes, he uses the adjective "grant" to describe the instrument he calls a *nacaire*. It seems logical that he is impressed by the unusual size of these drums, as compared to the *nacaires* that were more widely known at this time, which were much smaller (see Figure 20).

As is obvious in the illustration, these drums are very small kettledrums, easily carried by a person, and were widespread throughout the Levant. However, Polo's text seems to indicate something much bigger. At the very least, the kettledrums he mentions were such that he needed to indicate size explicitly, to differentiate them from the more familiar small drums. So, he must be describing a different kettledrum, something closer in size to the timpani we have today.

The drums that became our modern timpani spread throughout Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries, after European relations began with the Ottoman Empire.[56] These drums were much too large to be carried easily by a human into battle; Farmer tells us that in the Far East they were about the size of a man, and thus must have been

[55] Ibid. 56.

[56] Ibid. 56.

extremely heavy and deafeningly loud.[57] Few Europeans would have come across such a drum at this time, so it is obvious that Polo has chosen to use a more common term – *nacaire* – in order to describe an uncommon instrument to his thirteenth-century readers, a drum that is usually referred to as a *ke'urge* in the Mongolian language (itself apparently an ambiguous term).[58] This choice, while useful in order to help readers picture an analogous instrument, actually obscures the true impact of the Khan's great drum and is a useful illustration of the semantic difficulty I confront in this project.

In any case, let us return to the text to continue examining the appearances of percussion instruments. Joinville's next mention of drums is part of a general description of the enemy camp:

> A la porte de la heberge le soudanc estoient logiez en une petite tente les portiers le soudanc et ses menestriers, qui avoient cors sarrazinnois et tabours et nacaires, et fesoient tel noise au point du jour et a l'anuitier que ceulz qui estoient delez eulz ne pooient entendre l'un lautre, et clerement les oioit l'en parmi l'ost.[59]

Joinville's description tells readers some important information about music in the Saracen army. First, the musicians traveling with the fighters must be part of the sultan's household, since they are housed right outside the sultan's tent. From a European perspective, such a position gives these musicians a certain amount of rank or social importance. Furthermore, they fulfil a purpose within the army, playing loudly at

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[57] Henry George Farmer, *Studies in Oriental Musical Instruments*, Second Series (Glasgow: Longwood Press,1939) 12-13.

[58] Emsheimer and Carroll 10.

[59] Joinville 314.

daybreak and nightfall every day. Later in the same passage, Joinville explains that these same musicians also signaled new orders from the sultan:

> Dont il estoit ainsi que quant le soudanc vouloit charger, il envoioit querre le mestre de la Haulequa et li fesoit son commandement ; et lors le mestre fesoit sonner les estrumens au soudanc, et lors tout l'ost venoit pour oïr le commandement au soudanc.[60]

At this point, the "noise" decried by Joinville becomes an essential part of the army's function – the instruments must be loud enough to be heard throughout the encampment, so that no one remains ignorant of new orders. In this context, the instruments are not the vehicle through which orders are conveyed, unlike in previous examples. Rather, they are an alert system within the Egyptian army. They also appear to be under the direct command of the chief of the *Haulequa*, an elite guard responsible for the sultan's wellbeing, and not directed by the sultan. This hierarchy reinforces their military purpose, rather than any entertainment value they may have provided to the army, since, according to Joinville, "ne les menestriers ne feussent ja si hardis que il sonnassent leur estremens de jours ne mais que par le mestre de la Haulequa".[61]

The tactical advantage that loud instruments, particularly drums, bring to the battlefield is undeniable; in many of the examples I have presented throughout this chapter, drums are used to communicate over long distances or in spite of other loud noises. They are thus incredibly useful when signaling to parts of an army that are separate from the main body. One such example is in Joinville's description of a conflict

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[60] Ibid. 314.

[61] Ibid.

between the emperor of Persia, Béréka Khan, an ally of the Egyptians, and the sultan de la Chamelle, an ally of the Christians. The sultan's forces were greatly reduced by the first round of fighting, and now they are facing the possibility of a siege:

> Quant le soudanc vit ce, il vint a sa gent et leur dit que il se iroit combatre a eulz, car, se il se lessoit assieger, il seroit perdu. Sa besoingne atira en tel maniere que tout sa gent qui estoient mal armee, il les envoia par une valee couverte ; et si tost comme il oïrent ferir les tabours le soudanc, il se ferirent en l'ost l'empereur par derieres et se pristrent a occire les femmes et les enfants.[62]

Clearly, the sultan's battle strategy actually depends on his drums' ability to be heard over a distance, as well as his troops' familiarity with the sound of the sultan's drums. The timing of the drums, and thus the timing of the rear attack by those of the sultan's troops who were "mal armee", was crucial: too early, and the small detachment could be overwhelmed by the rear guard of the emperor's army who were still in the camp; too late, and the main body of the emperor's army may not hear the screams of the women and children being killed over the sounds of their own attack on La Chamelle. In either case, the sultan's army would be slaughtered, La Chamelle taken, and the Christians down one ally.

Fortunately for the sultan and the Christians, the attack on the camp worked. In fact, it was so successful that "il ne demoura homme ne femme que tous ne feussent morts et livrez a l'espee".[63] The drums in this case were a signal to start the battle, but it wasn't quite the battle expected by the emperor and his army. Instead of acting as a

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[62] Ibid. 462.

[63] Ibid. 464.

musical contract for all participants, these drums were instruments of dissimulation. Their deception allowed the sultan's army to carry out a seemingly impossible task: to defeat 25,000 soldiers with a force of only 280.[64] This episode seems to echo the Biblical tale of the fall of Jericho, when the Israelites used their trumpets and voices to help bring down the wall around the city. Of course, God does not appear to have directly intervened in the story told by Joinville, but the parallels between the two stories – a mismatch between the defending forces and the attackers, the use of musical instruments to turn the tables, the triumph of "God's chosen people" – are implicit.

Religion provides excellent fodder for conflicts between groups of people, as *La Conquête de Jérusalem* and *La Vie de Saint Louis* show. In both texts, drums were useful ways to show cultural differences, but they also highlighted some of the similarities between cultures. The development of the role of drums in the construction of cultural identities, however tenuous or amorphous those identities may be in the ages before true nationalism, continues to provide an intriguing, new perspective for modern scholars. Furthermore, the connection between percussion/rhythm and an effort to signify both power and sort of "authorized violence" in early texts allows us to consider whether drums continue to play similar roles in during another tumultuous period: the French Reformation.

Domestic Drumbeats

In France, religion was an integral part of the French identity; the French king enjoyed the title "*Rex christianissimus* – the Most Christian King – [as] a sign of their

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[64] Ibid.

particular elevation above all other secular monarchs in Europe".[65] French kings eventually became more than just defenders of the faith; they began to "function as priests and even gods", able to receive both the bread and the wine at communion and determine proper methods of worship for the people.[66] Christianity, specifically Catholicism, was entwined in every aspect of daily life. Churches were the center of life in rural areas and French clergy influenced the Christian world in Rome, so a Catholic perspective was inescapable. As the work of Martin Luther and John Calvin gained traction throughout Europe, questioning the increasingly-dubious practices of the Church and calling for a separation between faith and king[67], this unbroken "French-Catholic" identity began to develop some cracks. Soon the confessional divide erupted into open war, with the 1534 Affair of the Placards, the Huguenots moving to stabilize their identity and openly oppose the Catholic conception of the Eucharist. Such a direct action spurred Francis I's 1540 Edict of Fontainebleau, declaring Protestantism one of the "heresies qui à nostre grand regret & desplaisir ont pullulé & pullulent en nostre royaume, pays, terres, & seigneuries" and calling for its "extirpation & extermination".[68]

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[65] Mack P. Holt, "The Kingdom of France in the Sixteenth Century," *Renaissance and Reformation France*. Ed. Mack P. Holt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) 9.

[66] Ibid.

[67] The separation called for by reformers, in this case Huguenots, was not the creation of a secular state. Rather, they regarded the Pope and the Catholic Church as corrupt, representatives not of God but only "un gouvernement pervers & confit de mensonges, lequel esteint ou estouffe la pure clarté de la doctrine" and wished to restore the Church to purity (Calvin, *Institution de la religion chretienne,* 2.2, 707).

[68] François I, "Ordonnance du Roy François, contre les imitateurs de la secte Lutherienne, & recelateurs d'iceux." (Edition de 1551) 1r.

One of the most enduring cornerstones of the Huguenot identity was the translation of the Psalms into the vernacular, so that they could be easily sung by anyone. This project, implemented by Calvin, sought to make the Bible and all forms of worship accessible to people outside the clergy, thereby removing some of the Church's power over the populace. While the central religious texts and rituals of Christianity remained in Latin, it was impossible, Calvin maintained, for people to be true participants in their own faith:

> Et dit l'Apostre, que le people ne peult responder *Amen* à la prière qui a esté fait en langue estrange. Or est-il ainsi, que puis qu'on l'a fait au nom & en la personne de tous, que chacun en doit estre participant.[69]

In addition, Calvin wanted to provide a series of simple songs for worship and everyday life that would "inciter les coeurs & les enflamber à plus grand'ardeur de prier".[70] The Psalms were perfect; their sacred nature ensured that they would call singers and listeners to worship God, and their familiarity would make them easy for everyone to learn. The first truly popular metrical Psalm translations appeared in the 1539 version of the *Psautier de Genève*, which were written by Clément Marot. Marot continued translating Psalms until his death in 1544, upon which Théodore de Bèze completed the remaining Psalms by 1562.[71]

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[69] Jean Calvin, "Epistre." *Institution de la religion chretienne* (Geneva: Jean Girard, 1545).

[70] Calvin, *Institution* 615.

[71] For the full texts of the Psalms discussed in this section, please see the Appendix.

The Psalms became so popular that multiple composers created four-part harmonizations from the original homophonic tunes, and the Huguenots quickly became known for their Psalm singing. In fact, it was a seminal part of their identity: "The singing of the Psalms provided the Calvinists with a sense of identity … as they sang the Psalms they identified themselves as those who were fighting for a specific objective."[72] Psalm-singing "entered into the very warp and weft of the humblest members' lives,"[73] and every one of their services included congregational singing. Once the fighting began, the Psalms transformed into something more than a tool for worship; they became a tool for war.[74] In his *Memoires*, Claude Haton describes how the Huguenots used the Psalms on the battlefield:

> Les ministres et prédicans desditz seigneurs estoient armez et bien Montez avec leurs maistres en laditte guerre ; lesquelz à cheval faisoient la presche chascun d'eux en son quartier, en chantant leurs psaulmes de Marot en vulgaire françoys ou bien les psaulmes de David, comme ilz disoient, traduitz en françoys ; et chantoient avec une si haulte voix, que le camp du roy les entendoit bien.[75]

In this battle, the Huguenots are "serré[s] de si près qu'il[s] ne pouvoi[en]t fuir",[76] so their singing is meant to signal their defiance, force others to bear witness to their

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[72] W. Stanford Reid, "The Battle Hymns of the Lord : Calvinist Psalmody of the Sixteenth Century." *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies* 2 (1971): 36-54; 43.

[73] Reid 37.

[74] Van Orden 19.

[75] Claude Haton. *Memoires*. Ed. F. Bourquelot. Tome I. (Paris : Imprimerie Impériale, 1857) 308.

[76] Haton 308.

sacrifice, and solidify their "confidence and assurance that no matter what would take place they were on the Lord's, i.e. the winning side."[77] Of course, the text of the Psalms themselves was often quite appropriate for this purpose, as we can see in the following lines from Marot's translation of Psalm 18:

> Dieu, c'est mon roc, mon rempar hault, et seur,
> C'est ma rençon, c'est mon fort deffenseur,
> En luy seul gist ma fiance parfaicte,
> C'est mon paroys, mes armes, ma retraicte :
> Quand je l'exalte, et prie en ferme foy,
> Soubdain recoux des ennemys me voy.[78]

In this Psalm, God starts as a rock, something solid, natural, and close to the earth; he is the foundation of the narrator's faith. Later in that same line, he is the "hault et seur" rampart of a figurative fortress. It is therefore clear that he is both the solid base and the overseer of this building. He then plays the redeemer (rençon) and the defender, as if the narrator has become or is in danger of becoming a prisoner. In this line, God has begun to play a more personified role in the conflict between salvation and damnation: these two roles seem to require an active agent who stands between the narrator and his enemies. By the next line he is again in a non-personified role as a safe shelter (paroys), weapons (armes), and sanctuary (retraicte); he protects the narrator in every possible way, and in return, the singer of this Psalm "l'exalte, et prie en ferme foy", the final

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[77] Reid 46, 43.

[78] Clément Marot and Théodore de Bèze. *Les pseaumes mis en rime françoise*. Paris : Jean Bonnefoy, 1563, pp. 27.

means of repulsing the enemy. The concatenation of different descriptors for God gives readers, singers, and listeners of the Psalm a sense of the totality of God's protection for his people, and thus incites great courage as well as imparts an arguably super-human power: according to the singer, God "de hardiesse, et force il m'environne" and

> [S]eure voye à mes emprises donne :
> Mes piedz à ceux des Chevreulz faict esgaulx,
> Pour monter lieux difficiles, et haultz :
> Ma main par luy aux armes est apprise,
> Si que du bras ung Arc d'acier je brise.[79]

Through faith and God's power, the singer turns from an ordinary person into an extraordinary warrior: swift, sure, unfaltering, and brave. This singer becomes the "chef des nations" thanks to God's protection and intervention and resolves to "parmy les gens estranges / Te beneiray, en chantent tes louanges." In this way, the wonder of God's favor, extended to all of David's descendants forever, can be spread even further.

Although drums are never explicitly mentioned in this Psalm, I hypothesize that drums are an implicit part of Psalm 18. In the fourth stanza, the sounds of this holy battle are thrust into the foreground, as part of an awesome display of power on the part of God:

> Au ciel menoit l'Eternel grand tonnerre,
> L'Altitonant sa voix grosse hors mist,
> Et gresle, et feu sur la terre transmist :

[79] Marot et de Bèze 29.

Lança ses Dards, rompit toutes leurs bandes,

Doubla l'esclair, leur donna frayeurs grandes.[80]

This description of the thundering voice of God, which descends upon the battlefield in order to terrify enemies of the faith, may be in a way the precursor to some of the passages explored earlier in this chapter, notably the passages about the arrival of the Count of Jaffa's troops in *La Vie de Saint Louis* and the battle between the Grand Khan and Naian in *La Description du Monde*. In those cases, drums and other battlefield noises rival the divine "grand tonnerre", so that the battle drums play the same role as God's voice: "romp[re] toutes leurs bandes, / . . . [et] leur donn[er] frayeurs grandes". The incredible volume of God's voice and the rending of the sky in order to rain down hail, fire, arrows, and lightning are common elements throughout these passages, so that thundering noises – whether God's voice or drum rolls - and violent natural phenomena are inextricably linked.

Furthermore, the narrator uses the same imagery as that of the *Conquête de Jérusalem,* mentioned earlier in this chapter: the shaking and displacement of the natural world in battle. In the Psalm, "Incontinent tremblerent les Campaignes: / Les fondements des plus haultes Montaignes / Touts esbranlés, s'esmeurent grandement », all due to the anger of God. Once he has finished decimating the enemy troops, the marks of his power are visible: "Furent canaulx desnués de leur unde, / Et descouvertz les fondements du Monde." This hyperbolic evocation of the aftermath of battle, in which the very environment is altered by overwhelming sounds and other

[80] Marot et de Bèze 28.

manifestations of God's fury, could be read as an amplification of the *Conquête*'s description of Jerusalem's defender's instruments, which echo through the air and shake the hills and valleys. Although these two particular texts may have never been in direct conversation, they must certainly be read as part of the same tradition of Western Christian literature; they share the common goals of reaffirming the status of Christianity as supreme and of spreading knowledge about Christianity.[81]

The next Psalm I wish to discuss is Psalm 68, translated by Théodore de Bèze, "Que Dieu se montre seulement", which, according to Ker was the 'song of battles' of the Huguenots and "was raised by them in many a bloody and desperate conflict".[82] This particular Psalm shows the progression of a battle wherein God only has to reveal himself to the enemy in order to send them fleeing in all directions. Once they're gone, the focus of the narrator turns to describing the victory and encouraging listeners to join in the song.

The Psalm begins with an exhortation to God to "se monstre[r] seulement" in order to strike fear into the enemy. God's power consumes those who stand against him, so that they are rendered like nothing more than "un amas de fumee" or "la cire aupres du feu". However, he protects those who "chantent en son honneur", characterized as "les justes".[83] Thus, the Huguenots, by literally singing these words in battle, are clearly

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[81] Despite the uses to which the Psalms have been put by the Huguenots, and other Christian sects, it is important to remember that they are originally part of the Hebrew scriptures. The fact that they have been so entirely assimilated into Huguenot culture in these translations, and the translations' subtle (or not, in some cases, as in the Psalm 118 translation) reframing of certain imagery as referring to Christ is another layer of cultural violence, as they erase Jewish identity and beliefs.

[82] J. Ker. *The Psalms in History and Biography*. Edinburgh: A.E. Elliot, 1888, p. 95.

[83] Marot et de Bèze 125

positioning themselves as the righteous worshippers who watch “en toute esjouissance” as God drives away their enemy.

The Psalm is full of references to the physical position of God and his army. God’s dwelling place is Mount Sinai, « le mont de Dieu merveilleux » which is « levé jusqu’aux nues ». His army of angels is supported by a procession of the chosen people, all of whom descend from “ce mont …[où] à jamais / y fera demeurance”. It’s a dazzling experience for the narrator, full of the sights and sounds of joyful worship:

> Chantres te devançoyent de pres,
> Les joueurs d’instruments après,
> Marchoyent d’une desmarche,
>
> Avec les tabours au milieu
> Chantoyent les louanges de Dieu
> Les filles assemblees,
> Disans, O race d’Israel,
> Louez le Seigneur eternel
> Es sainctes assemblees.[84]

The drums in the middle of the procession would likely provide the first sign of its arrival, as the beats echo out across the landscape in advance of the sounds of the other instruments and the singers.

Because the drummers are literally descending from the high mountains, the drums play the same role as God’s voice, which thunders down: “alors qu’il veut tonner,

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[84] Marot et de Bèze 128

/ Haut sa grosse voix resonner, / Par son pouvoir supreme." Additionally, the drums are clearly an integral part of praising God in this procession, as they accompany the singing and are overlaid by encouragements for listeners to raise their voices in turn: "Chantez à Dieu, Princes & Rois, / Psalmodiez à pleine voix / Ses louanges tressainctes". I find it significant that the drums are physically located "au milieu"; perhaps this positioning signals their central role in enhancing the effect of the "Arche" – the Ark of the Covenant – at the head of the procession, augmenting the vessel's governance of the faith by governing the feet of the marchers? If so, we can read this Psalm as the depiction of a victory march, whereby the drums are part of the signal of Christian rule over the land. The drums described in the text spread the music of praise far and wide, just as the Huguenots' vernacular Psalms spread knowledge of their beliefs across the country.

Psalm 68 was not the only one that the Huguenots sang as they marched into the fray; the next battle hymn is Psalm 118, "Rendez à Dieu louange, et gloire," translated by Marot. The argument he gives in the edition of the *Vingt Pseaulmes* (1543) explains the general content:

> Argument : C'est ung hymne par lequel David delivré de tous maulx et eslevé Roy sur tout Israel, rendit publiquement grâces à Dieu au tabernacle de l'alliance, là où d'ung grand cueur il celebra la bonté dont il avoit usé envers luy et là se monstre clairement figure de Jesuchrist.[85]

This argument echoes the sentiment of Psalm 68 – by singing this psalm in battle, the Huguenots may be presupposing their victory, or deliverance from the oppression of

[85] Marot et de Bèze 230.

Catholicism. Because the Bible was the source of ultimate truth for Huguenots,[86] they may also be using this Psalm as a sort of prophecy or spell: by singing of past victories, they can alter current events in their favor. The Psalm is a point of contact between the past and the present here; its truth *before* (when it was first written) is just as true *now* (during the Reformation) to the Huguenots, something that is signaled explicitly in the text with the refrain "Dure perpetuellement". This phrase is repeated five times – at the end of the first four stanzas, as well as at the end of the whole Psalm, wherein the last stanza is the same as the first:

> Rendez à Dieu louange, et gloire,
> Car il est bening, et clement.
> Qui plus est, sa bonté notoire
> Dure perpetuellement.[87]

The double repetition – of refrain and stanza – lends a sense of timelessness to the text, as if it could be sung continuously and perpetually, the measured words blending end and beginning until there is no difference between the two. Such a textual structure makes Psalm 118 an ideal song to encourage persistence from Huguenot troops; the words circle seamlessly, just as God's grace and protection flows endlessly from age to age. It is impossible to simply stop singing, with such a weight behind the words; and, since singing was a major facet of Huguenot rebellion and resistance to Catholic rule, it

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[86] Charles Garside, Jr. "The Origins of Calvin's Theology of Music." *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series, Vol. 1, No. 4 (1979), pp. 1-36; p. 29; Calvin, 1.6, 22-23

[87] Marot et de Bèze 230.

is impossible to stop fighting, too. In fact, the Psalm states that the singer isn't even stopped by death: "Arriere ennemys, et envie, / Car la mort point ne sentiray, / Ainçoys demoureray en vie".

Although drums are not explicitly mentioned in this psalm, its rhythm is reminiscent of one of the marching rhythms explicated by Thoinot Arbeau in his *Orchésographie,* a 16th century French social dance manual with a surprising wealth of information about musical instruments, war, and marching music. Here is a side-by-side view of both the rhythm and the beginning of the melodic line:

On the left is a marching rhythm explicated by Arbeau[88], and on the right is the beginning of the Psalm tune.[89] As one can see, they use different note values – the marching rhythm uses minims and semiminims, whereas the Psalm uses semibreves and minims. However, the rhythmic pattern is the same, even though the Psalm tune would be sung at a slower tempo. In fact, if we cut all the note values in half for the Psalm tune, we can correct for the tempo difference to more easily compare the two examples. Below are both examples put into modern notation, with the marching rhythm first:

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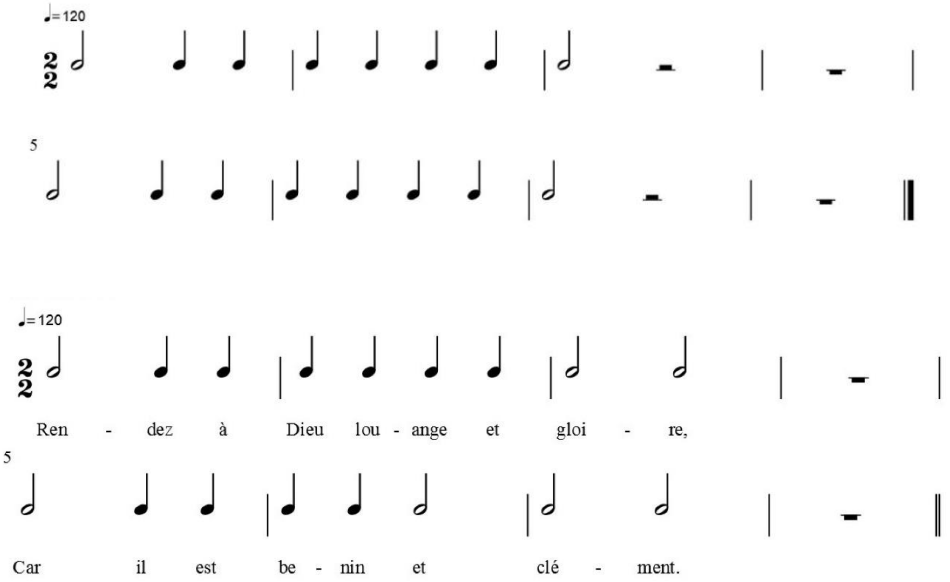
[88] Arbeau 10r.

[89] Claude Goudimel, *Les Pseaumes mis en rime Francois par Clement Marot et Theodore de Beze mis en quatre parties* (Paris : Jean Bonnefoy, 1565) 606.



The almost identical rhythms of the pieces are very striking; even though they were each written for different instruments and with different primary purposes, they have the same ultimate effect: highly-regulated, inexorable progress. It is clear why Psalm 118 was so popular as a battle hymn. It would be easy to speed the singing up to match the tempo of the drum beats, so that the singing is backed by the drums. Imagine, therefore, the effect of an army of singing soldiers approaching battle, whose words are punctuated by the sharp, loud beats of drums. Such a show of discipline – both religious and physical – would be an impressive deterrent to the enemy. While I cannot say whether the rhythmic similarities of these two musical examples were explicitly intended, the connection between them is undeniable and understandable.

Arbeau himself explains the importance of having a standardized marching rhythm, saying that, given people's natural differences in gait speed and step length "si trois hommes se promenoient & marchoient ensemble, & chacun d'eulx vouloit aller à

part selon l'une des trois diversités ils ne s'accorderoient pas".[90] In an army, these differences are extremely undesirable, leading people to "marcher confusément & sans ordre cause qu'ils seroient en peril d'estre renversés & diffaicts".[91] While Arbeau's assertion that walking out of step with one's fellow soldiers could lead to someone striking off in a completely incorrect direction is a little hyperbolic, his point stands: unsynchronized marching is undisciplined and confusing. The solution to this problem, attributed to the French, was the use of drums: "en la marche de la guerre, le françois à faict server le tambour pour tenir la mesure, suyvant laquelle les soldats doibvent marcher."[92] Thus, the beat of the drum marks each step, so that soldiers match their steps to the drum. The now-regular steps confer an additional advantage: the ability to use music to measure distance. "Et ainsi consequemment tant que le chemin dure en sorte qu'en deux mil cinq cents battements de tambour le soldat marche la longueur d'une lieue."[93] Thus, the drum cadences require a measurable, consistent amount of forward movement; they impose physical discipline upon the soldiers, turning individuals into an integrated group with a common goal.

The precision of this goal does seem to rest entirely upon the drums, so one important aspect of marching cadences at the time was a standardized "measure" of

> huict minimes blanches, desquelles les cinq premieres sont battues & frappées scavoir les quatre premieres chacune d'un coup de baston, seul & la cinquieme

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[90] Arbeau 7v-8r.

[91] Ibid. 7v.

[92] Ibid. 8r.

[93] Ibid. 8r-8v.

> des deux battons tout ensemble & les trois aultres sont teues & retenues, sans estre frappées.[94]

In other words, in an 8-beat sequence, where the half note takes the beat, the first five are sounded, and the last 3 are rests. This basic pattern produces a steady, regular, and predictable walking rhythm. The difference in playing technique among the first five beats – so that the first four are played with only one stick and the fifth uses both – helps to keep every soldier from literally starting off on the wrong foot; the difference in timbre and volume between the first and the fifth beats would be noticeable, so any individual who was out of step would be able to correct their march immediately. As Arbeau explains a little later, this basic rhythmic pattern was designed specifically to direct a soldier's every step:

> Si le tambour n'usoit point de souspirs, les marches des soldats pourroient tumber en confusion car (comme je vous ay dit) lassiette du pied gauche doibt estre sur la premiere note & lassiette du pied droit sur la cinqueième, & si les huict nottes estoient toutes touchées, un soldat pourroit faire les assiettes de ses pieds sur aultres nottes que sur la premiere & cinquième.[95]

This explanation of the use of the cadence with a group of soldiers is edifying; by requiring one step every four beats, it becomes obvious that, despite the relatively long note value (a modern half note), the beats would have actually been quite fast. The faster the actual tempo, the more quickly (to a point) one could move an army a given distance. So, the tempo chosen by the drummer or drummers in a company is of utmost

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[94] Ibid. 8r.

[95] Ibid. 15r-15v.

importance. Too fast, and the soldiers would be too depleted to fight – a danger that might be all too close, given that "la plus grand part des soldats n'y sont guieres bien exercés."[96] Too slow, and a company could miss a rendez-vous point or arrive too late in the day to begin a battle and lose the element of surprise. The drums, therefore, literally keep the army together during their movements.

However, this initial explanation of the basic marching cadence is far from the end of the story. Arbeau makes it very clear that playing five (half note) minims was only the beginning; in fact, marching rhythms could use any combination of white minims, black minims, and crochets (expressed as both notes and as the nonsense syllables tan/plan, tere, and fre, respectively), as long as the three beats of rest at the end are preserved.[97] The elucidation of a variety of combinations of these note values is hardly exhaustive, but it is evocative, as if Arbeau seeks to illustrate to Capriole, as well as to the reader, just how complex even a simple march can be. Drumming for an army is not a job for just anyone, he implies; the drummer must have not only skill but also good taste: "Entre toutes les diversitez nombrees cy-dessus, un tambour pourra choisir celles qui luy sembleront estre plus aggreables, & mieulx sonnantes aux aureilles."[98] This attitude is shared by Louis de Montgommery, who is firm in his opinion of the amount of skill and precision needed by military drummers:

> [Il] faut prendre garde que les Tambours battent bien l'ordonnance, & que ce ne soit, ny trop viste, ny trop l'entement, afin que l'on puisse bien entendre les coups

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[96] Arbeau 8r.

[97] Ibid. 9v-14r.

[98] Ibid. 14r.

> distinctement, & que ceux qui peuvent avoir deux tambours les facent battre ensemble, afin que quand l'un fait des fredons, que l'autre batte la marche simple . . . .[99]

Of course, what is "agreeable" and "well-beaten" is culturally-mediated, so that a careful listener could pick out differences between, for example, a Swiss drummer and a French one:

> Le tambour des Suysses faict un souspir aprez la troisieme note, & les trois souspirs à la fin : mais tout revient à un : car les assiettes des pieds sont tousiours sur la premiere & cinquième note.[100]

The overall consistency of the march – always four white minim-beats per footstep – does ensure that there is some level of understanding across national boundaries, such that a marching rhythm should be recognized wherever one happens to be. Thus, drums help to communicate even across a language barrier, or when language is impossible:

> Le bruict . . . sert de signes & avertissement des soldats, pour desloger, marcher, le retirer, & à la rencontre de l'ennemy leur donne cœur, hardiesse, & courage d'assaillir, & de se deffendre virilement et vigoureusement.[101]

In this passage, Arbeau touches on the physical effects of hearing drums (as well as other military instruments). They promote courage and bodily strength, virtues that

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[99] Louis de Montgommery, *La Milice françoise reduite à l'ancien ordre & discipline Militaire des Legions : telle & comme la souloient observer les anciens François, à l'imitation des Romains, & des Macedoniens* (Paris : François Rousselet, 1615) 114.

[100] Arbeau 14r.

[101] Arbeau 7v.

may not be otherwise present in a person: “Il n’est coeur si mol que le son de nos tabourins et de nos trompetes n’eschauffe.”[102]

Of course, drums do more than simply direct a march. Arbeau mentions the concept of “*evolutions*” beaten by the drums, which were patterns also called “countermarches”, according to *Tacticus Aelianus*. These patterns were markedly different from a standard march, and thus signaled a different kind of movement. The description of one such pattern sounds quite jarring:

> [L]e tambour use d’une continuation de battements plus legiers & concitez par minimes noires y entremeslant des coups de battons frappez rudement ; lesquelz font un son comme si cestoient coups d’arquebuzes, & ce quand les soldats approchent l’ennemy de prez . . . .[103]

By telling us that the drum beats sound like “coups d’arquebuzes”, Arbeau draws a direct parallel between the drums and the other noises of battle. Furthermore, it gives readers the impression that the drummers were using their instruments to intentionally mimic the noise of gunfire – the rapid patter of light beats of short duration (quarter notes) interspersed with notes more “rudely” beaten – more loudly or violently, perhaps? – creates a soundscape that closely resembles that of armies actively engaged in battle.

Because Arbeau is careful to note that this *evolution* is used when the soldiers are near to enemy forces, it is as though the drums are presaging events that will happen shortly; that is, they mimic gunfire in order to warn all listeners what is in their future. The effect that this change in drumming has on the soldiers is to encourage them to

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[102] Michel de Montaigne *Les Essais* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004) 593.
[103] Arbeau 16v-17r.

draw together; the individual men become "un rampart fort espaiz, & difficile à forcer & romper."[104] Yet another change in rhythm, when the drum "sonne deux minimes noires continues, qui font la mesure binaire legiere" makes the men advance "saultelotans & danceans" into combat. Arbeau even personifies the drum, noting that this quick, light pattern sounds like it is repeating the word "dedans" over and over, encouraging the soldiers to progress ever forward into the fray.[105]

For another view on military drumming, let us turn once more to Louis de Montgommery's *La milice Françoise,* which gives modern readers a sense of how drums in the army worked, from the perspective of a military tactician, rather than a musician or dance instructor. He begins with an explanation of how the drum (and drummer) fit into the military hierarchy:

> En chaque compagnie, doit y avoir un Tambour & un pifre . . . . Par-dessus eux comme leur Capitaine doit estre un Tambour Colonnel . . . . [qui] porte un baston sans fer à la main, avec lequel il bastonne fort bien les Tambours, quand ils manquent à leur devoir : il faut qu'un Tambour Colonnel sçache parler plusieurs langues estrangeres. Qu'il soit ruzé, point ivrongne, ny causeur, fidelle sur tout. Il doit loger au logis du Sergent Major, ou proche d'iceluy, & se presenter soir & matin devant luy, pour recevoir ses commandemens.[106]

According to this passage, there are at least two people per company who are responsible for the drums – the drummer and the drum colonel. The sign of the drum

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[104] Arbeau 17r.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Montgommery 37-38.

colonel's office is, fittingly, a baton, which he would use only on the very particular instrument of the drummer's body. The parallelism of this structure is amusing: whenever necessary, the drummer beats the drum, and the drum colonel beats the drummer. This *mise en abîme* of drumming, intentional or not, emphasizes just how visceral an art it is. When well done, it leads the army to execute great feats; when poorly done, it leaves the drummer – and likely the rest of the army – open to physical consequences. The drums are thus denoted as quite important, which is borne out by the drum colonel's close relationship to the *Sergent Major*: he must remain physically near to this officer, who is second-in-command to the *Colonnel*, the commander of a legion.[107] The drum colonel is privy to orders and is expected to transmit them to the rest of the army when the sergeant-major commands.

Montgommery also explains here just how important good judgment is when it comes to drums. His description of an ideal drum colonel as someone who "sçache parler plusieurs langues estrangeres", who is "ruzé, point ivrongne, ny causeur, fidelle sur tout" paints quite an exacting picture of just what kind of person is needed. On subsequent pages, Montgommery elaborates further on the duties of the drum colonel, which helps readers understand why the drum colonel must be so accomplished.

First, he is responsible for sounding the signal to decamp when "il y a alarme"; this call must be done with "une main legere, & d'un jeu serré" especially when close to the enemy. In that instance, the drum colonel has to muffle the drum with a cloth "pour entendre le son plus sourd."[108] Clearly, in this instance, the army is in a delicate and

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[107] Montgommery 49; A company was at least 100 men (Van Orden 28). A legion is composed of several thousand men, but the numbers are highly variable (Hale 61-62).

[108] Montgommery 39.

urgent situation; the drum colonel must use considerable discretion when beating out the call to *déloger*; otherwise, the enemy could gain dangerous information about the movements and current location of the army. Furthermore, such a crucial task requires a good deal of skill as a percussionist. The drum colonel must beat lightly and subtly enough to keep the enemy from hearing, but loudly and clearly enough to alert his comrades to what is happening. Furthermore, the *délogement* is not an instantaneous process, so the drum colonel must sound the orders until all the men have decamped.[109]

Second, the drum colonel is ultimately responsible for the successful transmission of orders to every single soldier. He must have the drummers relay these orders quickly, clearly, and respectfully, in a variety of situations. Any indiscretions, inattention, or drunkenness could spell disaster if orders were garbled or sounded at the wrong time. And, since armies were often a conglomeration of men from different nations, which Hale calls their "Noah's ark nature",[110] the drum colonel – perhaps more than any other officer - had to be able to communicate effectively with people who did not speak French, hence the requirement that he be multilingual. His ability to keep order among the drummers directly affected the organization of the entire army, especially in combat:

> Aux assauts principalement, ceux de dedans, lors qu'ils ont sonné l'alarme, doivent lever la main, car le bruit oste tout moyen au chef de commander. Et si c'est une erreur de croire que ce son là anime les soldats.[111]

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[109] Ibid. 65-66.

[110] Hale 70.

[111] Montgommery 39-40.

This passage reminds us just how loud drums on the battlefield are, and how far the sound can travel. It indicates that drums could and did drown out essential verbal instructions during active combat, so an undisciplined drummer could prevent those orders from being spread. In addition, Montgommery alludes to the common belief of drums being able to motivate soldiers in combat, saying that such a belief is "une erreur." Here, he is speaking specifically about the idea that it is simply the *noise* that encourages. I do not believe he is completely discounting the power of drums to inflame the hearts of soldiers; instead, he is pointing out how that noise can undermine the effectiveness of an army when it is misused, i.e., when it destroys order and discipline. He elaborates further about the responsibility of the drum colonel regarding this issue:

> Les Tambours (lors que le chef hausse le baston, où la gennette, pour luy faire signal de lever main, de cesser à battre pour commander quelque chose a ses Soldats,) ont tous un certain refrain, qui dure un long espace ; de sorte que c'est chose qui merite d'estre promptement ordonnée : il faut que le chef ait la patience d'attendre que Monsieur son Tambour ait achevé sa ballade : le Tambour Colonnel aura soing d'oster ceste mauvaise coustume, laquelle n'est propre qu'a jetter bande, où revendre chevaux, & non à la guerre.[112]

In this passage, Montgommery is describing a particular behavior that impedes the functioning of the army: the practice of drum flourishes before important orders are announced. The over-the-top elaboration on the part of the drums is echoed by the increasingly sarcastic tone and the use of exaggerated musical terms. Instead of the

[112] Montgommery 40.

"bruit" mentioned on the previous page, now the drummers are producing "refrains" and "ballades" which take a considerable amount of time and prevent the commander from actually giving orders. Furthermore, the use of the subjunctive phrase "il faut que" and the epithet for the drummer, "Monsieur son Tambour", firmly express Montgommery's exasperation with this musical habit. It is the drum colonel's job to regulate the drums, then, his good judgment making up for the percussive excesses of the regular drummers.

Of course, the drum colonel's duties do not take up the entirety of the information about drums that Montgommery includes in this treatise. In the chapter called "De la maniere de soustenir un siege", he lays out some rules for behavior during a siege, one of which has to do with drums:

> Vous ne laisserez aussi approcher non plus aucun Tambour, ny trompette : car souvent sous ombre d'une chamade, un Cappitaine avisé se desguisera comme eux, & en cet equippage recognoistra sans peril, ce qui leur pourroit couster beaucoup de temps, & d'hommes sans en pouvoir estre bien informez.[113]

From this passage, we may assume that drummers were highly mobile members of an army, and that they may not have been viewed as much of a physical threat by opposing forces. Their instruments would have hindered easy use of a weapon, also, so a lone drummer was probably easily ignored. Furthermore, it would be easy to disguise oneself as a drummer – as long as no actual drumming was involved – because the trappings of such a position were so simple: a drum and a pair of batons. In this way, drums enabled

[113] Montgommery 141.

spying, allowing an officer to gather useful information about his opponents. But, they may also have marked drummers as useful prisoners: as stated earlier, they were privy to every single order from the officers, since it was their job to relay those orders to the rest of the men.

Of course, ultimately the drums were a symbol and outgrowth of the discipline and ability of an army, and Montgommery was not immune to their effects, despite his disdain for some of the bad habits of the drummers. According to him, the French drum corps

> est meilleure que de nulle autre nation, bien que les Espagnols s'en mocquent, & disent qu'il semble que les tambours François sonnent plustost un branle, que la marche. Mais qui considerera bien sa cadence, trouvera qu'elle marque distinctement le pas grave, tel que le Soldat doit observer marchant en bataille ou entrant en garde.[114]

Montgommery's allusion to the « dancelike » rhythm of French drums connects nicely to Arbeau's descriptions, discussed earlier, and seems to emphasize the importance of grace and musicality in war. Only sophisticated listeners, unlike the Spanish, he argues, can truly understand the effectiveness and gravity of the French marching rhythms; they create a framework that a soldier can follow both on and off the battlefield, as well as an order that helps to direct entire armies to move in concert against an enemy.

These striking descriptions of military drumming by both Arbeau and Montgommery indicate the extent of the physical influence that drums have on the

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[114] Montgommery 38.

bodies of soldiers and the movements of an army. Not only do they simply propel men in one direction or another, but they also impart various qualities to each listener, whether it is the promise of violent action, the immovable strength of a wall, or the grace of a dancer. As Van Orden says, "drummers formed a crucial link in the chain of command,"[115] and without them, an army would quickly fall apart; an army without a drummer is no longer an army, but a loose collection of individuals who may or may not have the same goal in mind.

Montaigne also comments on this visceral and emotional power wielded by the drums. In his essay "De la diversion", he specifically emphasizes how easy it is to control a person's reactions once you have the right tools:

> Qui demandera à celuy là, 'Quel intérêt avez-vous à ce siège ?''L'intérêt de l'exemple', dira-t-il, 'et de l'obéissance commune du prince : je n'y prétends profit quelconque ; et de gloire, je sais la petite part qui en peut toucher un particulier comme moi : je n'ai ici ni passion, ni querelle.' Voyez le pourtant le lendemain, tout changé, tout bouillant et rougissant de cholere en son ranc de bataille pour l'assaut : c'est la lueur de tant d'acier et le feu et tintamarre de nos canons et de nos tambours qui luy ont jetté cette nouvelle rigueur et hayne dans les veines. 'Frivole cause !'me direz vous. Comment cause ? Il n'en fault point par agiter nostre ame ; une resverie sans corps et sans subject la regente et l'agite . . . .[116]

In the case of the formerly-dispassionate man in the passage above, the correct tools were the « lueur de tant d'acier et le feu et tintamarre de nos canons et de nos

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[115] Van Orden 208.

[116] Montaigne 839.

tambours ». The implication here, of course, is that his logical mind was diverted by the sensory input he received: his eyes were dazzled, his ears deafened, and his heart was set afire. The tools of war, among them drums, were enough to create physical and emotional reactions that overruled his previous attitude. The "ame" is therefore easily subject to someone's emotions, so that a drum could potentially incite a person to act in a manner that is in complete opposition to their normal behavior. Such power should not be used lightly.

In any case, the connection between the body and the drum in situations of war is steeped in violence. Each beat of a baton corresponds to a step, or a blow, or another foot of bloody terrain gained or lost. Nowhere is this connection between violence and drums clearer than in Agrippa d'Aubigné's *Les Tragiques*. Only one passage in the entire work mentions drums explicitly, but it is one of the most effective evocations of how deep the influence of war drums goes:

> Les bélîtres armés ont le gouvernement,
> Le sac de nos cités : comme anciennement
> Une croix bourguignonne épouvantait nos pères,
> Le blanc les fait trembler, et les tremblantes mères
> Croulent à l'estomac leurs poupons éperdus
> Quand les grondants tambours sont battant entendus.[117]

In the first lines, Aubigné expresses his disdain for those who control the government (who control both the cities and their sacking at a whim), calling them "bélîtres armés",

[117] Agrippa d'Aubigné, *Les Tragiques*. Edition de Frank Lestringant (Paris : Gallimard, 1994) Livre I, vv. 219-224.

and thus affirms his allegiance. He then references a well-known, historical symbol of conflict and Catholic rule within France: the *croix bourguignonne*, a type of St. Andrew's Cross. This cross was used during many conflicts and by a variety of groups[118], but Aubigné is probably referring to its symbolism during the Armagnac-Burgundian Civil War. In this case, its close physical proximity to the phrase "le blanc les fait trembler", which Lestringant indicates was the color of royal troops,[119] it seems clear that Aubigné evoques it as a metonym for Catholic reign over France.

However, its association with terror both past and present is clear – it actively "épouvantait" the ancestors of French citizens and now "fait trembler" Aubigné's fellows. The sight of the cross is also accompanied by a seminal sound of war, which causes a visceral, instinctive, and ultimately useless reaction in its audience. This sound, the "grondant tambours", is clearly terrifying: it causes women to tremble and clutch their infants. Aubigné's description of the drums imbues them with menace, as if they are actual predators instead of mere musical instruments. Drums embody war in these lines – a logical next step for an instrument with such a long history in combat.

Conclusion

Even with such a narrow cross-section of literary works, the drum's importance to combat is clear. Its presence in conflicts from the Crusades to the Reformation (and beyond) affirms its legitimacy as a tool of war, not only for its practical use, but for its emotional resonance across cultures and eras. Drums thus play a multifaceted role in

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[118] For more information on this topic, see Emily Hutchinson, "Partisan identity in the French civil war,1405–1418: reconsidering the evidence on liverybadges". *Journal of Medieval History* 33.3 (2007): 250–274.

[119] Frank Lestringant, "Notes," *Les Tragiques* 384.

war. First, war drums are markers of identity: use the wrong drum, or use the right drum in the wrong way, and you are strange, Other, pagan, heretic. But, use them the right way, and you establish your place in (military) society. Second, war drums are regulators. They measure time and distance, they impose physical and mental discipline, and they instruct those who hear them to fight.

Despite the increasing codification and precision of making war throughout history, it is fundamentally chaotic, terrifying, and brutal. But in the midst of this chaos, war drums have a powerful rhetoric all their own. As one of the oldest instruments, drums' roots are deep and universal – they are a touchstone between cultures. So, when the drums of war start sounding against an Other, we would all do well to remember how effective a tool they are in the service of power, and how easily they can lead us into the chaos of conflict. And then, perhaps, we should try to resist the instinct to march to their rhythms.

Chapter 3
Drums and Dance: The Rhythms of Court

Dance, like music, exists as both an art form and a popular pursuit; it can be performative and participatory, rarefied and quotidien, controlled and exuberant. In medieval and early modern French society, dance appeared in many contexts, from village circle dances to court ballets. Van Orden tells us that, regardless of genre, "these balletic practices . . . projected a musical order across the social body . . . . Through the action of music, social bodies cohered"[1]; writing about dance bears this out. For some, dance is a way to "ensevelir nos malheurs",[2] as if focusing on the movements of one's body can obscure the strength of one's emotions. Others believe that dance is the natural outcome of music's spiritual effects on the body:

> "El dolce effecto . . . del dançare non e sino Una actione dimostrativa di fuoiri di Movimenti Spiritali li quali se hanno a Aconcordare con le misurate & perfecte consonancie D'essa hermonia."[3]

Still others declare that, thanks to dance, "La vie de cour se concentre obstinément sur l'oubli du présent et sur l'idéalisation des êtres et des rapports sociaux qui forment son

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[1] Van Orden 36.

[2] Pierre de L'Estoile, *Mémoires-journaux de Pierre de L'Estoile*. Ed. Gustave Brunet, Aimé Louis Champollion-Figeac, Eugène Halphen, Paul Lacroix, Charles Read, Tamizey de Larroque, and Edouard Tricotel. 12 vols (Paris: Alphonse Lemerre, 1888-1896) 84.

[3] Ambrosio da Pesaro, *The Illustrious Giovanni Ambrosio da Pesaro's* The Art of Dancing, *A Secular Work* in *Fifteenth Century Dance and Music: Twelve Transcribed Italian Treatises and Collections in the Tradition of Domenico da Piacenza,* Vol. 1 Translated and Annotated by A. William Smith (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995) vv. 237-44.

microcosme."[4] In this case, dance as a courtly pastime creates a new world which is predicated on refining one's projected image and accepting the performances of others, where the illusion of control is more important than the reality of constant changes – whether those changes be of the physical body or the social/political one.

Of course, dance is an intensely physical pursuit, demanding a good deal of bodily control and constant refinement,[5] but I would argue that it does not stop there. In fact, dance is an art that could – even must – be included under the umbrella of rhetoric. Dance's social function would have been understood as a form of intentional communication, and thus seen through a rhetorical lens. This chapter will explore the reasons for analyzing dance through rhetorical terms and categories by dealing with its music, its structure, its purpose, and its various forms. In order to fully develop this idea, I will use examples from a number of early modern works from various genres, some traditionally literary and some not.

Dance: The Foundation of a Court

Dance, according to sources such as Arbeau's *Orchésographie* and Castiglione's *Le livre du courtisan*, is an integral part of courtly life in the early modern period. A well-reared member of court should be able to dance well, and, by the time of Louis XIV's elaborate *ballets de cour*, those who were viewed as the most perfect examples of nobility were often those who displayed skill in many pursuits, among them dance, music, and martial arts. Dancing allowed the French nobility to "en faire goûter aux

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[4] Georgie Durosoir, *Les Ballets de la Cour de France au XVII siècles* (Geneva: Editions Papillon, 2004) 8.

[5] Van Orden 92.

peuples toutes les douceurs; sous les appas du plaisir & du divertissement qui les leur rendent plus sensibles".[6] Dance, Menestrier implies, is a vehicle for all of life's pleasures, and by enjoying it – either as participant or spectator – one becomes more refined, more knowledgeable of the world. This statement also alludes to the social foundation that Menestrier believed dance possessed, that of "inherent political and religious as well as aesthetic connotation".[7] Missing at least a modicum of ability in the various courtly arts could be a problem if the individual in question wished to advance in society.[8]

This assertion seems unlikely until one realizes that dance – of all kinds, but especially the *ballets de cour* - "engaged courtiers in the performance of political hierarchies, created opportunities to be seen and to perform and – just as important – permitted observers to judge those performances with exaction".[9] For Menestrier and his contemporaries, dance has become one of the "systems of corporeal signification to convey status and identity"[10] as well as a form of inscription, controlled narrowly by the French monarchy's "rigidly fixed social and political hierarchy".[11] In this milieu, dances

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[6] Claude-François Menestrier, *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les regles du théâtre* (Paris: chez René Guignard, 1682) eiiir.

[7] Susan L. Foster, "Textual Evidances." *Bodies of the Text: dance as theory, literature as dance*, pp. 231-46. Ed. Ellen W. Goellner and Jacqueline Shea Murphy (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995) 243.

[8] Van Orden 13.

[9] Van Orden 83.

[10] Foster 233.

[11] Ibid. 234.

are “texts written of and through precisely inscribed bodies”,[12] bodies that are constantly being scrutinized for their adherence to a code of behavior that rests on the pursuit of complete refinement. A dancing body is a body hard at work maintaining “a complex balancing act of concealing and revealing, consolidation and dispersal”,[13] where the goal was for each courtier to use dance as a tool to create an unblemished façade of seemingly-effortless perfection.[14]

This requirement is confirmed in the very first pages of *Orchésographie*, where Capriole begs for Arbeau’s help learning to dance. Capriole, a young courtier, is apparently completely ignorant regarding the execution of a dance but is aware of its importance in his life: “[I]’ay deffault de la dance pour complaire aux damoiselles, desquelles il me semble que depend toute la reputation d’un ieusne homme à marier”.[15] He begs for Arbeau’s help precisely because his inability to dance is holding him back, despite his other good qualities and his skill in other noble pursuits; Arbeau, the self-professed expert on dance in this book, can help. The hyperbolic statement that “toute la reputation” depends on dancing seems a bit absurd at first, the rash words of a

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[12] Elizabeth Dempster, “Women Writing the Body: Let’s Watch a Little How She Dances.” *Bodies of the Text: dance as theory, literature as dance*. Eds. Ellen W. Goellner and Jacqueline Shea Murphy (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995) 23.

[13] Ellen Welch, *A Theater of Diplomacy: International Relations and the Performing Arts in Early Modern France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017) 32

[14] Wayne A Rebhorn, *Courtly Performances: Masking and Festivity in Castiglione’s* Book of the Courtier (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978) 14.

[15] Arbeau 2v.

passionate youngster. However, Arbeau-the-instructor makes no effort to decrease the intensity of Capriole's belief, instead confirming it:

> Vous le prenez fort bien, car naturellement, le masle & la femelle se recherchent : & n'y a chose qui plus incite l'homme à estre courtois, honneste, & faire acte genereux que l'amour : & si voulez mariez, vous debvez croire qu'une maistresse se gaigne par la disposition & grace qui se voit en une dance, car quant à l'escrime & au ieu de paulme, les dames ny veuillent assister de craincte d'une espée rompue, ou d'un coup d'estoeuf, qui les pourroit endommager.

These opening remarks help establish dance as crucial to the life of a courtier. This statement is further borne out by more contemporary research on the subject, in which scholars such as Georgie Durosoir have carried out the work of cataloguing and describing many of the ballets occurring in the 16th and 17th centuries. As Durosoir puts it, "Les occasions en sont multiples, quotidiennes, de raison d'état ou d'initiative privée."[16] Even the literature of the time reflects the frequency at which opportunities to dance arose:

> Comme il [le roi Henri II] réussissait admirablement dans tous les exercices du corps, il en faisait une de ses plus grandes occupations. C'étaient tous les jours des parties de chasse et de paume, des ballets, des courses de bagues, ou de semblables divertissements.[17]

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[16] Durosoir 9.

[17] Madame de Lafayette, *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678) (Paris: Hatier, 2003) 7.

Given the ubiquity of dance in the 16th and 17th century French court, it is no wonder that Capriole is so worried about how much his lack of skill is holding him back in courtly life. The reader does not get much information about this character, since the dialogue conceit doesn't need to do anything but indicate who is teacher and who is student; all the image we have is of a young man, relatively skilled in other physical pursuits but clumsy on the dance floor, who is almost comically naive and eager to learn. His flattery of Arbeau-as-dancing-master reveals the true purpose of *Orchésographie*: "Vray est que vostre methode d'escripre est telle, qu'en vostre absence, sur vos theoriques & preceptes, un disciple pourra seul en sa chambre apprendre vos enseignments".[18]

This text is meant to translate the purely physical movement of dance and the auditory movement of music into something that can be read, understood, and put into practice by anyone. Furthermore, it does not require that an instructor actually be present. In fact, such a book seems meant to create a deeper connection between mind and body as well as to lower the barrier for participating in courtly life. With this kind of resource, even those who live far from court, cannot afford a dancing instructor, or for whom physical pursuits do not come naturally can gain skills necessary for advancement in noble society.

While *Orchésographie* is no doubt a useful resource on the surface, the existence of this text may also be conceived as an indirect challenge to more modern (Western) distinctions between body and mind. René Descartes' seminal statement, « Je pense,

[18] Arbeau, 5r

donc je suis », neatly severs mind from body as Descartes muses on the possibility that everything but one's own existence may be an illusion – senseless, corrupted data collected by a flawed, corrupted body. In its most radical form, the *cogito* implies that existence is predicated only on thought, as if action – and thus the body, for it cannot think, only act – means nothing. But Arbeau requires his reader to put the body first, as well as to begin conceiving of it as a site for both action and discourse :

> Mais principallement tous les doctes tiennent que la dance est une espece de Rhetorique muette, par laquelle l'Orateur peult par ses mouvements, sans parler un seul mot, se faire entendre et persuader aux spectateurs, quil est gaillard digne d'estre loué, aymé, & chery.[19]

The idea of dance as a "Rhetorique muette" elevates it from a lowly position of bodily exercise to part of the loftier realm of philosophy, with dancers seeking to share their ideas with a receptive audience. Since rhetoric at this time is based not only on persuasive ability but also on general knowledge of the world and of works of classical rhetoric, participation in it is a sign of a good education and (likely) nobility. Furthermore, in its application, rhetoric was tied closely to moral philosophy, giving rhetoriciens space to logically debate issues of right and wrong. In a dance setting, rhetoric performed correctly would demonstrate not only a dancer's understanding of the broader situation, but also their ability to determine the "right move" in concert with, or in spite of, other dancers. In this spirit, Menestrier adds his support for the idea of body-mind connection:

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[19] Arbeau 5v.

> [L]e Ballet exprime les mouvemens que la Peinture, la Sculpture ne sçauroient exprimer, & par ces mouvemens il va jusqu'à exprimer la Nature des choses, & les habitudes de l'ame, qui ne peuvent tomber sous les sens que par les mouvemens du corps, qui sont les Interpretes des Passions, & des sentimens interieurs.[20]

Dance becomes a way for the "low" parts of humanity – the body – to translate or be translated; the body is the vehicle through which the "sentimens interieurs" and the "habitudes de l'ame" can be shared, and through this communication, the body becomes a representation of "la Nature des choses." In this model, the body thus cannot be separated from mind or spirit, since without the body, comprehension of the spirit is rendered impossible. More modern scholars of both philosophy and dance follow this line of thinking, seeking to reaffirm the mind-body connection and the ways that "mental processing [is] geared toward action".[21] Elizabeth Dempster explains this stance neatly, saying,

> Dance can be thoughtful action, a movement of embodied mind. It offers the possibility of a distinctive mode of action, a mode of action embracing a conception of the body which is not shadowed by habits of thought based on Cartesian dualism.[22]

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[20] Menestrier 41.

[21] Kathryn Banks and Timothy Chesters, "Introduction." *Movement in Renaissance Literature: Exploring Kinesic Intelligence* Eds., Kathryn Banks and Timothy Chesters (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2018) 3.

[22] Dempster 25.

Therefore, since dance is movement, action, change, spatial relationships – difficult concepts to commit to a static page - the fact that Arbeau has undertaken to teach it through writing is an act of rebellion, simultaneously affirming it as a textual art, a pleasant pastime, and part of early modern scholarly traditions. He begins this task by offering a definition of dance:

> La dance ou saltation est un art plaisant & proffitable, qui rend & conserve la santé, convenable aux jeusnes, aggreable aux vieux, & bien séant à tous, pourveu qu'on en use modestement en temps & lieu, sans affectation vicieuse.[23]

It is interesting to me that Arbeau defines "dance" with "saltation," since these two words imply slightly different actions. A dance may be fast or slow, sprightly or reserved, whereas a *saltation,* which means both "dance" and "jump"[24], would necessarily require a certain amount of jumping and leaping. By calling the reader's and Capriole's attention to *saltation*, which seems to be a specific style of dance, Arbeau is emphasizing dance as more of an athletic pursuit. This strategy may serve to appeal more to the Caprioles of the world, who have perhaps neglected their dancing in favor of other exercises. It also illustrates the suitability of dance for everyone: vigorous dancing is the purview of the young or the very fit and makes them stronger, while more

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[23] Arbeau 5r.

[24] I assume that these two different meanings are derived from both Latin and Italian; the root of *saltation* is *saltare*, which means "to jump" in Italian, but "to dance" in Latin. In Pierre Rivière's *La Nef des folz du monde*, the narrator speaks of both "danses joyeuses et saltacions" (370), and Rabelais' Gymnaste performs graceful, acrobatic feats in Chapter 35 of *Gargantua*, described as « guambade[s] », « saut[s] », and « sobresauts » - dancelike movements which are, nevertheless, not part of a dance. These examples thus indicate to me a certain distinction between the two.

restrained styles help everyone else maintain their health. Finally, it is important to note that Arbeau's definition includes important signifiers for *how* dance should be done: "modestement en temps & lieu, sans affectation vicieuse." We should understand this description as directly inspired by both Castiglione and Cicero, who emphasize the importance of decorum and good sense in one's actions and words.[25] With such a clear intertextual link, it becomes obvious that the definition of dance is much more wide-ranging than it appears, touching as it does on ideals of morality, propriety, social responsibility, and honesty; its connection to rhetoric is multifocal.

Dance and the Pursuit of Personal Perfection

Menestrier tells us that dance is a useful activity for creating a balanced person, since « [l]e divertissement n'est pas moins necessaire à l'esprit pour le delasser, que la nourriture l'est au corps pour l'entretenir ».[26] Dance as *divertissement* is not just entertainment but a sustaining activity for the soul, on the same level as eating is for the physical body. Menestrier continues this line of reasoning, saying that dance « sert à moderer quatre passions dangereuses, la crainte, la melancholie, la colere & la joye ».[27] Dance is therefore viewed as an activity that helps to moderate individual emotions, all of which can be destructive on their own. A dancer may be more spiritually or psychologically balanced, making them more attractive to their peers. Suddenly, Castiglione's claim that a *courtisan*'s daily routine of dance, martial arts, and study

[25] For a fascinating discussion of the rhetorical value of decorum in Cicero's works, see Daniel Kapust, "Cicero on decorum and the morality of rhetoric." *European Journal of Political Theory*, 10.1 (2001): 92-112.

[26] Menestrier 29.

[27] Ibid. 31.

means that, « tutte l'hore del giorno divise in onorevoli e piacevoli esercizi cosí del corpo come dell'animo »,[28] makes more sense; each activity adds value to both the mental and physical development of the *courtisan*. By combining physical and spiritual development, dance helps its participants to remain healthy on all levels.

Unfortunately, despite its many benefits, dance is not an activity that everyone can do, even if Arbeau insists that it is "bien séant à tous". Ambrosio, Menestrier, and Castiglione place limits on just who can dance. Menestrier's mostly have to do with social status in the context of *ballets de cour*, as he opines that "[i]l seroit ridicule de voir danser sur des Theatres des Docteurs, des Magistrats & des Vieillards qui doivent faire Profession d'une vie grave & serieuse".[29] The status of ballet as a diversion, an entertainment – however noble – renders it inappropriate for those who must maintain an image of stolid respectability. Furthermore, he alludes to the idea that ballet is only suitable for those under a certain age, since greater age is associated with a decrease in the passions and vigor for which dance provides an outlet.

Castiglione also places an age limit on dancing, stating through his character Federico, "Il medesimo dico del danzare; perché in vero questi esercizi si deono lasciare prima che dalla età siamo sforzati a nostro dispetto lasciargli."[30] There are two ideas at stake in the above sentence. On the one hand, there is the idea of age rendering someone ridiculous, which is explicit in the rest of the passage from which this statement is taken.

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[28] Baldesar Castiglione, *Il libro del cortegiano* Ed. Walter Barberis (Torino: Biblioteca Einaudi, 1998) 21.

[29] Menestrier 16-17.

[30] Castiglione 140.

Older people are, according to the majority of Castiglione's characters, obliged to retire from public displays of courtly arts. Why, we might ask? Because these arts are designed to present the person performing them as either a potential lover or a potential object of love, and, as Federico tells us, "ne' vecchi l'amor è cosa ridicula."[31] Thus, by dancing, an older person is claiming an identity to which he or she no longer has a right, which disrupts the careful social order of the court.

The other reason older people should refrain from dancing has to do with the question of simple physical ability, indicated by the idea that the constraints of age are more than merely social, but physical as well, exerting an undeniable force on a human body. With the dwindling of passion comes bodily weakness, and a weak body cannot manage the physical demands of dance to the degree necessary within the early modern court. Because dance is such a physical art, someone who isn't capable of performing it to perfection should not. It is to this way of thinking that Ambrosio subscribes, stating that,

> Imperoche in persone di Sue membri difective non possano haver luocho chomo Sonno çoppi gobbi Stropiati & simile gente perche queste tale parte vogliano & consisteno nello Exercicio & movimento corporale.[32]

Here, Ambrosio makes the point that a lack of bodily perfection translates to imperfect execution of the art of dancing. Imperfection is clearly not to be tolerated; it is in passages like these that the status of dance as art, craft, or illusion becomes clear,

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[31] Castiglione 139.

[32] Ambrosio vv. 524-49.

subsuming its status as entertainment or diversion. Flawed bodies ruin the carefully-constructed image of an ideal court that dance helps to preserve, and thus must be discouraged from participation.

In fact, the division between a proper dancing body and one that is improper is an important tactic in the French court's efforts to coalesce around its values of refinement and the elimination of flaws ; by excluding a subset of its members, dance allows the court to more easily define itself, both internally and externally.[33] Such a self-definition tactic is particularly obvious in the following description of the French court in Madame de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves :*

> Jamais cour n'a eu tant de belles personnes et d'hommes admirablement bien faits, et il semblait que la nature eût pris plaisir à placer ce qu'elle donne de plus beau dans les plus grandes princesses et dans les plus grands princes.[34]

However, it is not Nature that has created such a beautiful image of the French court ; it is the nobility's own systematic elimination or erasure of anyone who does not achieve the high standards necessary in order to be considered part of the group. Of course, if one works hard enough, with the help of manuals and instruction on proper courtly behavior from authors like Castiglione, Menestrier, and others, that exclusion may be turned to inclusion. Thus, while the grandeur of the court is not a completely closed system, it is still one built on a strict foundation of regulations to which all must

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[33] William McNeill, *Keeping Together in Time: Dance and Drill in Human History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995) 52; Norbert Elias, *The History of Manners*. Transl. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978) 36.

[34] Lafayette 8.

conform. This level of control allows Menestrier to truly claim, “C’est la gloire de la France d’avoir achevé de regler tous les beaux Arts.”[35]

Dance as Courtship Ritual

In addition to its emphasis on striving for artistic perfection, dance is an opportunity for participants to prove their modesty, subtlety, and prudence in a public, performative way. Being a successful dancer, Arbeau tells us, is not only about physical ability, but also about the ability to judge one’s surroundings. The best dancers toe a delicate line between demonstrating skill and avoiding ostentatious displays of prowess. In dance, as in rhetoric, the “orator” should seek to persuade his audience through an appearance of moderation and natural good taste.

Of course, the area in which the illusion of the ideal body and the most subtle of sensibilities is most important is that most courtly of all endeavors: the search for a mate. Let us return to Arbeau’s opening remarks about the importance of dance to a young courtier. Arbeau begins this passage by asserting that men and women naturally seek each other’s company, which immediately establishes such a relationship as both normal and highly desirable.[36] He then jumps directly to the idea that, by spending time seeking the companionship of another gender, love will develop. Love, in turn, inspires a man to improve himself by becoming more “courtois [et] honneste”, but it also encourages a sort of performance of this improvement through “acte[s] genereux”. The performativity of courtship doesn’t end there, however, for a successful courtship – one

[35] Menestrier 5.

[36] Arbeau 2v.

that ends in marriage or a similar "claim" - requires that a man be a good dancer. He specifically cites that women are attracted to the "disposition & grace qui se voit en une danse"[37]; these characteristics, which may be translated as gracefulness and proper arrangement of movement during the dance, could reflect such qualities of the spirit as healthy self-awareness, courtesy, and modesty – all desirable in a potential mate. Menestrier would agree, telling readers that dance adds "à toutes ses actions un air noble & une certaine grace qu'on trouve rarement en ceux qui n'ont jamais appris cét exercice."[38] Additionally, Arbeau's mention of the qualities of "disposition & grace" alludes to the idea of dance as rhetoric, "disposition" being read as *dispositio,* the arrangement of arguments.

Of course, Arbeau does not dispute that there are other skills a courtier should have, implying that any man worth his salt participates regularly in fencing and tennis. However, he does point out the intensely masculine and potentially volatile atmosphere of these latter activities, where even spectators may be in danger of injury. Dancing, he asserts, is a much safer activity for a woman, one in which she can even participate, rather than simply attending to watch a potential lover.

The importance of having both parties in a courtship dance together was useful from a physical perspective. Dancing allows for men and women to both prove their suitability and evaluate each other's:

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[37] Ibid.

[38] Menestrier 30.

> Il y a bien plus, car les dances sont practiquées pour cognoistre si les amoureux sont sains et dispos de leurs membres, à la fin desquelles il leur est permis de baiser leurs maistresses, affin que respectivement ilz puissent sentir & odorer l'un l'aultre, silz ont l'aleine souesve, & silz sentent une senteur mal odorant, que l'on nomme l'espaule de mouton: de façon que de cêt endroict, oultre plusieurs commoditez qui reüsissent de la dance, elle se treuve necessaire pour bien ordonner une société.[39]

Dance becomes an easy way to gauge health and fitness in a potential mate, which is clearly cast as something men and women both do. The physical proximity and stamina it requires gives everyone a chance to see, feel, taste, and smell each other, so that a potential lover's body may be deemed acceptable (or not). Dance is thus an essential courtship ritual, a way by which the young are permitted a level of freedom and intimacy that is nevertheless limited, codified, and bounded by social norms. For these reasons, it "se treuve necessaire pour bien ordonner une société" while seeming, in some ways, to break the normal rules of daily court life.

Modesty and the Female Dancer

Throughout *Orchésographie,* Arbeau very clearly positions his argument around the figure of a male dancer, a *gaillard*. In this way, he underscores the importance of dance as a method of specifically *male* advancement in courtly life. Of course, this emphasis may be simply because his student is a young *courtisan*, but women also clearly danced during this time, although Arbeau mentions them only rarely. In order to

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[39] Arbeau 2v.

fill in the gap left by the general absence of women in *Orchésographie,* let us turn to Castiglione. About halfway through the work, the conversation between characters turns to the virtues of the ideal court lady. The general consensus is that she should be graceful and delicate, comporting herself in all activities « con riguardo, e con quella molle delicatura, che avemo detto convenirsele ».[40] Where a man may persuade an audience of his strength, dignity, and value during a dance, a woman must diminish herself so that all that remains is an impression of "quella nobile vergogna che è contraria della imprudenzia".[41]

Arbeau is of the same mind as the majority of Castiglione's characters, and asserts that dance

> sert grandement à la santé, mesmement des ieusnes filles, lesquelles estans ordinairement sedentaires & ententives à leur lanifice, broderies, & ouvrages desguille, font amas de plusieurs maulvaises humeures, & ont besoing de les faire exhaler par quelque exercice temperé.[42]

Dance is an "exercice temperé" for women, not a performance of persuasion, and is meant only to be a break in a daily routine of quiet, demure, and ornamental pursuits. Castiglione's character Le Magnifique expresses this ideal plainly as part of his description of an ideal court lady:

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[40] Castiglione 266.

[41] Castiglione 266.

[42] Arbeau 6v.

> In questo modo sarà ella ornata di boni costume e gli esercizi del corpo convenienti a donna farà con suprema gratia e i ragionamenti soi saranno copiosi e pieni di prudenzia, onestà e piacevolezza; e cosí sarà essa son solamente amata, ma reverita da tutto 'l mondo e forse degna d'esser agguagliata a questo gran cortegiano, cosí delle condizioni dell'animo, come di quelle del corpo.[43]

Instead of allowing her to display herself as a person "digne d'estre loué[e], aymé[e], & chery[e]",[44] dance simply rids her of the unhealthy and unattractive "maulvaises humeures" in her body. The physical activities that "convenienti a Donna" are, it is obvious, not meant to make a lady exceptional, merely agreeable. And, of course, even conducting herself with nothing but perfect modesty, honesty, and grace, she may still not be as highly regarded as her male counterpart. Ambrosio alludes to why this may be, saying that, if a woman dances exceptionally well, she will be "dotata & Degna de virtuosa & comendabile Fama", but that such recognition is rare; this is because they regard dance not as an art, but as mere exercise, committing faults left and right.[45] Women are thus prejudged as insensible to the nuances of the noble art of dance, simply because it is one of the few physical activities that are suitable for them and they treat it as such. For a woman, who is, in many ways, the opposite of a man,[46] dancing is a subtraction of faults from her natural "imbecillità",[47] not an addition of value.

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[43] Castiglione 265.

[44] Arbeau 5v.

[45] Ambrosio vv. 840-855.

[46] Castiglione, 258-59.

[47] Ibid. 259.

Although the notable absence of advice for female dancers is a gaping hole. Arbeau's silence on the subject is perhaps due to an expectation that noble women are usually taught to dance (as a matter of course) by dancing masters hired by their parents[48]; in that case, a text like *Orchésographie* is unnecessary, as a well-reared woman *must* dance well in order to succeed socially, whereas Capriole's mere presence in the dialogue makes it clear that a well-reared man does not necessarily need to dance well in order to avoid complete social downfall, as long as he has other virtues that can be displayed to his peers.

Dance as a way to emphasize the noble status of a woman appears even more obvious in Arbeau's description of the *pavane*, a dance similar to the *basse danse* in terms of speed and dignity but much more fashionable in the current time:

> Ladicte pavane n'a pas esté abolie & mise hors d'usage du tout, & croy qu'elle ne le sera jamais, vray est qu'elle n'est pas si frequentee que par le passé: Noz Joueurs d'instruments la sonnent quant on meyne espouser en face de saincte Eglise une fille de bonne maison, & quant ils conduisent les prebstres, le baronnier & les confreres de quelque notable confrairie.[49]

By indicating that the church wedding of a "fille de bonne maison" is a classic example of the appropriate time to play a *pavane*, Arbeau tells readers that it is a dance linked strongly with the idea of a woman's social standing and suitability. In addition, its role as a religious processional reinforces the *pavane* as a noble, honest, sedate, and even

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[48] Kenneth Charlton, *Education in Renaissance England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965) 214.

[49] Arbeau 28v.

pious sort of dance. Later comments on both the *pavane* and the *basse danse* continue to emphasize their role in courtly life. Capriole first remarks that he "treuve ces pavanes & basse-dances belles & graves & bien séantes aux personnes honorables, principalement aux dames & damoiselles".[50] No doubt the slow tempo, gliding style, and general simplicity of both dances contribute to Capriole's opinion. They are thus the perfect form of the "exercice temperé" that women most need.[51] Castiglione's description of women dancing also bears out the idea that dancing is the perfect social activity:

> Cosí confermando ognuno, impose la Signora Duchessa a madonna Margherita e madonna Costanza Fregosa che danzassero. Onde súbito Barletta, musico piacevolissimo e danzator eccellente, che sempre tutta la corte teneva in festa, cominciò a sonare suoi instrumenti; ed esse, presesi per mano, ed avendo prima danzato una bassa, ballarono una roegarze con estrema grazia e singular piacer de chi le vide.[52]

In the above passage, each participant is given the opportunity to showcase their skills – the women perform to display their grace and knowledge of multiple dances, while Barletta fulfills the need for pleasant music and a convivial atmosphere. The characterization of the audience's enjoyment as "singular" indicates to the reader that these four individuals have provided an entertainment of uncommon quality.

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[50] Ibid. 29r

[51] Ibid. 6v.

[52] Castiglione 115.

Clearly, these dances are a perfect vehicle for displaying both modesty and grace, since they are so easily performed: "Et les damoiselles avec une contenance humble, les yeulx baissez, regardans quelquesfois les assistans avec une pudeur virginale".[53] The lack of eye contact, save for quick glances around the room, as well as the graceful movements of the women, signal their purity and suitability for their place in a courtly lifestyle. Given the fact that one of the main reasons for dancing is to spend time in close(r) contact with the other gender, this kind of closed off body language provides the perfect means by which a woman could either subtly encourage or discourage a would-be suitor. By limiting the potential lover's access to her eyes, a lady protects herself in this delicate game of courtship-persuasion; without eye contact, the arrows of *Amour* cannot pierce her and render her vulnerable to a suitor's charms.[54]

Finally, both the *pavane* and the *basse-dance* are easily performed even in some of the more cumbersome fashions of the time. Arbeau specifically lists garments such as swords, capes, "grands manteaux & robes de parade" for the men, and the "grands queües de leurs robes abaissees & traisnans, quelquefois portees par damoiselles"[55] as examples of clothing that one can still wear while performing these dances. Each of these items requires a good deal of skill to handle gracefully in daily life, and doing so while dancing would have effectively displayed the dancer's courtly training. A slightly later quote by Arbeau seems to confirm this secondary purpose – to help create a

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[53] Arbeau 29v.

[54] Pierre de Ronsard, "Sonnet 53." *Les Amours et Les Folastries (1552-1560)*. Ed. André Gendre (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 1993), 116-17.

[55] Arbeau 29r.

spectacle of overwhelming grace and nobility - of the slower dances: “On se sert aussi desdictes pavanes quant on veult faire entrer en une mascarade chariotz triumphantz de dieux & deesses, Empereurs ou Roys pleins de maiesté”.[56]

Indeed, for Arbeau, these dances are the height of respectability, without a hint of lasciviousness, unlike other dances of the time.[57] Although he does not elaborate on the more disreputable dances in this paragraph, his contemporaries would have undoubtedly known exactly what he means. For Arbeau, an ideal court would maintain a seamless image of modesty and moderation, so that all dancers may be worthy of taking part in activities that are enjoyed by the highest powers in the land, whether for pure physical enjoyment or for the more intellectual perspective offered by the position of dance as part of the art of rhetoric.

The Rhetoric of Dance

Dance Instruments

Given the discussion of dance we have seen in previous pages of this chapter, it is clear that dance within the French court was seen as a virtuous pursuit, one of the noble arts. And, given that status, as Capriole points out, it must “depend donq de l’un des sept arts liberaulx”.[58] He is on the right track, but we will soon learn that dance is not merely one art, but a multitude:

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[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Arbeau 5r.

> Je vous ay ia dit, qu'elle dépend de la musique & modulations d'icelle, car sans la vertu rithmique, la dance seroit obscure & confuse: daultant qu'il fault que les gestes des membres accompaignent les cadences des instruments musicaulx, & ne fault pas que le pied parle d'un, & l'instrument d'aultre.[59]

Rhythm is required for coherence in dance, and during this time, rhythm was created by musical instruments; this musical structure was meant to guide the dancer in such a way that they can match each gesture perfectly with the notes. As Van Orden states, "music was a practical and *practicable* mathematics that occupied both body and intellect, bridging the sensible realm of sound and the speculative realm of number."[60] The most important instrument of the dance ensemble is the percussion, often a small hand drum: "on en a faict un petit que l'on appelle tabourin à main, long d'environ deux petits piedz & un pied de diametre, que Ysidorus appelle moityé de Simphonie".[61] This small drum has a "stridule & tremblotant" sound,[62] even when played with just the fingers, allowing it to easily set the pace for the rest of the ensemble.

The musical ensemble for dances seems relatively fluid – Arbeau first tells Capriole that, "il est accompaigné ordinairement d'ung ou plusieurs autres instruments musicaux, avec lesquels il convient, & leur donne grace servant de Base & Disdiapason a tous accords . . . ."[63] However, it is expected that at least one other instrument

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[59] Ibid. 5r-5v.

[60] Van Orden 53.

[61] Arbeau 21v.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid. 22r.

accompany the drum, because its name, “moityé de Simphonie”, indicates that is is merely one part of a *consonance*, which is a pleasant blending of simultaneous, different musical sounds.[64] The use of the word *simphonie*, which Arbeau tells us is Greek, as well as the word *disdiapason*[65], firmly situates this part of the discussion within a long tradition of musical theory, giving his teachings the weight of centuries of writings from philosophers and scholars such as Aristoxenus, Euclid, and Boethius. By including these references, both subtle and overt, Arbeau is not only drawing on significant outside authority to strengthen his position as expert, but also demonstrating his own knowledge of these texts.[66]

In a subsequent passage, Arbeau gives examples of instruments that may be habitually played with a drum:

> Le tambourin accompagné de sa flutte longue entre aultres instruments, estoit du temps de noz peres emploié pource qu’un seul ioueur suffisoit a mener des deux ensemble, & faisoient la symphonie & accordance entiere sans qu’il fust besoing

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[64] “[C]onsonance is the concord of mutually dissimilar pitches brought together into one” (Boethius 12) ; Arbeau 23r.

[65] Disdiapaison indicates a two-octave interval between the drum’s part and those of other instruments playing the dance music ; given the general lack of pitch information about drums, however, we can simply assume that drums represent the foundational, lowest part in a mixed instrumental ensemble.

[66] Despite Arbeau’s references to earlier treatises on music theory, I will not discuss the concepts of *musica universalis* in this dissertation. This theory is predicated on the relationship between pitches, such that movement produces set relationships between the body in motion, the tone that motion creates, and the relative position of that tone in the larger scale of the universe. The percussion music I discuss, however, is important not because of the pitch(es) of the instruments, but because of the rhythmic relationships of music and gesture.

> de faire plus grand despence & d'avoir plusieurs aultres ioueurs comme violons & senblables, maintenant il n'est pas si petit manouvrier qui ne veuille a ses nopces avoir les haulbois & saqueboutes.[67]

By mentioning that the combination of "flutte longue" and "tambourin" - by which Arbeau means the pipe and tabor – dates from the "temps de noz peres," he emphasizes the historical application of percussion to dance music. However, he does not give precise dates for when the pipe and tabor came to be used to play dance music, leaving the reader to posit that it is a long tradition.

The reason Arbeau gives for using this particular combination of instruments is interesting. Instead of highlighting elements such as the ease of transport or the pleasantness of the sound, he chooses to focus on the fact that it was less expensive than other options, because only one musician is needed in order to make a *symphonie*. He does not discount the possibility of adding other instruments to the ensemble, but implies that such additions – mainly strings, it seems – used to be seen as a marker of much higher status. In the current time, however, a more elaborate musical ensemble is completely normal, so that even the humblest of manual laborers thinks nothing of "avoir les haulbois & saqueboutes" to play dances at a wedding. In fact, Arbeau mentions that instruments such as oboes – with their "bruyans & cryards" voices - are especially good against larger drums, which are also acceptable to accompany a dance.[68] On later pages, Capriole asks for further information on the musical instruments needed for playing a dance, specifically asking if the pipe and tabor are absolutely necessary for

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[67] Arbeau 24r.

[68] Arbeau 24r.

pavanes and basse-dances. Arbeau's response is enlightening, giving modern readers a glimpse of the richness of musical possibilities of the time:

> Car on les [pavanes and basse-dances] peult jouer avec violons, espinettes, fluttes traverses & à neuf trous, haulbois & toutes sortes d'instruments: Voires chanter avec les voix; mais le tabourin ayde merveilleusement par ses mesures uniformes à faire les assiettes des pieds selon la disposition requise pour les mouvements.[69]

The potential interchangeability of the melodic instruments is given structure and predictability by the drum's regularity; Arbeau regards it as an important tool for the execution of the dance. Other dance treatises of the day, such as Ambrosio's *De pratica seu arte tripudii* (c. 1463), are also vague regarding the ideal dance ensemble, but Ambrosio does add an important point to what is clearly a long conversation with many opinions: a truly skilled dancer will be able to shape his dancing to the sound of the instruments, in order to create a perfect combination of music and gesture.[70] For the ballets, Menestrier asserts that multiple instruments are necessary; ballets require such diverse and precise movements of a dancer's body that a single instrument is insufficient:

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[69] Ibid. 33r-33v.

[70] "EXPERIMENTO DI COGNOSER[E] UN BONO DANÇATORE: Fate sonare de quatro o cinque ragione stromenti o veramente Pifari o organi o liuto o arpa o tamburino con fiauti o qualuncha stromento [...] Sappiate che cului Che dança gli e bisognia de ballare con quell'aira & con quella misura & con quel tempo che sonatori Li dicti sonatori" (vv. 1186-1207).

> C'est ce qui fait qu'il est plus aisé de bien danser & d'observer les cadences au son de plusieurs instrumens que d'un seul, parce que plusieurs instrumens determinent à l'harmonie qui est naturelle dans l'homme.[71]

For Menestrier, instrumental harmony corresponds directly to physical harmony, since music has the power to affect "les esprits, qui sont des substances legeres et presque toûjours mobiles."[72] Thus, no type of instrument is inappropriate for a ballet, since each instrument may create a different reaction in the dancer.[73] Musician and dancer are, therefore, equal partners in the creation of the art of dance, which is as much a conversation as it is anything else: "Dancing, like speaking, is a social act, produced by and within given discourses."[74] In a way, dance is also the natural outcome of hearing music:

> Les Anciens dansoient au son des chansons ou au son des instrumens, parce que naturellement le son qui est receu dans l'oreille ne s'y faisant entendre que par le mouvement d'une pellicule tendüe à qui nous donnons le nom de Tympan, […] [C]e petit mouvement porte un fremissement dans tous les nerfs, qui determine tout le corps à se mouvoir, tout ainsi qu'une petite pierre jettée dans le bassin d'une fontaine, remüe toute sa surface par des ondulations qui se forment des unes aux autres jusqu'au bord du basin.[75]

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[71] Menestrier 199-200.

[72] Menestrier 200.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Dempster 22.

[75] Menestrier 136.

The comparison between the effects of music on the body and the ripples of a stone dropped in water positions dance as both a natural instinct and a social construct. The vibration of the eardrum spreads unavoidably throughout the dancing body, a reaction that cannot be stopped. But, it can be shaped, much as the hypothetical ripples described above are constrained by the edges of the basin.

Furthermore, music – the "stone"—represents the human impact on the natural world, where changing its "shape" or "size" can alter the effects it has on the body it strikes. Of course, this analogy can only go so far, since human bodies have much more agency than bodies of water, but the strong relationship between music and body cannot be denied. The link between them is especially interesting when one considers just how differently various kinds of music can affect a body:

> Il est certain que la trompette & le tambour les animent bien autrement que le luth & la guitarre. Les Anciens qui s'aperceurent de ces differens effets, firent servir les trompettes, les tambours, les tymbales, & le choc des boucliers aux danses armées qu'ils nommerent Pyrrhiques.[76]

The power of music – recognized since antiquity – over the body makes it clear just how crucial a part it is to the rhetorical nature of dance. A Pyrrhic, with its martial instruments and emphasis on crashing, clashing sounds inspires a different kind of emotional and physical response within both dancer and audience than a gently-plucked lute melody. One of the most striking examples of the different effects on the body of

[76] Menestrier 200-201.

various instruments is the often-repeated anecdote of the musical treatment for a tarantula bite :

> Ché, come si dice che in Puglia circa gli atarantati s'adoprano molti instrumenti di musica e con varii suoni si va investigando, fin che quello umore, che fa la infermità, per una certa convenienza ch'egli ha con alcuno di que' suoni, sentendolo, súbito si move e tanto agita l'infermo, che per quella agitazion si riduce a sanità . . . . [77]

However, despite its ability to steer the movements, narrative or argument expressed by dance, music and musical instruments are not the main event: "Il faut ajuster les airs aux actions, aux mouvemens, & aux passions que l'on doit representer, parce que les airs sont pour les mouvemens, & non pas les mouvemens pour les airs."[78] The primacy of the dancer's actions make it clear that music helps to support the message of the dance, but that the steps and gestures of a dance provide the actual argument.

Types of Dances

In the case of regular court dances, Arbeau clarifies that there are a finite number of types of courtly dances, which fall into four main groups: pavanes, basse-dances, branles, and courantes.[79] These dances all require different music in addition to different steps, and Arbeau takes great pains in this section of the text to cover all relevant information, including the music, steps, and attitudes of each dance. Each type

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[77] Castiglione 28-29.

[78] Menestrier 205-206.

[79] Arbeau 24v.

of dance is treated in turn, with the discussion beginning with the basse-dance. Although the basse-dance is unfashionable at the moment Arbeau is writing *Orchésographie*, he still values it because it is "pleine d'honneur & modestie" - perfect for the "matrones sages & modestes".[80] These admirable qualities stem from the music and the steps required to participate in both the regular and irregular versions of the dance. In general, this dance was performed slowly, using gliding motions, so that the dancers' feet were always in contact with the floor (hence the word "basse"). The division of the basse-dance into "regular" and "irregular" groups is strange to a modern reader familiar with Western systems of music, since in the very next paragraph Arbeau tells us that it is performed in "mesure ternaire".[81] In the way that we currently notate music, a ternary rhythm is always seen as irregular, since we have built our entire system of notation on binary values. However, it is clear that regularity is judged here on a much higher level of composition – note values are not taken into account at all. According to Arbeau, the difference between a regular or "commune" dance and one that is irregular is solely dependent on the regularity or irregularity of the music that accompanies the choreography. A regular dance takes place within 80 measures of music composed in an AABCC format, where each letter represents a section of 16 measures. An irregular dance requires more than 80 measures to complete, and thus the

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

pattern of repeated measures differs. Generally, this is done by repeating four-bar sections in order to double or triple a section.[82]

In any case, the fact that the basse-dance is in ternary rhythm means that Arbeau must teach Capriole how to achieve this pattern, which differs substantially from the marching rhythms discussed earlier in the work. With the help of a brief musical example (see Figure 21), Arbeau explains that, since the melodies – played by a flute or pipe - used for basse-dances are ternary, the drum "faict la mesure ternaire aussi" in order to "s'accorder avec sa flutte".[83] It is a little unclear to me whether Arbeau means that the drum should beat each of the above notes, or whether the drum beats only once per measure (presumably on the beginning half note). Regardless, it is important to note that both the drum and the pipe are necessary to fully realize this music. Ternary rhythms require that the both musician and dancer pay close attention to the emphases placed on each beat in the measure. In the example given above, the rhythmic pattern involves a downbeat (a strong or emphasized note) on the first beat of the half note, and a secondary downbeat – which is less strong than the first - on the fourth beat (the second quarter note). This pattern makes it the equivalent of 6/8 time in modern notation, which creates a wonderful rocking sensation, perfect for a dance. Given the apparent ambiguity of Arbeau's playing instructions for the drum in this passage, I would expect the drum to be employed most effectively if it is at least

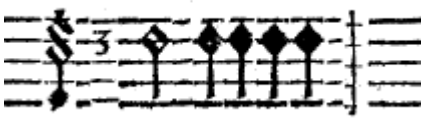

Figure 21: Illustrating a typical basse-dance measure. From *Orchésographie,* p. 25r.

[82] Del, "French Basse Dance." *Del's Dance Book*. Online Edition. 8 December 2017. Available FTP: www.sca.org.au/del/ddb/

[83] Arbeau 24v.

played on the first downbeat in each measure. In the case of a pipe and tabor, this level of engagement would allow for ease of playing even if the melodic line were somewhat complex.

On the part of the dancers, each measure is to be matched with "les mouvements des pieds & du corps, selon les preceptes de la dance".[84] With this line, Arbeau indicates just how intertwined the music and the movements are in the case of dance. Furthermore, he signals to readers that there are prescribed steps, or combinations of steps, that are appropriate for each kind of dance. Dance here is not so much an expression of individual creativity or ability, but a communal activity with a set of common instructions that everyone follows. In the following paragraphs, Arbeau explains to Capriole how to begin a basse-dance, beginning at what I would call "point zero": entering the space where the dancing is to take place. The dancer – Capriole – thus makes himself part of a larger group prepared to dance; in a way, entering a space for dancing is synonymous with assimilating into courtly society, at least for a little while.

Further integration into the group comes when Capriole chooses his dancing partner, who should be "quelque honneste damoiselle telle que bon vous semblera".[85] This choice is to be indicated with a physical gesture, wherein

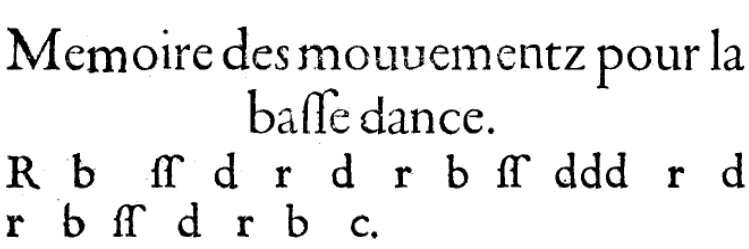
Memoire des mouuementz pour la baſſe dance.
R b ff d r d r b ff ddd r d r b ff d r b c.

Figure 22: Mnemonic for the first section of a basse-dance. *Orchesographie,* p. 26r.

[84] Arbeau 25r.

[85] Arbeau 25r.

the man must at once doff his hat with his left hand and offer his right to his chosen partner.[86] Arbeau does not seem to leave any room for the woman to refuse such an overture, as if her consent to dance is implied. Indeed, it is, given etiquette expectations of the time, for Arbeau describes that a "sage et bien aprise"[87] lady will never refuse an invitation to dance; to do so would show her to be "sotte".[88] Instead, she will accept a man's request to dance by giving him her left hand.[89] This acceptance puts the man firmly in the role of leader for the duration of the dance, so that he is responsible for the successful execution of the steps. At this point of the explanation, Arbeau continues with his customary granularity, breaking down the basse-dance into an easily-memorized sequence of individual steps, shown in Figure 22. Here, as with subsequent dances, each step is denoted by a letter, with repeated letters meaning that the step should be performed as many times as the letter is repeated. Once Arbeau shows the entire step sequence for the dance, he describes how to perform each step, so that even the most ignorant dancer may be able to perform them. For example, below is his description of the *reverence,* the step with which the dance must begin:

> La reverence premier geste & mouvement, tient quatre battements de tabourin, qui accompaignent quatre mesures de la chanson que sonne la flutte. Anthoine Arena considerant que toutes dances commencent par le pied gauche, a esté d'advis que la reverence doit estre faicte du pied gauche, toutesfois il semble en

[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid. 25v.

[89] Ibid. 25r.

> fin qu'il le remette en doute [. . . .] Quand à moi, je tiens avec mon maistre, souz lequel j'ay aultresfois appris à Poictiers, qu'il la fault faire du pied droit ; Ce faisant on a moyen de tourner le corps & la face devers la Damoiselle, & luy jetter un gracieux regard.[90]

The inclusion of differing opinions about how best to perform a *reverence*, as well as his personal recommendation on the best technique, head off any argument from a reader who may be more well-versed than Capriole in the art of dancing. In addition, by mentioning that both right and left feet have been used to make the *reverence,* Arbeau equips dancers with knowledge that may help them navigate dances in other courts, allowing them to always start off on the (figurative) right foot. Furthermore, by beginning the description with the length of time the step should take – four whole beats of the drum – he insists on a certain amount of precision from the dancer. The dancer has to pay attention to the music in order to begin the dance properly, and mentioning specifically that he should listen for the four drum beats provides an easy way for even the least musical to stay on track.

The rest of the steps for each dance are described with equal attention to detail, often accompanied with simple illustrations, and always including the drum as a unit of measurement. This insistence upon listening to the drum in order to gauge proper dance execution underscores its status as a foundational instrument in the musical ensemble. For dancers whose melodic sense is poor, who may be unable to hear the other instruments clearly, or who simply need extra guidance, the regularity and precision of

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[90] Arbeau 26v.

each beat provides a sense of stability amidst a sea of movements of varying complexity. Furthermore, such a multi-sensorial approach to dance education – encouraging readers to read the descriptions, imitate the illustrations, and listen to the music – strikes me as fairly effective, giving everyone the necessary base upon which the very best can begin building their dance skill into a true mastery of its forms and functions

Rhetorical Possibilities

In the case of the *pavane*, the musical score and its accompanying lyrics provide a striking illustration of just how important it is to approach dance using a variety of techniques. In these pages, the very regularity of the dance becomes clear.[91] In contrast to the ternary *basse-danse*, the *pavane* uses a binary rhythm, which lacks the little bit of "swing" of the former. The drum pattern given, a minim and two semiminims per measure, does help to create more interest in an otherwise extremely sedate piece; the smaller note values help to emphasize the first beat of each measure as well as break up the semibreves that begin and end each line of the song. However, it is not enough for Capriole, who remarks, "Ceste dance de pavane est trop grave & pesant, pour dancer en une salle avec une jeune fille seul à seul".[92] Clearly, a dance that is too regular and predictable becomes boring, not allowing Capriole the opportunity to display all of his dancing skill to his partner due to the slowness of the steps. Fortunately, Arbeau comes to Capriole's rescue, revealing that the very simplicity of the pavane actually allows for a dancer to display his creativity and mastery of the steps:

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[91] Arbeau 31r-32v.

[92] Ibid. 33r.

> [I]l y à aulcuns danceurs, lesquels decoupent le double qui est aprez les deux simples : Car en lieu que ledit double ne seroit que de quatre mesures notees par quatre semibreves, ils en font huict minimes blanches ou seize minimes noires, & consequemment font plusieurs assiettes de pieds, passages & fleurets, lesquels retumbent en mesme cadance, & font de mesme duration de temps, & tels decoupements & mouvements de pieds legierement faicts, moderent la gravité de la pavane . . . .[93]

What Arbeau outlines here is what turns dance from rote memorization of a sequence of steps into an art form, a fuller embodiment of the "Rhetorique muette"[94] that it is supposed to be. Furthermore, this kind of creativity separates competent dancers from the truly skilled. With the flexibility to break longer notes into various combinations of shorter ones, and the full "vocabulary" of steps and gestures to work with, a skilled dancer creates his own argument within the constraints of the dance, combining the rhetorical procedures of *inventio*, *dispositio*, and *memoria*. These modifications not only "moderent la gravité" of the dance, but can create an active and marked contrast between steps and music. By using lighter steps and faster rhythms, thereby increasing the difficulty of the dance, the dancer may stand out more from the crowd, or belie or enhance the emotions in the song being played. The musicians also have an effect, as Arbeau mentions: "Les joueurs d'instruments la sonnent aulcunes fois moins pesamment, & d'une mesure plus legiere".[95] However, their creativity may be

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[93] Ibid.

[94] Arbeau 5v.

[95] Ibid. 33r.

more limited, especially in the case of the drum, which must continue to clearly mark time for the dancers. Thus, the main foundation of the dance remains the same, thanks to the drum, providing a strong structure into which a dancer may introduce his own ornamentation.

However, lighter, faster dances may be not only more difficult to dance, but also more difficult to regulate. In particular, the *gaillarde*, which Arbeau describes as being danced "tumultuairement," so that the dancers "se contentent de faire les cinq pas & quelques passages sans aulcune disposition & ne se soucient pourveu qu'ilz tumbent en cadence".[96] In contrast to the descriptions Arbeau gave of previous dances, the *gaillarde* seems to offer a more overt opportunity for physical creativity; the most important rule is that dancers follow the tempo and the beat. Otherwise, they may apparently use any combination of steps.

This more individualized dance requires not only attention to one's partner, but also an awareness of the other dancers in the room. An ill-timed step could interfere with someone else's dance, breaking the careful cadence of courtly celebration and potentially affecting reputations. In fact, Arbeau seems doubtful of the quality of this dance, telling Capriole that, "une grande partie de leurs meilleurs passages sont incogneuz & perduz: Du commencement on la dançoit avec plus grande discretion",[97] indicating that discretion and moderation may be directly linked to the idea of a "good" dance or dancer. This insistence is echoed in *Il libro del cortegiano,* where the value of skill is measured in its apparent effortlessness: « si po dir quella esser vera arte che non

[96] Ibid. 38v.

[97] Ibid.

pare esser arte ; né piú in altro si ha da poner studio, che nel nasconderla, perché se è scoperta, leva in tutto il credito e fa l'omo poco estimato. »[98] Thus, the best dancers appear to do so naturally, without affectation, combining studied precision and natural enjoyment. In this case, in a dance that requires dancers to be "gaillard & dispos pour la dancer", the dignity of skill is juxtaposed with the *gaillarde*'s need for exuberance: Arbeau clarifies to Capriole that, "combien qu'elle se dance par une pesanteur raisonnable, les mouvements y sont gaillards".[99] So, the lightness of the dance must not be excessive, according to Arbeau; a properly-danced *gaillarde,* it seems, should have steps and gestures that remain crisp and on-beat, and the dancer must imbue his movements with a certain weight or gravity.

The specifics of this remain a little unclear until Capriole presses Arbeau to be more detailed in his descriptions of the *gaillarde*'s steps. The dance begins, as usual, with a *reverence*, in which the dancer must salute his lady:

> Pour faire la reverence, vous tiendrez le pied gaulche ferme à terre, & pliant le jarret de la jambe droicte, porterez la pointe de l'arteil de la semelle droicte derrier ledict pied gaulche: Ostant vostre bonnet ou chappeau, & saluant vostre Damoiselle & la compagnie . . . .[100]

This very stance embodies the balance between groundedness and lightness which Arbeau appears to call for in his instructions to Capriole. The planted left foot is a stable

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[98] Castiglione 59.

[99] Arbeau 39v.

[100] Ibid. 40r-40v.

foundation for the dancer's whole weight, while the pointed right foot, with only the toe resting lightly on the ground, allows the dancer to spring into action quickly. The next move after the *reverence* is to bring both feet together so that the dancer is equally distributed upon each of them.[101] The dancer should shift his weight smoothly from one foot to another as he steps, so that even during the lightest of gestures, the body must remain balanced. Dance, then, is an art comprised equally of flight and of gravity, of grace and of strength.

Arbeau's descriptions of dance as a sort of balancing act between the above characteristics call to mind the idea of moderation, but he also invokes the notion of dance's subtlety throughout this treatise. To return once more to his definition of dance as a "Rhetorique muette", on pages 43v and 44r of the text, Arbeau tells an impatient Capriole,

> il fault que vous ayez patience d'escouter comme sont faicts tous les mouvements: Car vous sçavez qu'en l'art de grammaire, le disciple faict premierement amas de noms verbs & aultres parties de l'oraison, puis il apprend à les lier ensemble congruement. Ainsi en l'art de dancer. . . .[102]

Arbeau's conceptualization of steps as part of dance's "grammaire" allows readers to understand its place in rhetoric even more clearly. The idea that one must build a vocabulary before learning how to properly order each element of a sentence, or, in this case, each passage of a dance, is an interesting one, built on the assertion that syntax

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[101] Arbeau 40v.

[102] Arbeau 43v.

and grammatical structures are somewhat separate from the basic elements of language – words. In a way, Arbeau implies that simply learning hundreds or thousands of words, that is, dance steps, is the best, first step towards mastery of the entire system; the syntax can come later and is almost a throwaway element: Arbeau suggests that the method of connecting steps can simply be memorized from various dances' *tablature*.[103] When Capriole asks if he can "faire lesdicts assemblements à ma phantaisie, quand je sçauray les mouvements particuliers"[104] – a physical manifestation of *dispositio*, the link between dance skill and crafting speeches or writing arguments becomes even more apparent. Arbeau's answer starts out in a noncommittal fashion, but further reading reveals that he has a strong opinion on the matter:

> Vous le pourriez: Mais il ne vous y fauldroit pas arrester, que ne les eussiez communiquez aux bons danceurs: Et est bien le meilleur de faire amas de passages ja inventez & receuz, car il y a je ne sçay quelle grace en aucuns passages qui ne se treuve pas en d'aultres.[105]

It is possible to combine the basic elements of a dance in nearly infinite combinations – just as each step exists on its own, and has its own meaning, they can be added to each other to create new "phrases" or *passages*. However, just as a random collection of nouns, verbs, articles, and prepositions cannot create meaning, so an ill-conceived *passage* is merely physical gibberish, with no grace or rhetorical strength. This exchange makes it clear that dancing is a far less open and creative art form than it may have

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[103] Arbeau 43v.

[104] Ibid. 44r.

[105] Ibid.

previously appeared, thus rendering the label of "Rhetorique muette" more than a simple metaphor or a slight hyperbole; a skilled dancer must use the "passages ja inventez & receuz" to form his argument in the same way that a skilled orator must use codified rhetorical strategies and topics already found to be effective by others in constructing his speech. By positioning dance as a language in this way, Arbeau adds it definitively not only to the Quadrivium, where it is rightly positioned due to its intertwining with music, but also to the Trivium. Indeed, Arbeau is not the only one who associates dance and speech so closely; Castiglione's narrators also appear to support the idea that Rhetoric is more than words:

> Appresso bisogna dispor con bell'ordine quello che si ha a dire o scrivere; poi esprimerlo ben con le parole le quali, s'io non m'inganno, debbono esser proprie, elette, splendide e ben composte, ma sopra tutto usate ancor dal populo . . . e co i modi e gesti convenienti ; li quali, al parer mio, consistono in certi movimenti di tutto 'l corpo non affetati né violenti, ma temperati con un volto accommodato e con un mover d'occhi che dia grazia e s'accordi con le parole . . . .[106]

The above passage clearly speaks specifically of *actio*, where the movements of the body are meant to enhance the spoken word. However, it is a small step from gesture as ornament to gesture as argument, especially given Castiglione's insistence on the importance of grace to a *courtisan*. In fact, on a previous page, Castiglione himself draws the connection between physical grace and broader truths about a person: "nel danzare un passo solo, un sol movimento della persona grazioso e non sforzato, súbito

[106] Castiglione 73.

manifesta il sapere di chi danza".[107] As Norbert Elias explains, "[b]odily carriage, gestures, dress, facial expressions – this 'outward' behavior . . . is the expression of the inner, the whole man".[108] Thus, a single dance step, perfectly executed, might demonstrate to an audience the dancer's perfect mastery of not only the skill of dance, but also of "molto piú di quello che fa"[109] – which could extend not only to other physical pursuits, but verbal ones as well. This is due to the assumption that grace in an art or skill, which is so perfect as to appear effortless, translates to an unconscious mastery of grace in all its forms.[110] Because such behavior demonstrates at once good taste (and tasteful persuasion) without revealing the work behind the act of persuasion, a dancer who manages to perfectly incorporate *actio* is successful not just on the dance floor, but in the wider realm of courtly behavior.[111]

Modern lovers of ballet will perhaps be familiar with the long tradition of mime used in this art, where meaningful gesture is intertwined seamlessly with more ornamental choreography. My research leads me to believe that the mime tradition in dance, which is an ancient one, may have informed early modern treatises on not only ballet, but also other kinds of dance, such that mime plays a certain role in the rhetorical function of dance. Ambrosio tells us in his treatise that dance is "un acto demostrativo

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[107] Castiglione 63.

[108] Elias 56.

[109] Castiglione 63.

[110] Ibid. 63-64.

[111] David M. Posner, *The performance of nobility in early modern European literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 12.

concordante alla Misurata melodia d'alcuna voce overo Suono"[112] based upon six rules, "Misura[,] Momoria[sic,] Partire de terreno[,] Aire[,] Mainera[sic] Et movimento corporeo".[113] These six rules, which pertain in turn to the music (harmony and rhythm), memory, physical space, upward movement or lightness of movement, manner (specific postures or turns of the body), and bodily fitness, are all crucial to the perfection of dance as an art. For the moment, let us focus on the rules of *aire, mainera* [sic], and *movimento corporeo*, which are the most closely aligned with the idea of dance as mime.

First, it is useful to define what exactly mime is, beyond the popular image of the silent, white-faced comedian. Mime is the use of expression, gesture, and movement in order to convey emotions, characterizations, or actions without any words. But what, exactly, is gesture? For not every movement is a gesture. In fact, gestures are movements "performed by the 'gesture apparatus' [which] consists of the hand, wrist, elbow and shoulder".[114] Menestrier expands this list in the context of ballet, saying, "le Ballet est un mélange de divers mouvemens des pieds, des bras, des mains, de la téte & de tout le corps.[115] They must convey "a definite word or occupational significance", which could be divided into three subgroups: "speech gesture, occupational gesture, and gestures of natural emotional significance".[116] These three subgroups of gesture, in

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[112] Ambrosio vv. 340-42.

[113] Ibid. vv. 345-47.

[114] Irene Mawer, *The Art of Mime: Its History and Technique in Education and the Theatre* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1932) 132.

[115] Menestrier 199.

[116] Mawer 131.

conjunction with other means of expressing what is happening on stage, help the audience understand the story or "argument" of a performance, whether that performance is oration, theater, or dance. The most familiar use of these mime techniques, first seen in the "Pantomimes que les Anciens donnerent aux danseurs"[117] are found in the Commedia dell'arte of early modern Italy[118], which became popular throughout Europe starting in the mid-17th century.

These techniques, some argue, form the basis of mime in ballet and theater, and were further developed in France until the nineteenth century.[119] Menestrier tells us that mime – or pantomime – helps us show "les passions qui sont le plus dans le commerce des hommes, & dans les usages de la vie civile, & dont les orateurs ont l'artifice pour la persuasion".[120] Even in textual representations, the power of gesture is made clear, as demonstrated by the concept of the "turning toward" in literature, in which this gesture between lovers shows the reader not only "the sense that this particular individual is being designated, this particular love is being singled out" but also "all of the steps . . . needed . . . in order to arrive at this point".[121] Dance, thus, allows participants to persuade and to express truth in addition to understanding ratios and proportions of

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[117] Menestrier 136.

[118] The earliest recorded commedia dell'arte performance was in 1551, in Rome. M.A. Katritzky, *The Art of Commedia: A Study in the Commedia dell'arte 1560–1620 with Special Reference to the Visual Records* (New York: Editions Rodopi, 2006) 82.

[119] Mawer 58.

[120] Menestrier 171.

[121] Ullrich Langer, "Turning toward the Beloved (Virgil, Petrarch, Scève)." *Movement in Renaissance Literature: Exploring Kinesic Intelligence,* Eds., Kathryn Banks and Timothy Chesters (Cham: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2018) 34.

time. By straddling both groups of the liberal arts, dance becomes not only a desirable subject to study, but a necessary one for a person of status in society.

Given Arbeau's doubling-down on the concept of dance as Rhetoric, his insistence on modesty and honesty during a dance begins to take on a deeper meaning. Dance becomes a vehicle through which both dancer and audience should exchange Truth: "Dance drew the body into the moral equation. Setting the soul in motion with steps, leaps, and turns, dance inspired knowledge of first causes and virtue".[122] This conception of dance requires that the dancer recognize that the physical movements of the body are part of the "plus excellens ouvrages de la nature" and that humanity is directed by "l'Autheur de l'Univers, qui est le grand maistre du Balet".[123] This connection between movement and virtue is explicit in writings about dance: "nous nous contentons d'en faire des divertissements honnêtes pour former le corps à des actions nobles, & de bienseance"[124] and "[q]uant à la plus grande perfection des dances, elle consiste à perfectionner l'esprit & le corps, & à les mettre dans la meilleure disposition qu'ils puissent avoir".[125] Dance, then, becomes a way for the dancer to partake of both a divine and a mundane art by "rearranging" and "perfecting" both body and spirit. If the space of one dance number is a dancer's chance to prove himself skilled, intelligent, and worthy of a lover's attention, then it is important for him to learn both the basic

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[122] Van Orden 82.

[123] Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle, contenant la théorie et la pratique de la musique. (Edition de 1636)* Livre II (Paris: Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, 1965) 159.

[124] Menestrier eiiiv-eiiir

[125] Mersenne 159.

argument of the dance and the elaborations that he can add in order to strengthen his case. Furthermore, with this attitude, if God is a “grand maistre du Balet”, then a person’s whole life as well as their dance must be seen as part of the virtue of the universe.

Arbeau’s conception of dance as rhetoric, as expressed in the passage quoted earlier, explicitly tells us that the dancer’s body is a rhetorical vehicle. Since a conversation or a persuasive speech requires more than one participant, the spectator is automatically drawn into the equation. It is the spectator who decides whether the dance succeeds in its goal of both musical/corporeal coherence and persuasion. Without a spectator, he implies, there is no dance, for there is no one to persuade. Put another way, if dance is a silent rhetoric, then it must have an argument and an audience; all the bodily skill in the world means nothing if no one is watching, and even the most sympathetic audience will remain unmoved if the message is absent or not compelling.

Clearly, the basic argument of the dance includes both the music – the rhythms and melodies played by drums and other instruments – and the steps. The music and the traditional *passages* given by Arbeau in *Orchésographie* provide a useful outline for the novice; they are the main ideas of the message the dancer wishes to convey, and generally follow the traditional structure of a classical argument: the introduction (and narration), the confirmation, the concession and refutation, and the conclusion. In the case of a dance, the structure is somewhat obscured because there are two (or more) participants who are responding to each other at once, rather than responses taking place after an argument is fully made.

To demonstrate the idea of dance as classical argument, I will return to one of Arbeau's earlier descriptions of the parts of a dance. Before a dance even begins, the dancers must agree to partner with each other; the man must introduce himself as a worthy partner at this point by doffing his hat and offering his hand to the woman. This first move begins the argument, allowing the dancer to figuratively break the ice and requiring the audience – the prospective female partner – to immediately engage with the argument. The introduction and narration of the argument continues with the official beginning of the dance, which is properly accomplished with a *reverence,* a preparatory step that also allows the man to turn more fully towards his partner and "luy jetter un gracieux regard".[126] A graceful and respectful *reverence* could help soften further the barrier between him and his partner in a society where a woman's modesty and honor are closely scrutinized and highly valued. Of course, if the woman is the one who invites a man to dance, as in the case of a lady who wishes to honor a particular guest, the *reverence* is both an acknowledgment of the invitation and the first proof of the man's politeness. The introduction establishes the speaker's/dancer's ethos; a graceful one disposes the audience favorably toward him. If, however, a man fumbles at this stage, he risks ridicule from both the lady and others in attendance, as this anecdote from *Il libro del Cortegiano* illustrates, in which a noblewoman asks a man to dance:

> [C]he una valorosa donna in una nobile compagnia piacevolmente disse ad uno, ch'io per ora nominar non voglio; il quale, essendo da lei, per onorarlo, invitato a danzare, e rifiutando esso & questo e lo udir musica e molti alti intertenimenti, offertigli, sempre con dir cosí fatte novelluzze non esser suo mestiero, in ultimo,

[126] Arbeau 26v.

> dicendo la donna, “Qual è dunque il mestier vostro?”, rispose con un mal viso: “Il combattere”; allora la donna súbito: “Crederei”, disse, “che or che non siete alla guerra, né in termine de combattere, fosse bona cosa che vi faceste molto ben untare ed insieme con tutti i vostri arnesi da battaglia riporre in un armario finché bisognasse, per non ruginire piú di quello che siate”; e cosí, con molte risa de’ circunstanti, scornato lasciollo nella sua sciocca prosunzione. [127]

In the above passage, the man’s initial error – the refusal of the dance – was compounded further by his insistence that none of the pastimes offered at the party were worthwhile. Indeed, his speech proves that he is rhetorically unprepared to engage appropriately with his prospective dance partner. He is physically and vocally ungracious, as well as arrogant, and the lady’s deft jest at his expense turns him at once from an honored guest to an object of ridicule. On the other hand, a successful courtier is aware that “sempre non si po versar tra queste cosí faticose operazioni [jousting, dueling, sports, etc.]”.[128] By balancing his time between strenuous pastimes and those that are “piú riposati e placidi”, he can build rapport with others and prove himself worthy:

> [Che] rida, scherzi, motteggi, balli e danzi, nientedimeno con tal maniera, che sempre mostri esser ingenioso e discrete ed in ogni cosa faccia o dica sia aggraziato.[129]

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[127] Castiglione 46.

[128] Ibid. 54.

[129] Ibid.

A true *courtisan* skillfully joins in with his peers; he is willing to have fun – or appear to have fun – but maintains a sense of good judgment to express exactly what he means with word and action.

The next part of an argument, the confirmation, allows the dancer to offer evidence of his social standing, education, and overall worth as a partner. For example, in the case of the *gaillarde*, Arbeau offers a variety of stances and steps that a dancer can use to begin the dance.[130] His detailed explanations, with illustrations, of each option imply that a well-tutored dancer should be familiar with them all. However, he also explains that some stances may be more appropriate than others. First, he references early representations of humans to defend his choice, the types of images that a well-educated nobleman should recognize: "L'une de celles qui ont le pied oblique me semble plus belle, car nous voyons és medalles & statues antiques, que les Monopodes sont treuvez plus artistes & plus aggreables".[131] Dance and art are put into conversation here, with the expectation that good dancing is not simply rote memorization of steps but also making good aesthetic choices. The aesthetic aspect of dance is also important to Castiglione:

> Vedete adunque come il mostrar l'arte ed un cosí intento studio levi la grazia d'ogni cosa. Qual di voi è che non rida quando il nostro Messer Pierpaulo danza alla foggia sua, con que' saltetti e gambe stirate in punta di piede, senza mover la

[130] Arbeau 41r-42v.

[131] Ibid. 42v.

> testa, come se tutto fosse un legno, con tanta attenzione, che di certo pare che vada numerando i passi?[132]

The gentleman mentioned above appears not only to be stiff and ungraceful in his movements, but also gives the impression that he has not fully mastered the dances, since he is visibly counting his steps to keep time with the music. These two characteristics combine to create an effect that is laughable rather than impressive or even neutral. By this metric, Pierpaulo may know the steps, but he does not really know how to dance. Additionally, Arbeau cautions readers against choosing stances that are not only aesthetically displeasing but also inappropriate to one's role in the dance:

> Et quand aux pieds joincts ou aux pieds eslargis directement, ils sentent leur contenance fœminine: Et tout ainsi qu'il est mal-seant à une Damoiselle d'avoir une contenance hommace, aussi doibt l'homme eviter les gestes muliebres.[133]

By avoiding these *faux pas*, a dancer asserts himself as appropriately masculine and possessed of both good bodily awareness and judgement. The choices he makes when there is room for improvisation or a certain ambiguity in how the dance can proceed help strengthen his position and therefore the argument of his dance.

Of course, all arguments must consider opposing views, so the dancer must also include a concession and refutation section. This part of the dance-argument may be the subtlest of all, for it consists not necessarily of specific steps or gestures, but of the dancer's awareness of both his abilities and his surroundings. For example, skillful

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[132] Castiglione 58-59.

[133] Arbeau 42v.

execution of the steps of a dance in ideal conditions means nothing if the dancer cannot also perform well on a crowded floor:

> Quelquefois il y a si grand presse & multitude de personnes en la salle, que la place pour dancer est racoursie, parquoy quand vous serez prez du bout, fauldra que faciez de deux choses l'une, ou que desmarchiez vous & la damoiselle que vous menez, ou bien que faciez une conversion.[134]

These two choices (to complete a series of *desmarches,* or backwards steps, instead of continuing to advance; or to perform a slow, 180-degree turn with the male dancer stepping backwards while his partner steps forwards[135]) each represent a divergence from the usual sequence of movements in a dance (here, specifically, for the *basse-dance*). They concede physical space to other dancers while also acknowledging the impossibility of carrying on normally with the dance. However, they are not a complete concession to the challenge against the dancer's ability: that would be either a dancer's leaving the floor in frustration or freezing in place, confused or uncertain, which would then impede the movements of others. Instead, the situation offers the dancer an opportunity to refute this challenge to his abilities: true mastery of an art means that one knows when rigid adherence to the rules is contraindicated, after all.

There is also an additional possible layer in the case Arbeau describes above. That is, there are two choices presented that solve the problem, but one of them is, to Arbeau,

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[134] Ibid. 29r.

[135] **Capriole:** "Qu'entendez vous faire conversion?" **Arbeau:** "C'est à dire qu'approchant du bout, vous faciez tousiours aller droit la damoiselle, & vous desmarchiez aultant quelle marchera, iusques à ce qu'aiez torné le doz du cousté qu'aviez les visaiges" (29r).

superior: the *conversion*. The reason he gives is simple: "[C]ar si elle treuvoit quelque empeschement en faisant les desmarches, elle pourroit tumber, chose qui vous torneroit à blasme, & qui vous reculeroit de ses bonnes graces".[136] The worthy and skillful partner takes into account not only his own ability and the constraints around him, but also the ability and potential constraints of his partner. By choosing the most convenient option for the lady with whom he is dancing, he proves that he is considerate and observant while also preempting any objections to his claims of skill.

The final section of an argument is the conclusion, which wraps up the question first posed by the dancer in the introduction: "Am I worthy of your regard as a dance partner and/or a suitor?" This part takes the form of a *congé,* performed as the conclusion of each section of the dance as well as at the end of the dance itself. It is a direct repetition of the *reverence* made at the beginning of the dance, although in this case it is a graceful leave-taking rather than an invitation to continue. The dancer takes the lady's hand, doffs his cap, and leads her back to where they began.[137] The somewhat recursive nature of the *congé,* as well as its very name, gives the dancer multiple chances to skillfully solicit his partner's continued interest. The term *congé* implies not only the action of departing but also the permission to depart granted to someone; properly executing a *congé* could be interpreted as asking and receiving permission to leave, and, in the case of intra-dance *congés*, to return as well. Finally, by closing the dance with a return to the start and a final salute, the dancer gives his partner a chance to consider his initial inquiry from the same place (both physical and rhetorical) with a more

[136] Ibid. 29r.

[137] Ibid. 26r.

complete set of data. This final gesture acts as the conclusion of a speech, which both summarizes the argument and appeals to the emotions of the audience.

By approaching a dance as if it were an argument, it may be possible for contemporary readers to gain a fuller understanding of the importance of dance to early modern societies, especially in the case of the social norms of the upper classes. Dance that transcends "mere" entertainment brings greater depth to the study of literature, culture, and history. For example, to return to the example of the *Princesse de Clèves,* a closer look at the various descriptions of characters and court using the information given in previous pages of this chapter is enlightening. The king, a young and active man, had a vibrant court, full of activity. The festive atmosphere is heightened by the beauty of the participants, so that the court is presented as legendarily impressive:

> Le goût que le roi François premier avait eu pour la poesie et pour les lettres, régnait encore en France, et le roi son fils, aimant les exercices du corps, tous les plaisirs étaient à la cour, mais ce que rendait cette cour belle et majestueuse, était le nombre infini de princes et de grands seigneurs d'un mérite extraordinaire.[138]

The combination of scholarship, athletic ability, and merit – which includes beauty – inherent in the court emphasizes the importance of these qualities in each individual. And, of course, the reader is not disappointed to learn that the pages of *La Princesse de Clèves* are overflowing with exemplary people: the prince of Clèves, the duc of Nemours, and, of course, the titular character herself, the princess of Clèves – all are described according to their beauty and their courtly accomplishments. Each of these characters

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[138] Lafayette 9.

are meant to represent the best of the court, worthy of each others' attentions and of the acclaim of other members of the court. Nowhere is this more apparent than during the ball where the princess and Nemours first become truly aware of each other. The scene begins when Nemours arrives and is immediately struck by the sight of the princess. He cannot stop himself from engaging in a dance with her:

> M. de Nemours fut tellement surpris de sa beauté que, lorsqu'il fut proche d'elle et qu'elle lui fit la révérence, il ne put s'empêcher de donner des marques de son admiration. Quand ils commencèrent à danser, il s'éleva dans la salle un murmure de louanges. Le roi et les reines se souvinrent qu'ils ne s'étaient jamais vus, et trouvèrent quelque chose de singulier de les voir danser ensemble sans se connaître.[139]

It is no accident that this scene of recognition happens during a ball. This situation is one of the few in which a married woman and a man who is not her husband can interact closely without drawing too much suspicion. Nemours's fascination and attraction lead him to act impulsively, entering into the dance-argument without a second thought. His inability to hide his emotional response and other "marques d'admiration," which the reader may imagine to be both verbal and nonverbal, once Mme de Clèves has completed the *révérence*, indicates the power of Mme de Clèves beauty and foreshadows the strength of their connection later in the novel. Despite the veneer of propriety, the chemistry between these two characters is impossible to hide; they are so well-matched, and such accomplished dancers, that they create a unique

[139] Lafayette 31-32.

spectacle for the other attendees of the ball. The fact that they do not actually know each other reinforces the rhetorical nature of dance; strictly speaking, the dance has taken the place of a longer-standing acquaintance or any kind of extended conversation. Dance renders words unnecessary, and its power may even be broken by speaking. The sublimation of conversation in the ballroom by murmurs of surprise and admiration at the skill of these two unacquainted dancers, as well as the lack of described conversation between the dancers themselves may indicate that speech and dance cannot occupy the same space equally.

This alternation of dance and speech continues after the ball, when the princess returns to her rooms:

> Mme de Clèves revint chez elle, l'esprit si rempli de tout ce qui s'étaient passé au bal, que, quoiqu'il fût tard, elle alla dans la chambre de sa mère pour lui en rendre compte; et elle lui loua M. de Nemours avec un certain air, qui donna à Mme de Chartres la même pensée qu'avait eue le chevalier de Guise.[140]

The power of the dance was so great that the *princesse* had to immediately describe her experience to her mother. Furthermore, Nemours made such an impression on the *princesse* during the dance that her feelings towards him are perceptible to other people. Dance is both the catalyst for their connection and the evidence of their chemistry; the *princesse*'s words afterwards only serve to spread the knowledge to her mother, who did not attend. This conversation is also confirmation of the danger that the dance poses to the *princesse*'s marriage and overall reputation. The instant

[140] Lafayette 33.

chemistry between Nemours and the *princesse* starts with this encounter, but it does not end there, eventually culminating with the mutual acknowledgment of their attraction, and then the *princesse*'s retirement from courtly life. The rhetorical power of dance is realized by creating a new relationship, and not simply reflecting "already existing social realities".[141] Nemours successfully persuades the *princesse* that he is an irresistible lover, leading her to abandon, however briefly, her strict morals and forget that she is a married woman, who should be bound solely to her husband.

Through the power of dance, a new reality is formed for the *princesse* and Nemours, one in which they are permitted to play the parts of perfect lovers. The dance becomes a place of deep truth for these two characters, where they explore their attraction. However, when they step outside the confines of the dance in order to continue this exploration, they reap the consequences. In fact, those consequences are far worse for Madame de Clèves than for Nemours: as a direct result of her indiscretion, her husband becomes ill and dies. This causation is explicit in the text:

> Vous versez bien des pleurs, madame, lui dit-il, pour une mort que vous causez et qui ne vous peut donner la douleur que vous faites paraître. Je ne suis plus en état de vous faire des reproches, continua-t-il avec une voix affaiblie par la maladie et par la douleur, mais je meurs du cruel déplaisir que vous m'avez donné.[142]

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[141] Dempster 34.

[142] Lafayette 161.

The *princesse* broke not only her vow but also the illusion of the perfect courtly lady which has been attributed to her throughout the text. Such a powerful flouting of the established order, as the result of such an overwhelming dance-argument, calls for an equally-powerful set of more or less natural consequences. And so the *princesse* ends her days alone, effectively banished from the court, her only occupation the attempt to reclaim her spotless reputation.[143] Although this banishment is self-imposed, it is nonetheless a grave punishment. For the *princesse*, Mersenne's conception of dance as part of virtue of the universe rings, perhaps, a bit too true. In their brief, yet powerful, shared dance, she and Nemours experienced a moment of physical and spiritual perfection that was, nevertheless, outside the bounds of courtly virtue. The tension between the rules of earthly marriage and courtly conduct and what seemed to be an almost divine experience is too much for a person to bear, and so she chooses not to. In this story, despite the relative paucity of dance descriptions, the presence of dance – that moment of perfect synchronization and wordless understanding between Madame de Clèves and M de Nemours - ripples through the entire text. In a way, *La Princesse de Clèves* could be understood as a text about the rhetorical and social importance of dance in the early modern French court, the literary appropriation of centuries of conversation about who dances, how and why they dance, and what dancing means.

[143] Lafayette 184.

Chapter 4

Drums and Discovery: Resonating across Cultures

Introduction

Frédéric Tinguely tells us that, in the early modern period, "l'art du voyage odysséen conjugue de façon inespérée la passion pour l'ailleurs et le refus, cher aux humanistes, de la perte d'identité, de la dissolution du sujet dans l'immensité géographique".[1] Tinguely argues that travelers during this time sought at once an escape from their everyday lives and a solidification of their own personal identity through their various expeditions. But what if that search for an identity did not stop with the individual, but was expanded into the development of a widespread musical practice, spurred by the portability and appeal of percussion instruments? While no single work discussed in this chapter explicitly seeks to create some kind of "French" or "European" identity, there is a notable trajectory from the earliest work (Marco Polo's *Le Devisement du Monde,* written in 1298) to the latest (François Bernier's *Voyages . . . Contenant la Description des Etats du Grand Mogol, de L'Hindoustan, du Royaume de Kachemere, &c*, about his travels in 1656-1668 and published in 1711) which help outline a story of cultural encounter and musical development from the medieval period to the end of the 17th century. In this chapter, I will show that these instruments play dual roles in European society, acting as both symbols of "exotic" cultures and as central elements in the creation of a European musical practice.

[1] Frédéric Tinguely, *Le Voyageur aux mille tours: les ruses de l'écriture du monde à la Renaissance* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2014) ii

Percussion Instruments as Cultural Signifiers

Over the course of my research for this chapter, I read many "travelogues" from this period detailing voyages of varying levels of veracity, only to come up with a paltry selection of passages that describe or refer to music or musical instruments. Most of these works are vast in scope, covering topics from the history of a people to their religious practices or traditional foods, but one of the most important – and oddly, often least-regarded – subjects covered is the music and musical instruments of various early modern, non-European cultures. I say "oddly" because French music and musical instruments during the medieval and early modern periods were heavily influenced by encounters with other cultures, specifically the Levant, and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the far East and the New World:

> Yet the irony of European observations of non-European instruments during the early modern period is that every single European instrument known at the time had originated elsewhere – mainly the East. These had been so thoroughly adopted into European practice, and incorporated within European aesthetic ideals, that they had become indigenized and their differences forgotten.[2]

This lack of detail about objects that are so crucial to Western musical development is surprising, especially when music is so central to many aspects of society throughout history, as illustrated by McGavin:

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[2] David R. M. Irving, "Comparative Organography in Early Modern Empires," *Music & Letters,* 90.3 (2009): 372-398; 375-76.

> Music can be popular or governmental in origin, spontaneous or organized; it can accompany leisure or constitute an educational discipline in itself; it can be produced by one person or a group; it is flexible, ubiquitous, and closely related to the social context in which it appears; it can match or change the prevailing mood; it carries resonances which create a quasi-textual inflection upon events. Its practitioners themselves can have many kinds of relation to society: some of them will have trades independent of music…, others will need high-level connections to permit their concentration on their art; others again will owe more to those who pay them than to society at large.[3]

Why did travelers apparently ignore the musical details of the cultures that they encountered, especially when such details were so smoothly absorbed into their own societies? For, if musical instruments were so intriguing that they were brought back to Europe in droves, one might expect more attention to be paid to their descriptions by those who first encountered them. How can we understand this "appropriation" (however anachronistic that term may be for this era)? What does it mean for our understanding of France's own musical history and development?

As Irving describes above, most musical instruments, although extra-European in origin, made an incredibly quick transition from "recognizable cultural artifact" to "completely unmarked." In this chapter, I hope to explore the various ways that these instruments, specifically drums and rattles, were described in the travel literature of the

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[3] John J. McGavin, "Secular Music in the Burgh of Haddington, 1530-1640," *Music and Musicians in Renaissance Cities and Towns*. Ed. Fiona Kisby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 49.

16th and 17th centuries in an effort to demonstrate the various stages of incorporation into French/European culture and draw a more nuanced picture of this dispersal of non-European artifacts throughout European culture. To do so, I will use the following sources: (1) Marco Polo, *Le Devisement du Monde* (1298); (2) André Thevet, *Les singularitez de la France antarctique, autrement nommée Amérique, & de plusieurs terres et isles découvertes de nostre temps* (1558); (3) André Thevet, *Le Brésil et les Brésiliens* (1575); (4) Jean de Léry, *Histoire d'un voyage en terre de Brésil* (1578); (5) Augustin de Beaulieu, "Mémoires du Voyage aux Indes Orientales" (c. 1619-1622); (6) Marcello Mastrilli, "Relation des Isles Philipines Faite par un Religieux qui y a demeuré 18. Ans" (1637); (7) Martin Martinius, "Description géographique de l'Empire de la Chine" (1655); (8) François Bernier, *Voyages, Contenant la Description des Etats du Grand Mogol, de l'Hindoustan, du Royaume de Cachemire, &c* (1671).[4]

[4] These texts represent not only temporal but also geographic variety, as they describe a number of different cultures at different points in time. Furthermore, they are the few that explicitly mention musical instruments with any great level of detail. I eliminated texts that simply mentioned "exotic" music in passing or did not engage with the musical styles, instruments, and customs of non-Europeans/non-Christians at all. I also focused only on those texts either written originally in French or translated into French by a contemporary of the author. Texts that I read during my research that will not appear in this chapter are: (a) Gabriel Sagard's *Le grand voyage du pays des Hurons, situé en l'Amérique vers la mer douce, és derniers confins de la nouvelle France, dite Canada . . .* (1632); (b) René Goulaine de Laudonnière's *L'histoire notable de la Floride située ès Indes Occidentales, contenant les trois voyages faits en icelle par certains capitaines et pilotes français, descrits par le capitaine Laudonnière, qui y a commandé l'espace d'un an trois moys : à laquelle a esté adjousté un quatriesme voyage fait par le Capitaine Gourgues* (1586); (c) Claude Dablon's *Relation de ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable aux Missions des Pères de la Compagnie de Jésus, en la Nouvelle France, les années 1671 & 1672* (1673); (d) Jean Thévenot's *Relation d'un voyage fait au Levant : dans laquelle il est curieusement traité des estats sujets au Grand Seigneur . . .* (1664); (e) François de la Boullaye-Le Gouz's *Les voyages et observations du sieur de la Boullaye Le Gouze* (1653) and (f) Jean Baptiste Tavernier's *Les Six voyages* (1676).

Given the extensive time period these works cover, I wish to look at where they fit within the various stages of processes we may now term "appropriation" and "cultural exchange", using a more complex framework than the simple image of one culture "stealing" from a different culture. In this chapter, I wish to emphasize that the process of appropriation as I understand it for this study "is aimed at creating and/or consolidating identity"[5] in a way that is not destructive to the source culture, but instead enriches the recipient culture and our understanding of that culture in the modern day. I believe that one of the fundamental ways we can read the inclusion of percussion instruments in these texts is as a concrete symbol of culture. Whether as objects that draw sharp boundaries between Familiar and Other, or as elements ripe for exchange or assimilation, percussion instruments are remarkable both for their ubiquity around the world and their culturally-mediated forms and uses. By breaking the appropriation/assimilation process down into four stages (Encounter, Acquisition, Reinterpretation, and Reclamation[6]), illustrated by close analyses of various passages from my primary source texts, I will endeavor to trace the path of percussion instruments in French travel literature from exotic trophies to fully-engulfed "French" objects.

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[5] Kathleen Ashley and Véronique Plesch, "The Cultural Processes of 'Appropriation.'" *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies,* 32.1 (Winter 2002): 1-15; 5.

[6] I have identified these stages based on the trends I saw as I was researching this chapter. Not all instruments or instrument uses will pass through all of these stages, and some may vacillate between several.

Encounters with Musical Rituals: A Suspicious Practice

In the earliest travelogue I explored in this chapter, Polo's *Le Devisement du monde,* familiarity with Levantine and Far Eastern cultures was minimal, except in the context of the Crusades or other cultural conflicts and the very beginnings of trade or pilgrimage routes. From those violent encounters, "the small Arabic kettledrums (*naqqara*) . . . took the Crusader's fancy and were adopted in European military music".[7] Apart from their martial purpose, they were played by women "as delicate instruments to accompany the soft-toned instruments; they were also used for dance music".[8] Polo's own use of the term "nacaire" to describe this kind of drum emphasizes its status as a specific, geographically- or culturally-limited instrument, not yet renamed as the "timbale."

In this text is also one of the first descriptions of a religious ritual that would later fascinate another author in the 17th century. The passage, part of Polo's account of the country of Zardandan, which is part of China's Yunnan province, describes an effort to heal the sick using musical instruments and chants:

> Maiz quant ilz sont malades si font venir les enchanteurs de dyables, ce sont ceulx qui tiennent leurs ydoles. Et quant ilz sont venuz, et les malades leurs dient leurs maladies. Et quant il leur en dit leurs maladies, si font maintenant les diz enchanteurs [sonner] leurs estruments et commencent a chanter et a karoller et

[7] Blades, "Percussion Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance: Their History in Literature and Painting" 11.

[8] Ibid.

> tant saultent que aucuns de ces enchanteurs cheent a terre pasmez comme mort. Et ce sera ce que le dyable lui sera entrez dedans le corps.[9]

According to Polo, the "enchanteurs de dyables" act as messengers between the patient and the spirits. In order to incite the *dyables* to take part in the ritual, the *enchanteurs* use both vocal and instrumental music as a sort of invitation. However, they also appear to use these musical devices, and an accompanying dance, to induce exhaustion in themselves, perhaps to lower any physical or spiritual barriers to possession. Although the instruments used in this healing ritual are not specified by Polo, the long history of substantial cultural exchange and trade between China and other countries, such as the Philippines,[10] as well as the need for some way to mark the beat, makes it probable that one of the instruments used was a rhythm instrument such as a drum, bell, or rattle.

Once the *enchanteur* has entered the deathlike faint and been possessed, the other participants in the ritual can begin communicating with the spirit. This spirit shares the reason for the sick person's malady, which is always due to some other spirit: "'Tel esperit si l'a touchié pour ce qu'il lui fist aucun desplaisir'".[11] If this spirit can be appeased, the second part of the ritual begins, in which the spirit makes demands about the number of sheep that should be sacrificed and cooked, as well as the number of people who should attend the sacrifice. Once these preparations are made, "si

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[9] Polo 292.

[10] Robert B. Fox, "The Archaeological Record of Chinese Influences in the Philippines," *Philippine Studies* 15.1 (1963): 41-62; 41-42.

[11] Polo 292.

commencent a baler et a chanter et a sonner au louement de l'esperit".[12] If the sacrifice and celebration are deemed acceptable by the spirit, the participants leave and "se lieve le malade tout sain et tout gary."[13]

No explanation is offered for this miraculous recovery, other than the successful completion of the ritual. However, it seems clear that, from the perspective of both Polo and the people of Zardandan, this use of musical instruments affects human bodies and human spirits in two ways, first through the possession of the *enchanteurs*, and then through the apparent healing of the patient. Although Polo offers no explicit opinion of the efficacy of this ritual, he does pass judgment on the people themselves, calling their belief "le mauvez usage de ceste male gent".[14]

However, this disdainful descriptor used after the initial encounter of such a music-centered ritual is countered by the later European acceptance of music as one way to heal disease. In *Le Solitaire second* (1555), Pontus de Tyard references "Theophraste, Thales, Asclepiade, Xenocrate, Iérophile & cent autres" who used music for "la guerison des perturbacions d'esprit, & des corporelles maladies".[15] Furthermore, he calls music "maistresse souvereine, [qui peut] temperer un desir, guerir une douleur, soulager un ennui de misere, conforter une langueur, & adoucir une amoureuse peine".[16]

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[12] Ibid. 294.

[13] Ibid. 296.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Pontus de Tyard, *Le Solitaire second* in *Renaissance française: traités, méthodes, prefaces, oeuvres généraux*, Vol. 3. Ed. Olivier Tachier (Courlay, France: Editions Fuzeau Classique, 2005) 123.

[16] Ibid.

In Castiglione's *Il Libro de cortegiano*, we see the description of a musical ritual to cure someone bitten by a tarantula:

> Ché, come si dice che in Puglia circa gli atarantati s'adoprano molti instrumenti di musica e con varii suoni si va investigando, fin che quello umore, che fa la infermità, per una certa convenienza ch'egli ha con alcuno di que' suoni, sentendolo, súbito si move e tanto agita l'infermo, che per quella agitazion si riduce a sanità . . . . [17]

In the above passage, although once more the specific instruments are not noted, the use of a rhythm instrument as part of a dance music ensemble is well-documented (see Chapter 3) in France. If we take Tyard and Castiglione as exemplars of general European attitudes toward musical healing rituals during the Renaissance, it seems clear that the narrative of medicinal music – necessarily ritualistic, although to varying degrees - had become more widely assimilated in the intervening years.[18]

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[17] Castiglione 28-29.

[18] Could it be that, with the gradual reintroduction of Ancient Greek and Latin texts, the familiarity of regarding music as legitimate medicine or some form of "spiritual healing" increased as these texts were propagated throughout Europe? In contrast, Polo would not have had access to the breadth of treatises mentioned by Tyard, for example, and thus might not be so ready to accept such traditions. I also must speculate that there is an element of cultural disconnect at play. In many cases, Ancient Greece and Rome were regarded as pinnacles of human thought and creation, such that incorporating texts, ideas, and beliefs into Renaissance European texts was an act of reclamation or "return" to that golden age. However, no such association existed between the Far East and Europe during Polo's time. Rather, his attitude regarding the spiritual practices of the people he encountered is disapproving at best and condemning at worst; he makes no mention of literature, history, or philosophy, save for a brief, misguided description of Gog and Magog in chapter LXXIII.

However, further reading complicates this assumption, as a ritual that closely resembles the one in Polo's account also appears in "Relation des Isles Philipines, Faite par un Religieux qui y a demeuré 18. Ans" (c. 1637), an account translated by Melchisedec Thévenot in the first volume of his collected travel stories, published in 1664. In this text, the unnamed author, who is likely Marcello Mastrilli, describes a group of priests, "*Catolouan[s]"* and *"Babailan[s]"* (male and female priests, respectively) who "ont un commerce particulier avec le Diable; il leur parle par la bouche de leurs petites Idoles, & leur fait croire qu'il est celuy de leurs Ancestres qu'ils adorent".[19] One of the most important rituals observed by the narrator is the *Sacrifice*, which

> se fait en frappant la Victime [a hen, a pig, some rice, or a fish, depending on the circumstances of the believers], avec certaines ceremonies, que le Sacrificateur fait en cadence, marquee par un tambour ou par une cloche, c'est dans ce temps-là que le Diable les possede, qu'il leur fait faire mille contorsions & grimaces, & à la fin, ils dissent qu'ils croyent avoir veu ou entendu.[20]

The use of either a drum or a bell to mark the steps of the ritual, in tandem with the blows struck by the officiant, lends the entire ceremony an air of strictness and precision, despite the vagueness of the description; "certaines ceremonies" tells the reader nothing about the details of the event, after all. This lack of information may be

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[19] Marcello Mastrilli [?], "Relation des Isles Philipines Faite par un Religieux qui y a demeuré 18. ans" (1637). *Relations de divers voyages curieux, qui n'ont point esté publiées,* Vol I. Ed. Melchisédec Thevenot (Paris: Chez Jacques Langlois, 1664) 3 [711].

[20] Ibid.

unintentional, due only to the author's inability to comprehend the importance of any words or gestures. On the other hand, it could be a deliberate masking of the ritual, as if a more precise account risks either lending credence to a non-Christian religion, corrupting the reader somehow, or rendering them vulnerable to a similar demonic possession. In any case, the actual moment of possession, which seems to be incited by the precise rhythm of the instrument, lacks a surprising amount detail for such a memorable experience. The hyperbole of "mille contorsions & grimaces," emphasizes the unnatural, uncomfortable elements of the spectacle, as the entry of the *Diable* disrupts the natural body and expressions of the host. However, the readers are once again deprived of further titillation; the no-doubt inhuman movements made by the possessed individual are left wholly to the imagination. Furthermore, the author makes no attempt to relate any of the words of the priests once the possession has ended, so readers are left wondering whether the ritual accomplished its goal – or even what the goal was in the first place (although we might assume that the priests are making a sacrifice in order to ask for a blessing for a particular believer).

In a still later travelogue, Père Martin Martinius' "Description géographique de l'Empire de Chine" (1665), also included in Thevenot's compilation, we see another perspective on the same ritual that Polo describes during his visit to the Yunnan province:

> Ils ont la mesme religion que les Chinois, attachez au culte des Idoles, & persuadez de la doctrine de transmigration ou passage des ames: mais ils ont cela de particulier, qu'ils se servent des prestresses qui dansent, qui sont des femmes comme peuvent estre ces basteleuses qu'on nomme communément Gitanillas en

> Espagne, & en France des Egyptiennes: ces trompeuses estans priées de chasser les maladies des maisons, ou en détourner le sort & la mauvaise destinée, ou bien d'en faire sortir les spectres & phantosmes, (si par avanture on a la croyance qu'il y en ait;) elles ne font jour & nuit que batre les tambours & faire bruit sur des bassins, sautant & dansant sans cesse. Ie l'ay veu faire dans la Chine à ce people qui estoit à la solde des Tartares, & me suis bien estonné, comment ces personnes pouvoient sauter si long-temps, & d'ailleurs comment les malades avoient la patience de souffrir un si grand bruit & si penetrant.[21]

Here, it appears that other cultures – encountered via trade or migration - may have influenced the development of this healing ritual in the intervening years between Martinius' account and Polo's, since Martinius remarks on the similarity between the dancing priestesses of the Yunnan province and the *Gitanillas* or *Egyptiennes* of Western Europe[22], part of the nomadic and widespread Roma people, who are, even now, regarded with suspicion. They originated in India and traveled throughout Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe, with the first written accounts of them appearing in

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[21] Martin Martinius, "Description géographique de l'Empire de la Chine" (1655), Transl. Melchisédec Thevenot. *Relations de divers voyages curieux, qui n'ont point esté publiées,* Vol II (Paris: Chez Jacques Langlois, 1664) 211 [335].

[22] The Roma/Romani people, who are often distrusted and even actively persecuted. They have no traditional homeland (and thus tend to travel constantly), making them outsiders wherever they go. See Špela Urh, "Anti-Roma Racism in Europe: Past and Recent Perspectives." *Race, Racism and Social Work: Contemporary Issues and Debates*, Eds. Michael Lavalette and Laura Penketh, 1st ed. (Bristol University Press, Clifton, Bristol, UK, 2014) 115–130. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qgtg9.12

the 14th century.[23] Thus, by the time of Martinius' text, the Roma would have been well-known in many regions, including in parts of the Chinese empire.

As in Polo's text, the tone of this description is dismissive, if not downright disgusted; Martinius moves from a simple description of beliefs – "culte des Idoles," "la doctrine de transmigration" – to opinion – "ces trompeuses," "souffrir un si grand bruit & si penetrant." Despite his reluctance to give more than a paragraph of space to this ritual, he still shares valuable information. First, we learn that the priestesses dance not only to cure the sick, but also to "détourner le sort" or "faire sortir les spectres & phantosmes," further increasing the impression of uncanniness that must have accompanied the ritual. According to Martinius, they "ne font jour & nuit que batre les tambours & faire bruit sur des bassins, sautant & dansant sans cesse".[24] Although he makes no mention of the supernatural "possessions" that Polo describes, Martinius does express his astonishment at the stamina of both the priestesses and their patients, which he does not appear to expect. After this passage, there is no additional discussion of the ritual.

Clearly, given this apparent vacillation between curiosity, disdain, and acceptance, the status of musical healing rituals remains questionable from the 13th through the 17th centuries; Europeans refuse to fully embrace them as part of their own practice, so they retain their place as "exotic" cultural elements, included in travelogues because of their very strangeness. It seems clear that there is a wide gulf between medicinal music of the ancient Greeks, as mentioned by Tyard, and other European

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[23] Ibid. 115; Bela I. Melegh et al, "Refining the South Asian Origin of the Romani People." *BMC Genetics* 18 (2017): 82. *PMC*. Web. 14 Sept. 2018.

[24] Martinius 211 [335].

cultures, as mentioned by Castiglione, and medicinal music of Eastern cultures. Perhaps these rituals in the East are too closely tied to non-Christian religions, as the repeated allusions to "dyables" or "spectres" illustrate, whereas Tyard's and Castiglione's examples make no mention of any folk beliefs or other deities, only implying some kind of inherent virtue in music. In any case, neither the Eastern percussion instruments (the specifics of which are impossible to infer from the texts, given the lack of concrete detail about form, sound, or construction) nor the rituals associated with them, as described in the above passages, appear to have been incorporated into European culture in a meaningful way by the end of the 17th century. They remain marked by their origins, illustrations of part of what it means to be *non*-European for readers of the time.

Despite the failure of Eastern medicinal healing rituals to take hold in European culture, explorers of the 16th century were fascinated by other musical aspects of non-European cultures, notably those in the New World. André Thevet's *Singularitez de la France antarctique* (1558) and Jean de Léry's *Histoire d'un voyage faict en terre de Brésil* (1578) both contain a wealth of information on the religious practices of the Tupinambá, which heavily involve certain musical instruments.

Thevet begins his work by telling the reader that he wishes "de vous conduire de point en autre, & de lieu en lieu, depuis le commencement iusques à la fin, droit, comme avec le fil de Thesée, observant la longitude des païs, & latitude".[25] This sentence indicates a desire to provide a thorough and organized description of the places he visits

[25] André Thevet, *Les singularitez de la France antarctique, autrement nommée Amérique, & de plusieurs terres et isles découvertes de nostre temps* (Paris: Chez les heritiers de Maurice de la Porte, au Clos Bruneau, à l'enseigne S. Claude, 1558) 3.

during his voyage, despite the oblique comparison of that voyage to the Minotaur's labyrinth. With his guidance, we will be able to avoid any dead-ends or doubling-back in our explorations of the wonders "plustost monstrueuses que naturelles".[26]

In terms of the use of percussion instruments, Thevet's descriptions seem to lead towards an interpretation of the Brazilians he encounters as "monstrous". In a discussion of their religious beliefs, Thevet begins a detailed account of the role of a certain kind of religious figure called a "Pagé", whose duties to the tribe include dream interpretation:

> Ces Sauvages ont encores une autre opinion estrange & abusive de quelques uns d'entre eux, qu'ils estiment vrays Prophetes, & les nomment en leur langue *Pagés,* ausquels ils declarent leurs songes, & les autres les interpretent: & ont ceste opinion, qu'ils disent la verité.[27]

Thevet reports that dreams are extremely important in the faith of this tribe, which he does not explicitly name, only calling them "(noz) Sauvages" or "(noz) Ameriques," and that they firmly believe that dream interpretation can give them important insights. Thus, the *Pagés* occupy a privileged space in the religious life of the Americans, since they are considered to have true prophetic powers:

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[26] "Advertissement au Lecteur par M. de la Porte." In *Les singularitez de la France antarctique, autrement nommée Amérique, & de plusieurs terres et isles découvertes de nostre temps* (Paris: Chez les heritiers de Maurice de la Porte, au Clos Bruneau, à l'enseigne S. Claude, 1558).

[27] Thevet, *Les Singularitez* 65r.

> Ils portent donc grande reverence à ces Prophetes susnommez, lesquels ils appellent *Pagés* ou *Caraïbes*, qui vaut autant à dire, comme Demidieux: & sont vrayement idolatres, ne plus ne moins que les anciens Gentils.[28]

Thevet clearly disdains the status of the *Pagés/Caraïbes*, and his description of the native religion is shocking in its condemnation. Thevet's choice of words in this section is brutal, calling the Americans a "peuple ainsi eloigné de la verité . . . qu'il adore le Diable par le moyen d'aucuns siens ministres, appelez *Pagés,* desquels nous avons desja parlé".[29] He continues, telling readers that the *Pagés* "sont gens de mauvaise vie, qui se sont adonnez à servir au Diable pour decevoir leurs voisins".[30] By making such strong judgments against the Americans, Thevet appears determined to create an impression of them as far more complex than either the blank slate or the "tableau déjà compose" that other travel writers, such as Léry, are determined to depict. [31]

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[28] Thevet, *Les Singularitez* 65v.

[29] Thevet, *Les Singularitez* 65v.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Frank Lestringant, "Les representations du sauvage dans l'iconographie du cosmographe André Thevet." *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance,* 40.3 (1978): 583-95; 592.

---, "Tristes Tropistes : Du Brésil à La France, Une Controverse à L'aube Des Guerres De Religion." *Revue De L'histoire Des Religions*, 202.3 (1985) : 267–294. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/23670522.

---, "Calvinistes et cannibals : Les Ecrits protestants sur le Brésil français (1555-1560)." *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français (1903-2015),* 126 (Janvier-Février-Mars 1980): 9-26; 18.

One of the most striking details of Thevet's description of the *Pagés* is their use of the fruit of the *Ahouaï* tree, which serves a dual purpose: the creation of music and the creation of poison:

> Entre autres choses ils s'aident d'un arbre nommé en leur langue *Ahouaï,* portant fruit veneneus & mortel, lequel est de la grosseur d'une chastaigne moyenne, & est vray poison, specialement le noïau. Les hommes pour legere cause estant courroucez contre leurs femmes leur en donnent, et les femmes aux hommes. [...] Ce fruit blanc avec son noïau est fait comme un Δ delta, lettre des Grecs. Et de ce fruit les Sauvages, quand le noïau est dehors, en font des sonnettes qu'ils mettent aux jambes . . . .[32]

The double use of these fruits underlines Thevet's opinion of the *Sauvages*, since he is careful to tell readers that they poison each other for "legere cause"; furthermore, Thevet appears to regard the poison-making as the primary use of the fruit, with their transformation into rattles being an afterthought; he makes no effort to describe what these rattles looked or sounded like, or even when they were worn, only stating that they "font . . . grand bruit".[33]

Thevet's perspective and the information he shares are echoed, if less aggressively, by Jean de Léry, which may be attributed to a difference in the overall tone of the Léry's work. When he published his *Histoire d'un voyage en terre de Brésil* in 1578, he clearly states his purpose for writing the text:

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[32] Thevet, *Les Singularitez* 66r.

[33] Ibid. 66r.

> [M]on intention et mon sujet sera en ceste histoire, de seulement declarer ce que j'ay pratiqué, veu, ouy et observé tant sur mer, allant et retournant, que parmi les sauvages Ameriquains, entre lesquels j'ay frequenté et demeuré environ un an.[34]
>
> (My intention and my subject in this history will be simply to declare what I have myself experienced, seen, heard and observed, both on the sea, coming and going, and among the American savages, with whom I visited and lived for about a year.)[35]

This declaration is striking in that he specifically wants to share both his observational and participatory experiences with his readers: not only did he "see" and "observe" Brazilian culture, but he encountered it regularly for a year. Léry, thus, positions himself not only as a traveler whose expeditions are meant to document what other people do, but also as someone whose own experiences overseas are of note. The narrative covers two separate cultural encounters: his stay in the Calvinist settlement in Guanabara Bay, and his time with the Tupinambá after he had to flee the settlement. The most information that he gives readers about Brazilian rituals of faith or significant ceremonies comes from his experiences with the Tupinambá, whose daily life provided Léry with a wealth of information to catalogue, some of which was even about percussion instruments. In fact, Léry was the first known European writer to try to

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[34] Jean de Léry, *Histoire d'un voyage en terre de Brésil* (France: Le Livre de Poche, 1994) 105-6.

[35] Jean de Léry, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, Otherwise Called America*. Transl. Janet Whatley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) 3.

notate American music.[36] Although he couldn't fully capture this music, the attempt to engage with it as a cultural element worthy of preservation is striking, especially in contrast with Thevet's condemnation of elements of that same musical practice.

One of the first times Léry introduces his readers to the musical instruments of the Tupinambá is when he attempts to describe the role of the *Maracas*. He begins by offering a description of their constructon and appearance:

> Outreplus, y ayant en ce pays-la une sorte d'arbres qui porte son fruict aussi gros qu'un oeuf d'Austruche, et de mesme figure, les sauvages l'ayant percé par le milieu (ainsi que vous voyez en France les enfans percer de grosses noix pour faire des molinets) puis creusé et mis dans iceluy de petites pierres rondes, ou bien des grains de leur gros mil, duquel il sera parlé ailleurs, passant puis apres un baston d'environ un pied et demi de long à travers, ils en font un instrument qu'ils nomment *Maraca* : lequel bruyant plus fort qu'une vessie de pourceau pleine de pois, nos Bresiliens ont ordinairement en la main.[37]

With this description, Léry is interweaving a lot of information for his readers, as well as making certain assumptions about their knowledge. The comparison he makes between the size and shape of the fruit and ostrich eggs presumes that readers are familiar with ostriches, another "exotic" product.[38] In this way, Léry is giving valuable information

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[36] Michael V. Pisani, *Imagining Native America in Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) 20.

[37] Léry 224.

[38] Ostriches, like elephants, lions, and cheetahs, were among the strange animals (living and dead) imported to Europe from abroad and displayed in menageries and what MacGregor calls "proto-museums" during the Renaissance. They were also among the birds described and illustrated by Pierre Belon in his 1555 *L'Histoire de la nature des*

about the appearance of the fruit while also doubly underlining its extra-European origin. However, he balances the perceived strangeness of such a plant with the phrase "ainsi que vous voyez en France les enfans percer de grosses noix pour faire des molinets." By creating this connection in the minds of his readers, he clarifies not only the actual actions of the Tupinambá but also ensures that those actions are perceived as normal and familiar. However, he is also directly comparing the Tupinambá to French children, their implied innocence perhaps increasing the likelihood that Léry's European readers would view the Tupinambá in a positive light, even as they learn about their more sensational customs.

Léry continues his description in this paragraph by telling us more details about the instrument. For more modern readers, who may be familiar with the toy maracas of today, the sheer size of these older, more traditional versions is surprising. At around two feet long, or possibly even longer, these maracas would likely make an impressive display, especially when many people played them at once. In addition, since Léry tells us that its sound is "plus fort qu'une vessie de pourceau pleine de pois," his readers would have a fairly good benchmark for what a Brazilian maraca would sound like. The fact that these rattles are made from dried fruits – gourds – explains this purported sound quality. When properly and fully dried, these fruits have a wood-like consistency, and their relatively thin walls provide a sharper, cleaner sound than a dried bladder

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oyseaux, avec leurs descriptions et naïfs portraicts retirez du naturel, escrite en sept livres, pp. 231-33. For more information on the collection of natural artifacts, see Arthur MacGregor, "Renaissance Collecting and Understanding of the Natural World." *Changing Perceptions of Nature*, Eds. Ian Convery and Peter Davis, NED - New edition ed., Boydell and Brewer (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK; Rochester, NY, USA, 2016) 75–88. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt19x3hsb.14.

could. Finally, Léry concludes this particular passage by saying that, "nos Bresiliens ont ordinairement en la main." Here, Léry indicates the daily presence and use of the maracas; unlike many instruments in European culture, the maracas appear to be part of the normal ensemble of the Tupinambá, much like a wallet or a cellphone would be for many people today.

In addition to being part of their everyday lives, the maracas also serve an important role in the religious practice of the Tupinambá: "Quand je traiteray de leur religion, je diray l'opinion qu'ils ont tant de ce *Maraca,* que de sa sonnerie, apres que par eux il a esté enrichi de belles plumes, et dedié à l'usage que nous verrons là".[39] First, they are an integral part of the dancing costumes that are worn by the Tupinambá, along with smaller rattles that are attached to the dancers' legs:

> Finalement, adjoustant aux choses susdites [various descriptions of personal ornamentation options] l'instrument nommé *Maraca* en sa main, et pennache de plume qu'ils appellent *Arraroye* sur les reins, et ses sonnettes composées de fruicts à l'entour de ses jambes, vous le verrez lors, ainsi je le representeray encor en autre lieu, equippé en la façon qu'il est, quand il danse, saute, bat et gambade.[40]

Léry paints a vivid picture of a typical Tupinambá dancer – bedecked in feathers and small rattles, which he tells us later are "fruicts secs . . . sonnans comme coquilles

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[39] Léry 224.

[40] Léry 228.

d'escargots, liez et arrengez à l'entour de leurs jambes",[41] and carrying the large maraca. The combination of the hollow clicking of the *sonnettes* and the louder, sharper rattling of the maraca must have created a counterpoint to the steps of the dancers, as each dancer's body became, in part, a musical accompaniment to the dance. These dances were an important part of many ceremonies, but one of the most interesting that Léry describes is what seems to be a daily activity for young, marriageable men:

> les jeunes hommes à marier ont cela de particulier, qu'avec chacun un de ces grans pennaches qu'ils nomment *Araroye*, lié sur leurs reins, et quelques fois les *Maraca* en la main, et les fruicts secs . . . sonnans comme coquilles d'escargots, liez et arrengez à l'entour de leurs jambes, ils ne font presque autres choses toutes les nuicts qu'en tel equippage aller et venir, sautans et dansans de maison en maison.[42]

Such a celebration sounds dynamic, since it involves the whole community on a nightly basis. However, its purpose remains unclear, beyond allowing the young men to prove their skill as dancers and thus their presumed suitability as husbands. Although Léry does not elaborate on why this kind of ritual is performed, I suspect that he uses it to, once more, illustrate the points of familiarity between his experiences (and those of his readers) and the customs of the Tupinambá:

> …tellement que les voyant et oyant si souvent faire ce mestier, il me resouvenoit de ceux qu'en certains lieux par deçà on appelle valets de la feste, desquels és

[41] Léry 253.

[42] Ibid.

> temps de leurs vogues et festes qu'ils font des saincts et patrons de chacune parroise, s'en vont aussi en habits de sois, avec des marottes au poing, et des sonnetes aux jambes, bagnenaudans [sic][43] et dansant la Morisque parmi les maisons et les places.[44]

By drawing a direct parallel between these young Brazilians and the "valets de la feste" who facilitate the parish celebrations of various (Catholic or otherwise Christian) figures, Léry helps to create recognition in his readers. The satirical comparison between these dances and Catholic saint celebrations in the eyes of his European readers, he allows them to imagine the Tupinambá through a more "usual" proxy, albeit not a flattering one. Furthermore, by mentioning the very similar equipment – strung rattles and maracas for the Brazilians, and *marottes* and small bells for the "valets de la feste" – Léry is, perhaps unwittingly, proving just how similar musical, ritual, and performance traditions are across cultures.

As he continues his study of the Tupinambá faith, he encounters the figures known as *Caraïbes*. Léry characterizes them as "faux Prophetes" who travel from village to village and,

> comme les porteurs de Rogatons en la Papauté, leur font accroire que communiquans avec les esprits ils peuvent non seulement par ce moyen donner force à qui il leur plaist, pour veincre et surmonter les ennemis, quand on va à la

[43] Perhaps a corruption of the verb "baguenauder"?

[44] Léry 253.

> guerre, mais aussi que ce sont eux qui font croistre les grosses racines et les fruicts, tels que j'ay dit ailleurs que ceste terre du Bresil les produit.[45]

The above passage clearly outlines his thoughts on the *Caraïbes*; he does not respect them at all, finding them to offer about as much religious value to the Brazilians as the peddlers of false relics do to Catholics in Europe. However, their actual status among the Tupinambá is not described in this passage, unlike in Thevet's earlier work, so Léry's readers may be left with the impression that the legitimacy of the *Caraïbes* within Tupinambá society is dubious, especially given Léry's mocking tone in the above passages. Nevertheless, it appears clear in Thevet's text that the *Caraïbes* are held in great esteem in this region.

Part of the difficulty that the European chroniclers have with the *Pagés/Caraïbes* may be their peripatetic nature. Despite the allure of travel, "civilization" in Western culture tends to be correlated with specific geographic boundaries, as expressed by Fernand Braudel: "C'est qu'en fait celle-ci est accrochée solidement à un espace déterminé, l'espace qui est une réalité géographique, mais aussi une des indispensables composantes des civilisations".[46] This geographic limitation is particularly important for religious or political figures, resulting in particular places being automatically correlated with authority (e.g., Rome, Paris, London, Washington, D.C.). However, the *Caraïbes,*

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[45] Léry 396.

[46] Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le Monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1949) 566.

while associated with the Tupinambá, appeared to have no particular residence within the tribe's territory, much like beggars' orders in Europe[47]:

> [L]es *Caraïbes* allans particulierement de village en village, font accoustrer de plus belles plumasseries qui se puissent trouver, en chacune famille trois ou quatre ou selon qu'ils s'advisent plus ou moins, de ces hochets ou grosses sonnettes qu'ils nomment *Maracas;* lesquelles ainsi parées fichans le plus grand bruit du baston qui est à travers dans terres, et les arrangeans tout le long et au milieu des maisons, ils commanderent puis apres qu'on leur baille à boire et à manger.[48]

This is the second time Léry mentions the fact that the *Caraïbes* travel constantly, and I believe that this level of unpredictability makes their social status difficult for European travelers to evaluate. Here, of course, Léry explains one of the reasons for their travel, which is a sort of dedication or sanctification of the *Maracas*. This ceremony involves not only the playing of these instruments, but also a symbolic planting within the village:

> Voire les laissans ordinairement ainsi plantez en terre quinze jours ou trois semaines, tousjours servis de mesme, ils ont apres cest ensorcelement une opinion si estrange de ces *Maracas*, (lesquels ils ont presques tousjours en la

[47] Robert Henke, "Sincerity, Fraud, and Audience Reception in the Performance of Early Modern Poverty." *Renaissance Drama,* New Series, 36/37, Italy in the Drama of Europe (2010): 159-178; 161.

[48] Léry 407.

> main) que leur attribuent quelque saincteté, ils disent que souventes fois, en les sonnans un esprit parle à eux.[49]

The *Maracas* are adorned with feathers by the *Caraïbes,* offered food and drink, and left standing in the earth for several weeks, all of which serves to transform them into divine objects. In this way, the *Maracas* become voices for the spirits; the music they make moves from man-made to supernatural and turns them from mere instruments to important spiritual objects that must be incorporated into the daily lives of the members of Tupinambá society. Although Léry is clearly dubious about this transformation, calling it "une opinion si estrange," he does not shy away from describing it; thanks to him, the ritual purpose of the *Maracas* is much clearer, allowing European readers to understand them within the broader context of religious beliefs, however strange they may appear to outsiders.

Despite the efforts to give detailed accounts of these rituals, neither Thevet nor Léry leaves any room for their European readers to consider incorporating elements of such practices into their own cultures. Just as with the medicinal music of the East, the clearly non-Christian roots of these religions renders the instruments themselves largely unsuitable for full assimilation into European music.

Percussion as Natural Product: Acquisition

In addition to their ritualistic purposes, the very construction of these instruments renders them difficult for these French explorers and their audience to assimilate into European culture. These instruments are what we might call "natural"

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[49] Léry 407.

instruments, made using a relatively unchanged natural material: the dried fruiting body of native plants.

In the case of the small rattles that the Tupinambá used as body adornments for their dances, these plants, *Ahouaï* trees, part of the dogbane family, were extremely dangerous and very recognizable:

> [C]e fruit est blanc, avec son noyau; fait en la forme d'un Δ letter grecque . . . . mesmes ils deffendent à leurs enfans d'y toucher, jusques à ce que le noyau soit dehors, auquel gist et consiste toute la force du venin, et les coquilles du fruict estans seiches, ils en font des sonnettes . . . .[50]

In a way, turning something so dangerous into such a common musical instrument and personal ornament is a kind of mastery of the natural world. The fact that the Tupinambá can safely deal with such a poisonous plant[51] is evidence of their resourcefulness, creativity, and knowledge. Léry goes into more detail about the construction of these rattles, "desquelles …ils sont fort convoiteux quand on leur en porte"[52]:

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[50] André Thevet, *Le Brésil et les brésiliens* (1575) Ed. Suzanne Lussagnet (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1953) 80-81.

[51] This plant (*Thevetia ahouai)* is extremely dangerous, as it produces a potent cardiotoxin affecting both humans and animals. Angel Josabad Alonso-Castro et al., "Medicinal Plants from North and Central America and the Caribbean Considered Toxic for Humans: The Other Side of the Coin." *Evidence-based Complementary and Alternative Medicine : eCAM* 2017 (2017): 9439868. *PMC*. Web. 15 Sept. 2018.

[52] Léry 224.

> [I]ls ont cueilli un certain fruict qui est de la grosseur, et aucunement approchant de la forme d'une chastagne d'eau, lequel a la peau assez ferme: bien sec qu'il est, le noyau osté, et au lieu d'iceluy mettans de petites pierres dedans, en enfilant plusieurs ensemble, ils en font des jambieres lesquelles sont liées à leurs jambes….[53]

Aside from stringing them together and using pebbles as the noisemakers inside the dried skins of the fruit, the actual materials remain relatively unchanged from their original forms. The manufacturing process is quite simple, if risky because of the plant's natural toxins, making this kind of instrument accessible to everyone in the community who is willing to learn the skill. Despite this apparent ease of access, it is clear why certain members of the tribe are "convoiteux" of the jambieres; they are material evidence of the maker's patience, time, caution, and skill.

The maracas are constructed similarly, as I touched on briefly before:

> Outreplus, y ayant en ce pays-la une sorte d'arbres qui porte son fruict aussi gros qu'un oeuf d'Austruche, et de mesme figure, les sauvages l'ayant percé par le milieu (ainsi que vous voyez en France les enfans percer de grosses noix pour faire des molinets) puis creusé et mis dans iceluy de petites pierres rondes, ou bien des grains de leur gros mil, duquel il sera parlé ailleurs, passant puis apres un baston d'environ un pied et demi de long à travers . . . .[54]

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[53] Ibid. 223-24.

[54] Léry 224.

Once more, the final instruments are still recognizable as natural and plant-based; the Tupinambá are working solely with available resources, meaning that their music reflects the world that immediately surrounds them. With such geographically- and naturally-bounded musical instruments, Tupinambá music cannot be so easily extricated from Brazil for incorporation into European musical practice – the instruments remain heavily marked by their extra-European origins.

Given the differences in natural resources between Europe and the New World, these instruments became curiosities brought back by collectors. For example, in *Le Brésil et les brésiliens*, Thevet writes, while describing the Tupinambá custom of wearing rattles to dance, "Et de telles braves sonnettes j'en ay une belle rangee en mon Cabinet, avec quelques unes de leurs espees, et pareillement diverses sortes de peaux d'oyseaux escorchez."[55] Thevet's small collection – rattles, weapons, and preserved bird skins – encompasses the social and religious, the martial, and the natural *milieux* that he observed in his text. It is likely that Thevet simply wants them as curiosities, to help give weight to the tales of his travels and serve as material reminders of his experiences. However, they are also part of the European habit of collecting foreign musical instruments for a variety of purposes,

> from the presentation of curious artefacts (as trophies or ornaments) to the provision of ethnographic data for scholars, to the bestowal of gifts (often from one monarch to another).[56]

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[55] Thevet, *Le Brésil et les brésiliens* 81.

[56] Irving 378

In addition to the Brazilian rattles, Thevet and Léry also brought back to Europe detailed information about their construction and how they varied from more familiar European rattles. Still later, it would turn out that these French explorers acquired much more from their travels: it is from Thevet that the plant used for the small rattles – called by the Brazilians the *Ahouai* – derives its name and genus: *Thevetia*.[57] By naming the genus after Thevet,[58] botanists privilege the French/European perspective and claim symbolic ownership over these plants, even as the instruments derived from their fruits remain quite separate from European culture. In fact, even in works purporting to represent New World cultures the instruments remain oddly absent, despite the French eagerness to welcome members of the Tupinambá tribe to court early in the 17th century[59]:

> [In *Les Indiens*] there are no indexical references to 'drums' for marking the beat and no use of rattles or chanting to provide local color. Nothing signifies Peruvian, American, or, in this case, 'Indian' in either the melody, the ornamentation, the bass line, the harmonies, or the texture (five principal

[57] Alexander Senning, "Thevetin", *Elsevier's Dicionary of Chemoetymology : The Whys and Whences of Chemical Nomenclature and Terminology* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2006) 389.

[58] *Thevetia ahouai* and its genus was first named and described in the 19th century by A.P. de Candolle and Alphonse de Candolle. See A.P. de Candolle and Alphonse de Candolle, *Prodromus Systematis Naturalis Regni Vegetabilis,* T.8 (Paris : 1824-1873).

[59] Pisani 23.

> features of Western musical style), nor does Lully's music[60] suggest difference . . . .[61]

The lack of concrete use of "Indian" musical instruments or accurate representation of these cultures is especially striking because of the availability of detailed information and firsthand exposure to, at least, the Tupinambá in the 16th and 17th centuries. To ignore nearly a century of writing about these cultures is to effectively reject the qualities that differentiate them. For the *Maracas* and other rattles of the Tupinambá, the final stage of cultural assimilation is not the incorporation of the instruments themselves into French musical practice, but the symbolic ownership of the resources from which they are derived, the detailed knowledge of their construction, and the trophies meant primarily for display.

Other natural percussion instruments also defy European assimilation due to their very nature. These instruments, described by the Italian Jesuit missionary Martin Martinius (Martino Martini) in his 1655 treatise, "Description géographique de l'Empire de la Chine,"[62] are so unusual that I have encountered no comparable instruments in either the early modern or modern periods. However, before I discuss them, I wish to briefly contextualize Martinius' work. As one might surmise from the title, this text obviously focuses on the natural wonders of the Chinese empire, rather than the people

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[60] Lully's music is the first record we have of many instrumental compositions, since percussion (and trumpet) parts were rarely written down before the latter part of the 17th century. Titcomb 60-61.

[61] Pisani 30.

[62] Translated by Melchisédec Thevenot and published in his *Relations de divers voyages curieux, qui n'ont point esté publiées,* Vol II. (Paris: Chez Jacques Langlois, 1664).

who live there. But, what is not so obvious is the volubility of Martinius' praise for the area:

> Il faut demeurer d'accord que l'Asie a esté de tout temps, & est encore à cette heure, le premier & le plus excellent pays de tout le monde. C'est elle qui a eu ces beaux & agreables jardins du Paradis terrestre, que la divine main avoit plantez avec les premiers hommes nos premiers peres: c'est de là, que ces grandes colonies se sont estenduës au long & au large, & ont peuplé tout le monde. Ces peoples ont appris aux autres les ceremonies de la Religion, les bonnes moeurs, les lettres & les autres sciences.[63]

Unlike some other European travelers (e.g., Polo, Mastrilli), Martinius does not view Asia as inferior, nor does he leave room for argument in this opening passage of the text: he states each claim as a fact, drawing on Christian beliefs about the origins of humanity. For Martinius, his travels to Asia represent an opportunity to not only act as a missionary to its people,[64] but also to learn about the continent and present that knowledge to his contemporaries back in Europe.[65] He was fascinated by China and worked to assimilate himself into both the Ming and Qing dynasties[66] (a deft political

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[63] Martinius 1 [117]

[64] Xu Mingde, "The outstanding contribution of the Italian sinologist Martino Martini to cultural exchanges between China and the West." *Martino Martini: A Humanist and Scientist in Seventeenth Century China*. Ed. Franco Demarchi and Riccardo Scartezzini, (Università degli studi di Trento, 1996) 23.

[65] Ibid. 26-28.

[66] The Ming Dynasty fell in 1644. Chusei Suzuki, John Wilson Lewis, et al, "China." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 15 Sept. 2018. Available FTP: https://www.britannica.com/place/China/The-end-of-Mongol-rule.

move, as well as an effort to preserve his own life, as the Ming dynasty fell to the Qing during Martinius' first years in the empire).[67] This work, originally published as the *Novus Atlas Sinensis* in 1655, established Martinius as "the founding father of modern geographical science".[68] Because he is most concerned with the geography of the Asia in this work, any mentions of its people – including cultural details like music and religion - are heavily tied to their surroundings. This brings us to exactly *what* the singular percussion instruments are.

One of the most geographically-significant phenomena that Martinius describes is the presence of landmarks that act as musical instruments; that is, musical mountains. The first of these is in the province of Xensi: Xecu mountain, "la montagne des dix tambours de pierre, que le Roy Sivenus y fit mettre, afin que les chasseurs fissent signe aux autres, lors qu'il verroient des bestes sauvages".[69] We have no other information about how or when these stone drums were constructed. As instruments apparently placed by royal decree, they are certainly remarkable. Their stated purpose, a means of signaling hunters, implies that, for each (presumably royal) hunting party, there were people whose job it was to both stand watch for game and play the drums to communicate the presence of wildlife and, potentially, its approximate location in relation to the mountain. Because they are made of stone, perhaps the noise they made when played was not so startling to animals as more piercing instruments like hunting horns would be, although this is simply speculation. In any case, it's an interesting

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[67] David E. Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989) 106-7.

[68] Mingde 30.

[69] Martinius 59 bis [179].

adaptation of the existing landscape, without being too disruptive to the environment: stone instruments, when not played, are simply stones. Although Martinius does not mention it, another truth of these instruments is impossible to ignore: over time, without maintenance, they will eventually erode into the landscape, subject to the same natural forces as anything else.

> Another landmark-instrument occurs in the province of Xantung:
>
> Il y a une montagne entr'autres qui est digne de remarque, nommée Mingxe, qui signifie une pierre resonante: elle n'est pas éloignée de Caotang; au sommet de cette montagne on y a dressé une piece de bois, qui a cent perches de haut, on dit, que pour si peu qu'on la remue, elle rend un son comme celuy d'un tambour: c'est ainsi de là que cette montagne tire son nom.[70]

On this mountain, the construction of the resonating body, a massive piece of wood[71], remains somewhat mysterious, since Martinius' use of "on" renders the creator anonymous. While maneuvering a piece of wood 1800 feet tall is not an impossible feat, it is a strange one. Martinius gives us no explanation for the presence of this natural instrument, and his source, another anonymous "on", likely didn't elaborate either. Unlike the previous mountain, with its stone drums meant for communication, Mingxe's resonant wood apparently serves no particular purpose. However, its sensitivity to any

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[70] Ibid. 72 [192].

[71] A "perche" is a unit of measurement that is usually between 16 and 25 feet long, although here it may be closer to 18 feet. From "Comprendre les anciennes mesures françaises : un arpent, une toise, une perche, une lieue…" *Le blogue de Bibliothèque et Archives Canada*. Pub. April 24, 2014. 12 July 2018. Available FTP : https://ledecoublogue.com/2014/04/24/comprendre-les-anciennes-mesures-francaises-un-arpent-une-toise-une-perche-une-lieue/

strike, no matter how delicate, might have made quite an impression on the nearby settlements during a rainstorm, as each raindrop contributed to music made solely by nature. Aside from its creation, there is one more mystery that remains for Martinius' readers: the name of the mountain itself. Martinius asserts that its name means something like "pierre resonante"; however, I have been unable to confirm this translation because he does not include the original characters that comprise its name. Without the original characters, the true name and its meaning have been obscured by a potentially faulty transliteration and understanding of the language on the part of either Martinius or his translator, Melchisédec Thevenot.

The final "natural instrument" is another mountain, called Tungeu, or "le tambour de cuivre".[72] Martinius gives no other details about it other than the fact that "on y entend battre le tambour toutes les fois qu'il doit pleuvoir".[73] It is unclear whether this mountain has undergone any human intervention in order to turn it into this kind of weather alert system, nor are modern readers able to truly discern how the mountain would have sounded. On one hand, Martinius may mean to compare the sound of the mountain in the rain to that of the familiar copper-bottomed kettledrums, rendering this unusual landscape feature more approachable to his readers. On the other, he may refer to a more unusual sound in the minds of European readers: that of an instrument like the *Dong Son* or *tonggu,*[74] drums with a metal head and a more melodic timbre.

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[72] Martinius 188 [312].

[73] Ibid.

[74] These bronze drums date from China's Bronze Age, and have been discovered in China, Vietnam, and Indonesia. See Catherine Churchman, "Where to Draw the Line? The Chinese Southern Frontier in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries" *China's Encounters on*

Obviously, these drum-mountains must remain solely as encountered instruments; they cannot be acquired or assimilated into European culture the way more portable instruments are. However, their representation in Martinius' text remains an important part of the exploration of European and non-European identities. Instruments that cannot be seen, heard, touched, or otherwise experienced by readers maintain an air of mystery and exoticism that even the strangest bell, rattle, or drum brought back from foreign lands does not match. It is only through the stories of explorers like Martinius that other Europeans can "acquire" these instruments, so that "la description même deviant un acte conscient d'appropriation symbolique. Le voyage se change en un rituel de baptême colonial."[75]

This "symbolic appropriation" is not necessarily negative; in the context of Martinius' work, for example, it is enacted in a way to share information more freely rather than to limit its transmission:

> [N]on-European musical instruments *and their descriptions* [emphasis mine] acted as transportable, material evidence of "exotic" musics for early modern

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the South and Southwest: Reforging the Fiery Frontier Over Two Millennia Eds. James A. Anderson, John K. Whitmore (Boston: BRILL, 2014) 62-63.

Although Martinius was unlikely to have been exposed to this exact kind of drum, it is possible that he refers to a similar one if we believe that the descriptor "tambour de cuivre" does refer to an all-copper drum. Alternative copper percussion instruments, such as metal chime bells (*bianzhong)* or gongs, cannot reasonably be called "drums."

[75] Friedrich Wolfzettel, *Le discours du voyageur: Pour une histoire littéraire du récit de voyage en France, du moyen age au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996) 85.

> European scholars, and as visual representations of musical and cultural differences for eyewitnesses and European readers alike.[76]

Martinius' geographical survey of China was not only based on his own travel experience, but also on the knowledge of other Jesuits and written sources from China,[77] and incorporated information from each of the fifteen provinces of the Chinese empire of the 17th century. This impressive scope is thus echoed internally by such wonders as the drum-mountains, whose sheer mass, as well as the questions left open around their history or origins, may act as a metonym for the size, complexity, and enduring nature of the Chinese empire.

Such detailed description of non-European elements and experiences, present not only in Martinius' work but also in those of Thevet and Léry, might have inspired their European audience to turn an equally-keen eye on their home cultures. By demonstrating a willingness to write so precisely about an Other, these authors may have experienced

> "a reversal of perspective [that] leads to self-reflection, auto-criticism, and a consciousness of the reciprocity of alterity that French travel writers such as Diderot, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Graffigny, and many others would pursue in the centuries to follow. Early modern travel writing therefore plays a central role in demonstrating the power of such narrative strategies to shape readers'

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[76] Irving 374.

[77] Mungello 117.

> perceptions not only of unfamiliar peoples and places but also of themselves and others back home.[78]

Thus, by limiting their acquisition and assimilation of these cultures mostly to the stories they could tell about them, these authors lead their readers to the beginning of a more globalized perspective.

Percussion and Processions: Recognizing the Value of Difference

As European explorations continued through the 17th century – part of efforts to pursue trade agreements and political involvement in other parts of the world, especially China and India – the tone of some of the travelogues I have read began to change subtly. Martinius' text, discussed in the previous section, shows this gradual transition, as his focus was on a more objective – and sometimes even overtly positive – view of the Chinese empire. In travelogues describing voyages in India, similar attitudes are also in evidence. In fact, as Brown says, "[a]ll the evidence of the travel journals [that she surveyed] seems to indicate a widespread musical rapprochement between India and Europe throughout the century".[79]

One of the best examples of this new, more positive (if not wholly enthusiastic) perspectives on Indian music can be found in François Bernier's *Voyages, Contenant la*

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[78] Scott D. Juall, "(Re)Writing Self and Other in Early Modern French Travel Literature." *L'Esprit Créateur: Encounters with Alterity in Early Modern French Travel Literature*, 48.1 (printemps 2008): 1-4; 3.

[79] Katherine Brown, "Reading Indian Music: The Interpretation of Seventeenth-Century European Travel-Writing in the (Re)construction of Indian Music History." *British Journal of Ethnomusicology,* 9.2 (2000): 1-34; 16.

Description des Etats du Grand Mogol, de l'Hindoustan, du Royaume de Cachemire, &c, first published in 1671. Bernier was a French medical doctor who, due to his love of travel and fascination with India,[80] acted from 1658 to 1666 as a court physician to the Mughal royal family.[81]

He was consistently amazed by the wonders of this part of the world, stating that he was "quelquefois étonné d'entendre icy de nos Européens mépriser les villes des Indes",[82] for these locales had their own particular beauties, appropriate for their climate and cultures. He was voluble in his descriptions of everything from architecture to food, including music, especially when it came to music associated with processions and royal ceremony.

To him, this music was strange in the same way that the architecture of Delhi was strange: its difference stemmed from the very milieu in which it was built, that is, the climate, social structure, and geography. Thus, the music necessarily bears no resemblance to northern European musical art. This strangeness is especially evident in the following description of some of the ceremonial music of the court:

> Sur la grand'Porte, qui est au milieu d'un des côtez de ce quarré, il y a un grand Divan tout ouvert du côté de la Cour qu'on appelle, Nagar-Kanai, parce que c'est le lieu où sont les Trompettes, ou plûtôt les Hautbois & les Timbales qui jouent

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[80] James Augustus St. John, *The Lives of Celebrated Travelers*. Harper's stereotype ed. Volume 1. (New York : Harper and Bros., 1842) 205-208.

[81] Ibid. 230.

[82] François Bernier, *Voyages, Contenant la Description des Etats du Grand Mogol, de L'Hindoustan, du Royaume de Kachemire, &c.* Tome II (Amsterdam: chez Paul Marret, 1711) 6.

> ensemble de concert à certaines heures du jour & de la nuit; mais c'est un concert bien étrange aux oreilles d'un Européen nouveau venu qui n'y est pas encore acoûtumé, car il y a quelquefois dix ou douze de ces Hautbois, & autant de Timbales, qui donnent tout d'un coup.[83]

Bernier explicitly states that the makeup of this "concert" is one of the qualities that makes the music he hears so strange. The combination of so many oboe-like instruments, with their reedy sound, and timbales – in this case, kettledrums, "de cuivre ou de fer, qui n'ont pas moins d'une brasse de diametre" – was an ensemble that he says, "me penetroit & m'étourdissoit tellement qu'elle m'étoit insuportable" at the beginning of his time in Delhi.[84] He further describes this music as a "tintamare" – a "din" or a "racket" – indicating that he found it to be loud, confusing, and without appreciable, pleasant melodic or harmonic qualities. However, he quickly continues this passage by reassuring his reader that, "je ne sais ce que ne fait point l'acoûtumance".[85]

After some time, he views the once-raucous music as "trés-agreable . . . elle me semble avoir quelque chose de grave, de majestueux, & de fort mélodieux" (albeit only from far away).[86] This gravity may be attributed in part to Bernier's recognition of the music – however far removed from Western sounds – as a well-governed art form. Later in this same passage, he tells us, "elle a ses regles & ses mesures, & qu'il y a d'excellens Maîtres instruits de jeunesse qui la conduisent, & qui savent parfaitement moderer &

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[83] Bernier 38-39.

[84] Bernier 39.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid. 39-40.

fléchir ces sons forts de Hautbois & de Timbales".[87] Although he does not elaborate on what these rules are, the very fact that they exist lends more legitimacy to the music in his opinion. Furthermore, the idea of moderation and delicacy, when applied to instruments that most Europeans (and indeed, Bernier himself, at one point) regarded as "insuportable," allows a certain amount of nuance into the popular narrative of Eastern strangeness: it is a sliver of familiarity amid a world in which a European traveler does not fit.

A sense of displacement is, in fact, crucial for the genre of the travel narrative. The tension between vast swathes of utter difference and glimpses of similarity is precisely the point; without these two opposing points of the spectrum, travel teaches a traveler nothing that could not be learned at home. The traveler's introspection – in which he or she becomes aware not only of the rules governing his/her internal identity, but also those that inform other identities – is especially crucial when it comes to encountering cultural elements such as ceremonies and celebrations, when participants and spectators alike have a role to play. In order to describe these events in a useful manner to his/her readers, the traveler must be aware of the rules governing such happenings.

One of the most codified set of roles, especially when it comes to the use of musical instruments (that Bernier describes in his text) applies to the royal processions that parade through the narrative much as they would have a city. The first of these is apparently a near-daily event, a break in the "Audience generale" that the King gives to

[87] Ibid.

the citizens of Delhi.[88] In this, the instruments are nearly an afterthought, part of a decorative costume:

> Ces Elefans ont aussi pour lors quelque belle couverture en broderie avec deux clochettes d'argent qui leur pendent des deux côtez, attachées aux deux bouts d'une grosse chaîne d'argent qui leur passe par dessus le dos.[89]

No mention is made of the sound of these silver bells,[90] but they would have provided a natural accompaniment to the rhythm of the animals' steps as they swung freely with each movement. They would have also served as an early warning system, to alert pedestrians to the oncoming animals. Furthermore, their presence, as part of a rich set of accessories, signals the shift in role for the elephants, further highlighted by Bernier: "leur sale & vilain corps est alors bien lavé & bien net".[91] For this procession, a parade of the King's menagerie, the elephants' bells are the first instruments to be heard. The animals and the instruments are both entertainment and inventory here, as they provide a break in the business of a courtly assembly while still demonstrating the wealth of the king.

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[88] The « Audience generale » was a daily opportunity for the citizens of Delhi to see and speak with their ruler. During this time, he made judgments, rulings, and generally displayed himself and his court as a public display of his role in governance. Bernier 40-41.

[89] Bernier 41-42.

[90] Bells in Indian culture are sacred, producing a sound that helps to focus the mind of a devotee and alerting deities to the presence of worshipers. Aruna Srinivasan, "Peal of Bells," *Times of India,* 03/16/11. Accessed 28 June 2018. Available FTP : https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Peal-of-bells/articleshow/7252714.cms

[91] Bernier 41.

The elephants and their bells return later in the account, as part of a procession to the countryside with the king and his court. At the front of the group are the highest ranked nobles, after which are carried a series of silver statues "mêlé d'un grand nombre de Timbales & de trompettes,"[92] followed by the remainder of the court, who "se font porter sur des Elefans, richement enharnachez avec leurs couvertures en broderie, & leurs grosses clochettes d'argent".[93] This later passage describes a kind of procession that the king organizes with some frequency, either simply to enjoy the country or to go hunting. The kettledrums and trumpets announce the presence of royalty while also imposing a rhythm for the parade. The bells, once more, serve to decorate the elephants, who are symbols of wisdom and power[94] as well as a means of transportation; their musical accoutrements again provide a more natural rhythm and warn other people to move out of the path of the procession.

For Bernier and his readers, the music of India is, at least in the context of various royal ceremonies and processions, an art form that is governed by an important set of rules and understandings on the part of both the audience and those who play the instruments. Although Europeans during the 17th century often felt a certain "tension between curiosity about and enthusiasm for Indian culture, and the need to bolster a sense of identification with Euripean interests",[95] accounts such as Bernier's are

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[92] Bernier 237.

[93] Ibid. 239.

[94] Madonna Gauding, *The Signs and Symbols Bible* (New York: Sterling, 2009) 239.

[95] K. Brown 16.

valuable evidence of the first steps toward a deeper understanding of the complexities of identity through travel writing.

Trophies and Tropes: Acquisition of Foreign Percussion Instruments and Staging Reinterpretations of the Other

Interestingly, in this time of coming to terms with different identities and their representations, the French do not often attempt to recreate or incorporate authentic American or Eastern musical traditions in their own compositions during the fifteenth, sixteenth, or seventeenth centuries.[96] This is in direct contrast to the way other cultures approached European music, as there is evidence, at least in India, of Indian musicians eagerly asking to be taught European styles of music and performance practice.[97] Instead, the "foreign" influences on European music are much more subtle, and perhaps even – after a time – nonexistent.

As I mentioned in an earlier section, European travelers were in the habit of acquiring musical instruments as trophies or souvenirs of other cultures. In fact, some scholars argue that this practice of acquisition is the main purpose of travel:

> La perception de l'Autre équivaut à l'expérience d'une altérité ennemie, dangereuse, idéologiquement irrécupérable, les pèlerinages paisibles, de même

[96] Mary Rowen Obelkevich, "Turkish Affect in the Land of the Sun King." *The Musical Quarterly,* 63.3 (July 1977): 367-89; 368; Pisani 42.

[97] K. Brown 15.

> que les croisades, étant justement caractérisés comme des tentatives de "récupération" symbolique ou réelle.[98]

While I believe that the desire to bring back foreign objects, especially in the case of musical instruments, is much more nuanced than an attempt at symbolic conquest or control, it is true that this practice existed on a large and influential scale. During and after the first Crusades, Europeans became fascinated by non-Western musical instruments.

In previous chapters I have repeatedly mentioned the use of kettledrums by the French. These instruments are a seminal example of how European music and musical customs were appropriated from other cultures. Kettledrums originated in the Middle East, where various sizes of these instruments were played by Arabs, Moors, and Turks, among others[99] and remain important factors in more modern traditional music of these regions. By the 14th century, "the sound produced by bands of Turkish instruments, and especially the timbres and effects of the kettledrums intrigued the spirit and musical ears of European soldiers".[100] From there, kettledrums became ubiquitous in European cavalry, and then became part of the classical, Western orchestra, thanks to composers like Lully, Purcell, Bach, and Haydn, and others.[101] Although kettledrums are probably

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[98] Wolfzettel 15.

[99] Obelkevich 372; Blades, "Percussion Instruments of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance" 12.

[100] Obelkevich 372.

[101] Blades, "Percussion Instruments of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance" 12.

the most widely known of the non-European "Western" instruments, there are many others:

> [T]he irony of European observations of non-European instruments during the early modern period is that every single European instrument known at the time had originated elsewhere – mainly the East. These had been so thoroughly adopted into European practice, and incorporated within European aesthetic ideals, that they had become indigenized and their differences forgotten.[102]

To illustrate this wholesale "indigenization" – more commonly called "appropriation" or "assimilation" now – let us consider another common early modern instrument. The lute, that quintessential instrument of the European Renaissance and common symbol of statesmanship and nobility (or prostitution, as the case may be),[103] has its roots in the Middle Eastern ūd, again brought to Europe through the Crusades in the 12th and 13th centuries.[104] The ūd still exists in Iran and other parts of the Middle East today, proving that, as in the case of the kettledrums, the assimilation of musical instruments during this time does not quell the development of the culture of origination in the same way that other forms of appropriation might, although it still has important implications for the ways that non-European cultures have been represented in Europe.[105]

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[102] Irving 375-76.

[103] For a deeper discussion of this topic, as it is outside the scope of my project, please see Katherine Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2015) 9-15.

[104] « Lute. » *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. 19 August, 2018. Available FTP: https://www.britannica.com/art/lute

[105] Harmful cultural appropriation involves the sublimation and deep offense of traditional practices of one culture by misrepresentation, disrespect, or cultural

With the increasing popularity of musical instrument trophies, musical instruments brought from far-away lands are beginning to move from unequivocally "exotic" to more recognizable during the sixteenth century. As more and more instruments enter Europe from various sources, even people who had never visited the original makers could own a piece of the East or the New World:

> By the late sixteenth century, it was not uncommon for Turkish instruments to enter Europe as highly profitable souvenirs of war. There was a ready market for these Oriental 'curiosities,' many of which ultimately became expensive additions to the display chambers or cabinets of wealthy collectors.[106]

As war trophies, imported instruments may be seen as new "subjects" of various European powers, further obscuring the boundary between cultures. Thus, *nacaires* become *timbales,* or, even more generally, *tambours*, losing their individuality as they lose their nationality. We see this gradual absorption of non-European music and musical instruments in trends of production; materials "such as ebony, ivory, Pernambuco wood, silk, and tortoiseshell" were all imported from outside of Europe, yet all of them also became quintessential elements in the manufacture of European musical instruments.[107] In terms of the musical stylings of the time, scholarship exploring early records indicates that, during the 12th through the mid-14th century,

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essentialism on the part of another culture. For a longer discussion on this subject, see James O. Young, "Profound Offense and Cultural Appropriation." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 63.2 (2005) :135–146. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/3700467

[106] Obelkevich 372.

[107] Irving 379.

"Montpellier subsidised a mixed ensemble of reeds, trumpets and drums . . . [a grouping] widespread in urban centres of Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, largely as a result of Middle Eastern influence".[108] Although this mixed ensemble was later superseded by other instrumental groupings, foreign influence – especially on percussion – continued to shape European music.

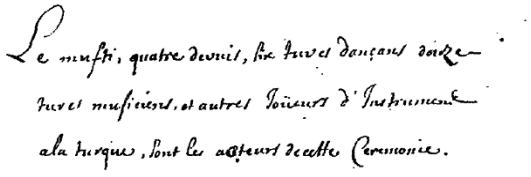
Le mufti, quatre dervis, six turcs dançans douze
turcs musiciens, et autres Joüeurs d'Instrumens
a la turque, sont les acteurs de cette Ceremonie.

Figure 23: The description of the musical ensemble for the "Marche pour la ceremonie des Turcs" as it appears in the Philidor Manuscript (c. 1690)

Interestingly, in this time of both absorbing new instruments and coming to terms with different cultural identities and their representations, the French (and Europeans in general) do not often attempt to recreate or incorporate authentic American or Eastern musical traditions in their own compositions during the fifteenth, sixteenth, or seventeenth centuries.[109] Even in Lully's compositions from *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, which is predicated on the (mocking) mimicry of the Turks by French people, there is no effort at all to imitate Turkish musical gestures. In fact, as we see by the staging instruction for the "Marche pour la cérémonie des Turcs," there isn't even a clear idea of what the ensemble should look like: "Le mufti, quatre dervis, six turcs dançans, douze turcs musiciens, et autres Joüeurs d'Instrumens a la turque, sont les acteurs de cette Ceremonie."[110] The score

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[108] Gretchen Peters, "Civic Subsidy and Musicians in Southern France during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries: A Comparison of Montpellier, Toulouse and Avignon," *Music and Musicians in Renaissance Cities and Towns*. Ed. Fiona Kisby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 61.

[109] Obelkevich 368; Pisani 42.

[110] Jean-Baptiste Lully and Molière, *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* (Paris: André Danican Philidor, c. 1690) 108.

offers no immediate clues either, since none of the five voices are labeled in any way. In modern performance, the usual ensemble often consists of violins, violas, cello, harpsichord, flute, lutes or theorbes, and oboe, although other instruments were certainly used by Lully,[111] including those originating from the Ottoman Empire. In this instance, the lack of specificity underscores not only the farcical nature of the "Ceremonie des Turcs" but also represents the French tendency to "utilize the novelty and exoticism of Ottoman music to enhance the beauty and intellectual challenge of their own works."[112] Of course, in this case, it is even more apparent than usual that the "Ottoman music" is simply a typically French march with an added flavor of *turquerie*, perhaps only shown with (un-scored) drum or other percussion parts and prop instruments that appear onstage without actually being played. In such a case, as well as in Lully's *Les Indiens*, published 1657, this kind of approach to musical representation of other cultures – an outright refusal to do so authentically – is part of a movement of reinterpreting those cultures. If the composer *says* that something is Turkish or American or Chinese, it *is*, even when nothing concrete indicates it:

> [In *Les Indiens*] there are no indexical references to 'drums' for marking the beat and no use of rattles or chanting to provide local color. Nothing signifies Peruvian, American, or, in this case, 'Indian' in either the melody, the ornamentation, the bass line, the harmonies, or the texture (five principal features of Western musical style), nor does Lully's music suggest difference in

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[111] See John Spitzer and Neal Zaslaw, "Chapter 3: Lully's Orchestra." *The Birth of the Orchestra* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[112] Obelkevich 368.

> the way that dancers' dress and movements in the *Ballet des nations* suggested difference.[113]

This reinterpretation demonstrates a distinct power imbalance between the host culture (French) and the cultures of origination. In the case of the New World cultures, this imbalance is indicative of the entire relationship between France, the Americas, Africa, and the West Indies during a period of rapid, widespread colonization.[114] France's efforts to control these lands and peoples extend seamlessly to involve an utter control of music and musical artifacts. In the case of the more "established" Eastern and Levantine societies – the Ottoman Empire, in this case, the reinterpretation is not representative of France's control in those regions. Rather, as Michèle Longino succinctly states, "Molière's play was not simply a comedy with a few 'turqueries,' but a compensatory exercise in which the French indulged to console themselves for their inability to manage the Ottomans to their advantage . . . What they couldn't control in the world, they would control on stage."[115] In literary worlds, the writer is not bound to a truthful representation of anything, and this bias – intentional or not – affects not only their contemporary audiences, but the interpretations made by their future readers.

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[113] Pisani 30.

[114] See "France's First Empire: Gains and Losses" in Barnett Singer and John Langdon, *Cultured Force: Makers and Defenders of the French Colonial Empire* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004) 24-46.

[115] Michèle Longino, *Orientalism in French Classical Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 145-46.

Conclusion: Reclamation: Where Percussion Leads Now

After years of both physical and intellectual appropriation of musical cultures, the final stage of musical instruments as cultural signifiers is to be recognized and reclaimed by their source cultures. To be clear, this does not negate the contributions that these instruments have made to French and other European cultures. The beauty of art, music, literature, and other products of culture is that they can be shared with outsiders. In some instances, that sharing may be paramount to their existence; music, for example, lives in the playing, singing, and hearing. The success of instruments like kettle drums in Western music is because they were used by Europeans so widely, in such varying contexts. Furthermore, their use in the West does not preclude their use in traditional musical stylings of Turkey, Iran, or other countries from which the French originally obtained them.

However, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the fields of comparative musicology and ethnomusicology were truly solidified in an effort to explore music and musical instruments from multiple perspectives, not just from the viewpoint of the (Western) colonizer. With the growth of these disciplines comes a more nuanced understanding of the ways that music and musical instruments travel and transform, through both space and time. In this atmosphere, not only are scholars recognizing the non-Western origins of many instruments, but musicians are given space to explore both historical performance practice and ways to incorporate historical instruments into more modern music from all cultural backgrounds.

It is into this milieu that I wish this chapter to fit. As with all scholarship, this investigation of the ways that percussion instruments from various parts of the world

were described, acquired, and utilized is meant to add another stepping-stone in what will be a never-ending, complex path towards a deeper understanding of the ways that cross-cultural encounters enrich our interpretations of artistic, literary, and scientific texts. By reading and analyzing what are, in the end, small excerpts from much larger works whose purpose was fundamentally to help both author and readers to understand themselves in relation to a world that seemed to be ever-growing, I believe that percussion instruments represent one part of a European identity whose construction relies on the presence and intervention of other identities. Just as "the core of the French national literature consists largely in a borrowing and cobbling of other people's stories",[116] so too does the French and more general European use of percussion consist of a willingness to borrow and repurpose the musical instruments of others, in the pursuit of constant musical and cultural development.

[116] Longino 7.

Conclusion

The reverberations – both literal and figurative – of percussion instruments are widespread, uncircumscribed by artificial notions of nation, genre, or historical period. From the *naqqara* of the Middle East to the *maracas* of the New World to the side drums of Europe, it is clear that the variety and use of percussion was embraced in Europe throughout the medieval and early modern periods and beyond. The representation of percussion instruments is marked by a tension between their status as visible, tangible artifacts of culture, and invisible, lost, or unmarked "background noise."

It was my intention to bring these instruments out of the background, because I do not believe that their presence in a variety of literary works relegates them to simple symbols of the time or place. Rather, they were included in these texts precisely *because* they were everywhere, so common that it is now difficult for us to know the full breadth of their uses, forms, and music. They form the rhythmic foundation of many musical genres, from folk to opera, yet until the seventeenth century, their music was rarely notated.

In each of my chapters, I treated a different general use for percussion instruments; these umbrella topics are not exhaustive, but I believe they provide evidence for the pervasiveness of percussion instruments throughout various areas of French and European life and culture during the medieval and early modern periods.

As part of French death rituals, drums and bells helped signal the transition from life to death in a time when that boundary was particularly permeable. These instruments were part of a "death spectacle" that at once announced death, honored the deceased, and helped codify traditions of mourning. The status of these instruments as

communication tools, whereby the deaths of important citizens, mainly the nobility, were announced throughout communities, makes them an important tool of death rituals. This role is further reaffirmed with their pictorial representations in various *danse macabre* texts. In these singular representations of the universality of death, percussion instruments – particularly drums – act as rather grotesque reflections of bodies that vacillate between life and death. The parallels between flesh and bone and hide and wood or metal also offer a striking commentary on how each person has an impact on the world: like the peals of a bell or the beats of drum, memories of the dead will eventually fade.

Drums also became instruments of war, leading their audience to death in a different way. In early texts, before European troops had adopted drums on the battlefield, percussion instruments were a way to represent the enemy as more violent and undisciplined. However, as instruments such as *naqqara* were adopted by French armies, drumming became a seminal part of the French military identity. Symbols of political and social power, they were also useful tools for communicating information on the battlefield and imposing discipline on the troops. They also became well-known for inspiring men to greater bravery in war, even when invoked figuratively, as in the metrical Psalm translations that the Huguenots sung during battle. Considering the martial impact of various percussion instruments makes their inclusion in a variety of texts that represent and discuss war a telling sign of their power over the minds and bodies of people.

The order that percussion brought to war also extended to another part of French life: the court. As the foundation of dance music, drums provided the necessary rhythms

by which courtiers pursued and wooed prospective lovers or proved their quality as members of this rarefied society. As illustrated by the works of Arbeau, Castiglione, and Lafayette, among others, dance during the early modern period was elevated from a physical pastime to a courtly virtue. Eventually, it was defined as a "Rhetorique muette", allowing dancers to pose complex arguments to an audience without saying a word. By elaborating on the parallels between traditional (spoken) rhetoric and the parts of a dance, I confirm the validity of this classification and apply it to an analysis of passages describing dance scenes in *La Princesse de Clèves*.

As drums helped to define what it meant to be a member of the French court during the early modern period, they and other percussion instruments were also undergoing a transformation from exotic objects to integral parts of European culture during this time. In my analyses of percussion instruments described in a variety of travelogues from the thirteenth century to the end of the seventeenth, I created and applied a simple model for tracing the integration of these instruments into European culture: a journey from Encounter, to Acquisition, Reinterpretation, and finally, Reclamation. While the majority of the instruments discussed did not make the full transition from Other to familiar, they remain an important element in our understanding of how cultural exchange may be interpreted during this time in history. These instruments represent an important step in the European attempts to catalogue and confront other cultures, as well as demonstrating the long-ranging impact of these encounters on European cultural development.

By including percussion in texts (or conspicuously refusing to mention it), whether it be a drum, a bell, a rattle, or a xylophone, the authors I studied for this

project bring a new sonority into their descriptions; it is therefore impossible to avoid imagining the sounds of each instrument as one encounters them in a text. Despite all that we cannot know about how they actually sounded, I believe that this act of "listening" to the text is a valuable one, which should be undertaken not only by musicologists but also by literary scholars.

In this project, I focused this listening exercise within the boundaries of percussion, rather than including, as others have done, more melodically-oriented instruments. I believe that bringing percussion instruments more strongly into interdisciplinary work on text-music relations is a crucial step towards a deeper, more nuanced analysis of both canonical and more obscure texts. In my mind, it is often impossible to completely separate performance art from literature, especially in the case of lyrical/poetic works. Furthermore, percussion instruments may be a more accessible entry point to this kind of work for scholars without an extensive musical formation; understanding rhythms and time signatures does not require the ability to sightread a melodic line or a series of chords. Rhythm is, in fact, inherent in all literature, despite the fact that we tend to only make it explicit in our analyses of poetry. A greater awareness of the rhythmic qualities of literature, and a greater knowledge of the literal or symbolic use of percussion instruments allows us to analyze literature through a multi-modal approach. Furthermore, a greater awareness of the sociocultural origins of various percussion instruments encourages us to question what the author may be trying to convey about questions of identity, belonging, or change.

Each chapter offers at least one opportunity to push the research further. For example, the parallels between instruments and bodies can be developed; the idea of

music as something that can be embodied is not a new one, but it warrants a more focused study. What are the philosophical and theological implications of linking (percussion) instrument construction with the composition of a human body, especially when folk beliefs and non-Christian influences are taken into account? Are there other visual or textual representations of this parallel, beyond the *danse macabre* genre?

A comprehensive comparison of metrical Psalm tunes in the sixteenth century and extant marching rhythms would also be a fascinating project. I presented a single example of a possible link between these two musical genres in my second chapter, but there might be more tangible evidence of such a relationship. How would such a connection change our conception of the ways in which these Psalms were used?

The connection between dance, rhetoric, and courtly love, can be strengthened through a comparative study of various dance manuals and courtly literature. Do the French and Italian expectations of ideal courtiers differ from those of other countries? Are there other examples of dance-as-wordless-conversation that are as powerful as the scene describing the first dance between the Duc de Nemours and the Princesse de Clèves?

To continue analyzing the ways in which percussion instruments symbolize and influence culture, it will be useful follow a single instrument's development in both Europe and its native culture. Such a study would necessarily encompass a more ethnomusicological point of view than I presented in this project.

These are only a few of the possibilities that exist to continue this research, demonstrating how deeply percussion and musical practice permeate literature.

As a final illustration of the importance of this project, let us return to Agrippa d'Aubigné's *Les Tragiques*. In the preface to the work, "L'auteur à son livre," Aubigné uses an extended apostrophe to describe his text, calling it "mon enfant" and "mon fils," presenting it as an independent entity, who must speak for him against the corruption of the world – especially the Catholic church. Aubigné laments that this task will only affect a few, saying,

> Car, pour une âme favorable,
> Cent te condamneront au feu;
> Mais c'est ton but invariable
> De plaire aux bons, et plaire à peu.[1]

His book, and by extension Aubigné himself, is a single voice against the "monde pervers" of the late sixteenth century. However, he is still hopeful that this small act of rebellion and truth-telling will have a positive result, given that the Protestant minority has won battles against the Catholic forces before. One example of such a conflict appears later in this preface: a brief retelling of the Vaudois resistance against the attacks of Charles III, duc de Savoie.[2] In these lines, Aubigné clearly places the Vaudois in the role of the underdog, the David to Charles III's Goliath:

> Là l'enfant attend le soldat,
> Le père contre un chef combat ;
> Encontre le tambour qui gronde

[1] Agrippa d'Aubigné, *Les Tragiques*. Edition de Frank Lestringant (Paris : Gallimard, 1994) p. 66, vv. 45-48.

[2] Lestringant, "Notes," *Les Tragiques* 375.

Le psalme [sic] élève son doux ton,
Contre l'arquebouze la fonde,
Contre la pique le bâton.[3]

The simple weapons of the Vaudois and their status as untrained civilians render them sympathetic victims, hardly likely to put up much of a fight. The juxtaposition of the angry drum of the Duke's troops and the sweet or gentle Psalm tune further reinforces the position of the Vaudois as the wronged party; the relentless aggression inherent in the "tambour qui gronde" threatens to overwhelm the thinner sound of a sung Psalm tune. The beating of the drumstick against the hide of the drum and the calling of the horns foreshadow the sound of blows and the cries of pain that comprise the true "music" of battle. However, the seemingly-fragile song of the Protestant defenders signals who the victors of this battle will be; the psalm is an invocation of God's grace and a plea for his assistance, which is answered:

Là l'enseigne volait en vain,
En vain la trompette et l'airain ;
Le fifre épouvante au contraire
Ceux-là qu'il devait échauffer :
Ils sentaient que Dieu savait faire
La toile aussi dure que fer.[4]

[3] Aubigné 71, vv. 205-10.

[4] Aubigné 71, vv. 211-16.

The power of the Psalm has turned the Savoyards' music against them and given the Vaudois a divine armor. Furthermore, this description gives the reader the impression that the Vaudois' true combat was accomplished solely through music, rather than the brutal fighting that the Savoyard troops incited in reality. In this way, Aubigné underlines the innocence of the Vaudois as well as their strong faith in God's protection and efforts on their behalf. Such an implication also allows him to more easily paint the Duke's forces as uncomprehending cowards who "eurent peur, sans connaissance / Comment ils fuyaient et pourquoi."[5] This poetic, idealized version of the battle ends with the following stanza:

> Dieu fit là merveille, ce lieu
> Est le sanctuaire de Dieu ;
> Là Satan n'a l'ivraie mise
> Ni la semence de sa main ;
> Là les agnelets de l'Eglise
> Sautent au nez du loup romain.[6]

In Aubigné's version of this story, two kinds of music oppose each other, metonyms for two opposing confessions, and, by extension, the opposing spheres of the mundane and the divine. The almost hyperbolically martial music of the Catholic troops, with their drums, fifes, trumpets, and bugles blatantly casts them as the aggressors, whose music,

[5] Aubigné 71, vv. 221-22.

[6] Ibid. vv. 229-34.

as well as their superior numbers, strength, and equipment, is meant to overwhelm the children and fathers who are the only human defenders of the Vaudois.

The instruments, however, represent the easily corrupted Catholic church, whose pretended virtue – their ability to strengthen those who play them – is revealed to be false; relying on something other than God's power is the Catholics' undoing and the confirmation that their faith is specious. On the other hand, the Vaudois show the truth of their faith by relying on a different kind of martial music, one that they believe to have been passed directly from God to David, and then translated with that same grace. Therefore, by this power, they are protected from harm, their music and their faith vanquishing that of the Catholics. The final image in this section, that of the Vaudois as the lambs of God in contrast to the Roman wolf – an allusion to the pagan origin story of Rome's founding – reflects not only images of innocence, sacrifice, and Christlike grace on the part of the Vaudois, but also a fundamental questioning of the Christianity of the Catholic troops.

By focusing so much on the sonic conflict, Aubigné at once refuses to describe the brutal realities of war (perhaps the only instance of such a decision in the whole text) and ensures that the reader understands that this war is not only between men, but between opposing ideas of purity and corruption that permeate every aspect of life during this period. And, once more, we see how strongly representations of percussion instruments reverberate through text and time.

APPENDIX

Psaume 18

Diligam te Domine.

Argument: Hymne tresexcellent lequel David chanta au seigneur Dieu apres qu'il l'eut rendu paisible et victorieux sur Saul et sur tous ses autres ennemys, prophetisant de Jesuchrist en la conclusion du pseaulme.

Je t'aymeray en toute obeyssance,
Tant que vivray, ô mon Dieu, ma puissance.
Dieu, c'est mon roc, mon rempar hault, et seur,
C'est ma rençon, c'est mon fort deffenseur,
En luy seul gist ma fiance parfaicte,
C'est mon pavoys, mes armes, ma retraicte:
Quand je l'exalte, et prie en ferme foy,
Soubdain recoux des ennemys me voy.

Dangers de mort ung jour m'environnarent,
Et grands torrents de malings m'estonnarent.
J'estoys bien pres du sepulchre venu,
Et des filés de la Mort prevenu:
Ainsi pressé, soubdain j'invocque, et prie
Le Toutpuissant, hault à mon Dieu je crie:
Mon cry au ciel jusqu'à luy penetra,
Si que ma voix en son oreille entra.

Incontinent tremblarent les Campaignes:
Les fondements des plus haultes Montaignes
Touts esbranlés, s'esmeurent grandement:
Car il estoit courroucé ardamment.
En ses naseaulx luy monta la fumée,
Feu aspre yssoit de sa bouche allumée,
Si enflambé en son couraige estoit,
Qu'ardants charbons de toutes pars jectoit.
Baissa le Ciel, de descendre print cure,
Ayant soubz piedz une brouée obscure:
Monté estoit sur ung Esprit mouvent,
Volloit guindé sur les aeles du vent,
Et se cachoit dedans les noires Nues,
Pour Tabernacle autour de luy tendues.

En fin rendit, par sa grande clarté,
Ce gros amas de Nues escarté,
Gresles jectant, et charbons vifz en terre,
Au ciel menoit l'Eternel grand tonnerre,

L'Altitonant sa voix grosse hors mist,
Et gresle, et feu sur la terre transmist:
Lança ses Dards, rompit toutes leurs bandes,
Doubla l'esclair, leur donna frayeurs grandes.
A ta menace, et du fort vent poulsé
Par toy, Seigneur, en ce poinct courroucé,
Furent canaulx desnués de leur unde,
Et descouvertz les fondements du Monde.

Sa main d'enhault icy bas me tendit,
Et hors des eaux sain, et sauf me rendit:
Me recourut des puissants, et haulsaires
(Et plus que moy renforcés) adversaires.
A mes dangers, il preveut, et prevint:
Quand il fut temps secours de Dieu me vint,
Me mist au large, et si feit entreprise
De me garder, car il me favorise.

Or m'a rendu selon mon equité,
Et de mes mains selon la purité,
Car du Seigneur j'avoys suivy la voye,
Ne revolté mon cueur de luy n'avoye:
Ains tousjours heu devant l'oeil touts ses ditz,
Sans rejecter ung seul de ses editz.
Si qu'envers luy entier en tout affaire
Me suis monstré, me gardant de mal faire.
Or m'a rendu selon mon equité,
Et de mes mains selon la purité.

Certes, Seigneur, qui sçais telles mes oeuvres,
Au bon tresbon, pur au pur, te descoeuvres:
Tu es entier, à qui entier sera,
Et defaillant, à qui failly aura.

Les humbles vivre en ta garde tu laisses,
Et les sourcilz des braves tu rabaisses,
Aussi mon Dieu, ma Lanterne allumas,
Et esclairé en tenebres tu m'as,
Par toy donnay à travers la bataille,
Mon Dieu devant, je saultay la muraille.
C'est l'Eternel, qui entier est trouvé,
Son parler est, comme au feu, esprouvé,
C'est ung bouclier de forte resistance
Pour touts ceulx là, qui ont en luy fiance.

Mais qui est Dieu, sinon le supernel?
Ou qui est fort, si ce n'est l'Eternel?

De hardiesse, et force il m'environne,
Et seure voye à mes emprises donne:
Mes piedz à ceulx des Chevreulz faict esgaulx,
Pour monter lieux difficiles, et haultz:
Ma main par luy aux armes est apprise,
Si que du bras ung Arc d'acier je brise.

De ton secours l'escu m'a apporté,
Et m'a ta dextre au besoing supporté,
Ta grand' bonté, où mon espoir mectoye,
M'a faict plus grand encor' que je n'estoye:
Preparer vins mon chemin soubz mes pas,
Dont mes talons glissants ne furent pas:
Car ennemys sceu poursuyvre, et attaindre,
Et ne revins sans du tout les estaindre:
Durer n'on peu, tant bien les ay secoux,
Ains à mes piedz tresbucharent de coups:
Circuy m'as de belliqueuse force,
Ployant soubz moy, qui m'envahir s'efforce,
Tu me monstras le doz des ennemys,
Et mes hayneux j'ay en ruine mys:
Ilz ont crié, n'ont heu secours quelconques,
Mesmes à Dieu, et ne les ouyt oncques,
Comme la pouldre au vent les ay rendus,
Et comme fange en la place estendus.

Delivré m'as du mutin populaire,
Et t'a pleu chef des nations me faire,
Voyre le peuple, à moy peuple incongnu,
Soubz mon renom obeir m'est venu:
Maintz estrangers par servile contraincte
M'ont faict honneur d'obeyssance faincte,
Maintz estrangers redoubtants mes effortz,
Espouventés, ont tremblé en leurs fortz.

Vive mon Dieu, à mon saulveur soit gloyre,
Exalté soit le Dieu de ma victoyre,
Qui m'a donné pouvoir de me venger,
Et qui soubz moy les peuples faict renger:
Me garentit qu'ennemys ne me grevent,
M'esleve hault sur touts ceulx qui s'eslevent
Encontre moy, me delivrant à plain
De l'homme ayant le cueur d'oultrage plein.

Pourtant, mon Dieu, parmy les gens estranges
Te beneiray, en chantant tes louanges:
Ce Dieu, je dy, qui magnificquement

Saulva son Roy, et qui unicquement
David, son oingt, traicte en grande clemence:
Traictant, de mesme, à jamais sa semence.

Psaume 68

Que Dieu se monstre seulement
Et on verra soudainement
Abandonner la place :
Le camp des ennemis espars,
Et ses haineux de toutes parts
Fuir devant sa face.

Dieu les sera tous s'enfuir
Ainsi qu'on voit s'esvanouir
Un amas de fumee
Comme la cire aupres du feu
Ainsi des meschans devant Dieu
La force est consumee.

Cependant devant le Seigneur
Les iustes chantent son honneur
En toute esiouissance :
Et de la grand'ioye qu'ils ont
De voir les meschans qui s'en vont ;
Sautent à grand' puissance.

Chantez du Seigneur le renom,
Psalmodiez, louez son nom,
Et sa gloire immortelle :
Car sur la nue il est porté,
Et d'un nom plein de maiesté,
L'Eternel il s'appelle.

Resiouissez vous devant lui,
Qui est de poures sans appui
Le Père debonnaire :
Qui le droit des vesues soustient,
Devant Dieu, di-ie, qui se tient
En son sainct sainctuaire.

Dieu faict avoir pleine maison

A ceux qui ont longue saison
Sans nuls enfans soufferte :
Deliure les siens enferrez :
Tient les rebelles enserrez
En leur terre deserte.

Lors que ton peuple tu menois,
O Dieu, & que tu cheminois
Par le desert horrible :
Les cieux fondirent en sueur,
La terre trembla de la peur
De ta face terrible.

Le mont de Sina esbranlé
Dieu, Dieu d'Israel, a branlé
Regardant ton visage :
C'est toy, puissant Dieu qui as fait
Degouter la pluye à souhait
Dessus ton heritage.

Quant il a esté mal en poinct,
Tus l'as redressé de tout point
Là tes troupeaux demeurent.
Tu l'emplis de biens infinis,
Dont les plus poures tu fournis,
Que sans secours ne meurent.

C'est toy, Seigneur, par ta bonté
Qui as l'argument presenté
A l'armee pudique
De nos pucelles, qu'on ouit
Lors que l'ennemi s'enfuit,
Prononcer ce cantique,

Or s'en sont fuis les grans Rois,
Les grands Rois, di-ie, & leurs arrois,
S'en font fuis grand'erre :
Celles qui n'avoiyent onc sort
De la maison, ont desparti
Et leurs biens & leur terre.

Quoy que ternis & basannez
Des ennuis qu'on vous a donnez,
Vous ne differiez gueres

De ceux que l'on voit tous noircis,
D'avoir esté tousiours assis
A l'ombre des chaudieres :

Vous reluirez comme feroit
L'aile d'un pigeon que seroit
De fin argent brunie :

Dont le pennage estincellant,
Fait sembler l'aile en l'air volant,
De plus fin or iaunie.

Car des lors que Dieu tout-puissant
Alloit les grands Rois renuersant
En sa terre promise,
Le pays deuint blanc & beau,
Ainsi que la neige au coupeau
Du mont Salmon assise.

C'est le mont de Dieu merveilleux,
O mont de Basan orgueilleux,
Mont leué iusqu'aux nues !
Monts haut montez, d'où vient ceci
Que nous venez heurter ainsi
De vos roches cornues ?

Il plaist à Dieu de retenir
Ce mont ici pour s'y tenir,
Telle est sa bien-vueillance :
Parquoy le Seigneur desormais,
Voire, qui plus est, à iamais
Y fera demeurance.

Anges à grandes legions
Servans à Dieu par millions
Sont sa gendarmerie :
Entre laquelle en son sainct lieu,
Comme en Sina, nostre grand Dieu
Estend sa seigneurie.

O Dieu, tu es en haut monté,
Et de ton ennemi domté
As emmené la bande.
Tu as en apres mis à part
Tes dons, pour nous en faire part,
Par ta bonté tresgrande.

Tu as desfait tes ennemis,
Afin que parmi tes amis
Tu faces ta demeure.
Or loué soit Dieu tous les iours,
Dieu, di-ie, qui de son secours
Nous soustient & asseure.

Nostre Dieu nous est Dieu sauveur,
Dieu qui monstre aux siens sa faveur
Par mainte deliurance.
C'est l'Eternel, Seigneur tresfort,
Qui les issues de la mort
Retient en sa puissance.

C'est Dieu, & non autre qui rompt
A grands coups la teste & le front
De la troupe ennemie :
Frappant la perruque de ceux
Qui ne sont iamais paresseux
En leur meschante vie

Ie defendray mon peuple esleu,
Dit le Seigneur, car il m'a pleu :
De Basan l'orgueilleuse,
Sain & sauf tirer ie le veux,
Dehors du gouffre dangereux
De la mer perilleuse.

Si que ton pied bagné sera
Dans le sang, qui regorgera
De la tuerie extreme :
Et tes chiens le sang leicheront
De tes ennemis qui cherront,
Voire de leur chef mesme.

O Dieu, cheminer on t'a veu,
Mon Dieu, mon Roy, & apperceu,
Marcher avec ton Arche :
Chantres te deuançoyent de pres,
Les ioueurs d'instrumens après,
Marchoyent d'une desmarche.

Avec les tabours au milieu
Chantoyent les louanges de Dieu
Les filles assemblees,
Disans, O race d'Israel,
Louez le Seigneur eternel

Es sainctes assemblees.

Illec Ben-iamin est venu,
Qui de petit est deuenu
Chef des autres prouinces.
Iuda le fort s'y est trouué,
Zabulon y est arrivé,
Nephthali & ses Princes.

Ton Dieu t'envoye & te fait voir,
Israel, tout ce grand pouuoir,
Conduisant ton affaire.
O Dieu, qui nous veux tant aimer,
Vien ceste oeuure en nous confermer
Qu'il t'a pleu de nous faire.

De ton sainct temple ta bonté
Secoure sa saincte Cité,
Rois te feront offrandes :
Dissipe donc de toutes parts,
Auec leurs lances & leurs dards,
Ces armees tant grandes.

Renuerse tous ces forts taureaux,
Deffay des peuples les troupeaux,
Et toute leur bataille :
Ren les mutins humiliez,
Se faisans fouler à tes pieds,
En t'apportant leur taille.

Grans seigneurs d'Egypte viendront,
Mores à grand' haste estendront
Au seul Dieu les mains iointes.
Chantez à Dieu, Princes & Rois,
Psalmodiez à pleine voix
Ses louanges tressainctes.

Ie di, le Seigneur glorieux,
Plus haut monté que tous les cieux
Qu'il a formez lui-mesme :
Qui fait, alors qu'il veut tonner,
Haut sa grosse voix resonner,
Par son pouuoir supreme.

Confessez qu'il est tout-puissant,
Sur Israel resplendissant,
En sa gloire indicible :

Qui a dans le ciel esleué
Certain tesmoignage engraué
De sa force inuincible.

O Seigneur, tu es redouté
Pour ces lieux, où ta saincteté
Est ainsi respandue :
Dieu d'Israel, tu es celui
Qui es de ton peuple l'appui :
Gloire t'en soit rendue.

Psaume 118
Confitemini Domino, quoniam

Argument: C'est ung hymne par lequel David delivré de tous maulx et eslevé Roy sur tout Israel, rendit publicquement grâces à Dieu au tabernacle de l'alliance, là où d'ung grand cueur il celebra la bonté dont il avoit usé envers luy et là se monstre clairement figure de Jesuchrist.

Rendez à Dieu louange, et gloire,
Car il est bening, et clement.
Qui plus est, sa bonté notoire
Dure perpetuellement.

Qu'Israel ores se recorde
De chanter solennellement,
Que sa grande misericorde
Dure perpetuellement.

La maison d'Aaron ancienne
Vienne tout hault presentement
Confesser que la bonté sienne
Dure perpetuellement.

Touts ceulx qui du seigneur ont crainte,
Viennent aussi chanter comment
Sa bonte pitoyable, et saincte,
Dure perpetuellement.

Ainsi que j'estoys en destresse,
En invocquant sa Majesté,
Il m'ouyt, et de ceste presse
Me mist au large, à saulveté.

Le tout puissant, qui m'ouyt plaindre,
Mon party tousjours tenir veult,
Qu'ay je doncq que faire de craindre
Tout ce que l'homme faire peult?

De mon costé il se retire
Avecq ceulx qui me sont amys:
Ainsi, cela que je desire
Je verray en mes ennemys.

Mieulx vault avoir en Dieu fiance
Qu'en l'homme, qui est moins que riens:
Mieulx vault avoir en Dieu fiance
Qu'aux Princes, et grands terriens.

Beaulcoup de gens, c'est chose seure,
M'assiegearent de touts costés:
Au nom de Dieu, ce dy je à l'heure,
Ilz seront par moy reboutés.

Ilz m'avoyent enclos par grand' ire,
Enclos m'avoyent touts mutinés:
Au nom de Dieu, ce vins je à dire,
Ilz seront par moy ruinés.

Ilz m'avoyent enclos comme abeilles,
Et furent, les folz, et haultains,
Au nom du grand Dieu des merveilles,
Comme feu d'espines estainds.

Tu as, importun adversaire,
Rudement contre moy couru,
Pour du tout tresbucher me faire,
Mais l'Eternel m'a secouru.

Le Toutpuissant, c'est ma puissance,
C'est l'argument, c'est le discours
De mes vers pleins d'esjouyssance,
C'est de luy que j'ay heu secours.

Aux maisons de mon peuple juste
On n'oyt rien que joye, et confort,
On chante, on dit, le bras robuste
Du Seigneur a faict grand effort.

De l'Eternel la main adextre
S'est eslevée à ceste foys,

Dieu a faict vertu par sa dextre,
Telle est du bon peuple la voix.

Arriere ennemys, et envie,
Car la mort point ne sentiray,
Ainçoys demoureray en vie,
Et les faicts du Seigneur diray.

Chastié m'a, je le confesse,
Chastié m'a, puny, battu,
Mais point n'a voulu sa haultesse
Que par mort je fusse abattu.

Ouvrez moy les grands portes belles
Du sainct Temple aux justes voué,
Affin que j'entre par icelles
Et que Dieu soit par moy loué.

Ces grands portes sumptueuses
Sont les portes du Seigeur Dieu:
Les justes gens, et vertueuses,
Peuvent passer tout au milieu.

Là diray ta gloyre supreme,
Là par moy seras celebré,
Car en adversité extreme
Exaulcé m'as, et delivré.

La pierre par ceulx rejectée
Qui du bastiment ont le soing,
A esté assise, et plantée
Au plus hault du principal coing.

Cela, c'est une oeuvre celeste,
Faicte, pour vray, du Dieu des dieux,
Et ung miracle manifeste,
Lequel se presente à noz yeulx.

La voicy l'heureuse journée
Que Dieu a faicte à plein desir,
Par nous soit joye demenée,
Et prenons en elle plaisir.

Or te prions, Dieu nostre Pere,
En ta garde à ce coup nous tien,
Et en fortune si prospere
D'orenavant nous entretien.

Beneit soit qui au Nom tresdigne
Du Seigneur est venu icy:
O vous, de la maison divine,
Nous vous beneissons touts aussi.

Dieu est puissant, doulx, et propice,
Et nous donra lumiere à gré:
Lyez le boeuf du sacrifice
Aux cornes de l'autel sacré.

Tu es le seul Dieu que j'honnore,
Aussi sans fin te chanteray:
Tu es le seul Dieu que j'adore,
Aussi sans fin t'exalteray.

Rendez à Dieu louange, et gloyre,
Car il est bening, et clement.
Qui plus est, sa bonté notoyre
Dure perpetuellement.

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