

“LONGING EYES”
TWO EROTIC DEVOTIONS IN HENRY PLAYFORD’S
HARMONIA SACRA, 1688, 1693

By

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ABSTRACT

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Henry Playford’s two-book anthology of sacred song, *Harmonia Sacra* (London: 1688, 1693), is as much a songbook of erotic love as it is a hymnbook of religious devotion. To clarify an early modern conception of embodied devotion in England, I explore two songs from the collection with an eye to the erotic, the carnal, and the material.

Chapter 1 examines the frontispiece of Book 2 (1693) on which sacred cherubs and secular putti mingle under God’s name. Turning then to Henry Purcell’s *Divine Hymn*, “Lord, what is Man,” Z. 192, the song that immediately follows the frontispiece, I explore how Purcell merges sacred praise and erotic desire by combining two conventions of Restoration song for the stage: religious enthusiasm and lovesick madness. Given the market for the public exhibition of madness and insanity in early modern London, I conclude this chapter by suggesting that the merging of lovesick madness and religious enthusiasm contributed to the commercial appeal of *Harmonia Sacra*.

In Chapter 2, I analyze another of Purcell’s devotional lovesick mad songs in Book 2. In “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” Z. 196, Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, expresses erotic desire for her adolescent son. I draw from medieval and Renaissance representations of Christ as the “infant spouse” as well as Alexander Ross’s 1654 reading of Christ as Ganymede, to argue that portraying the Virgin in the throes of lovesickness was not unfounded.

Together, these two erotic songs suggest the spiritual and commercial importance of religious music—as devotional practice and as entertainment for purchase—for the seventeenth-century’s rising non-noble leisure class.

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents who brought me to church
and taught me all the motions.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS.....	x
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1.....	5
“THE MOST PROPER ENTERTAINMENT”	5
Religious enthusiasm.....	7
Lovesick madness	14
Conclusion: Laughing and giving.....	20
APPENDIX	24
CHAPTER 2.....	29
“LONGING EYES”: A MOTHER’S DEVOTION.....	29
Theological and visual contexts.....	33
An erotic, agitated text.....	34
The literature of abandonment.....	40
Volatility	44
Temporal displacement.....	45
Conclusion: “Where’s Gabriel now?”.....	49
APPENDIX	53
EPILOGUE.....	59
The book as a historical artifact.....	59
The book as an asylum.....	61
APPENDIX	69
BIBLIOGRAPHY	71

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. <u>Named Contributors to <i>Harmonia Sacra</i> (1688, 1693), organized by death year</u>	70
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. <u>Henry Purcell, “Lord, what is Man,” <i>H.S.</i> 1, mm. 1-3.....</u>	11
Figure 2. <u>Purcell, “Lord, what is Man,” mm. 7-13.....</u>	12
Figure 3. <u>Purcell, “Lord, what is Man,” mm. 17-28</u>	12
Figure 4. <u>Purcell, “Lord, what is Man,” mm. 36-8.....</u>	13
Figure 5. <u>Purcell, “Lord, what is Man,” mm. 108-21</u>	14
Figure 6. <u>Simon Gribelin II, frontispiece, <i>Harmonia Sacra</i>, Book 2, engraving, (London: Henry Playford, 1693)</u>	25
Figure 7. <u>Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>Cupid</i> (detail), unsigned, n.d. (<i>ca.</i> 1634)</u>	25
Figure 8. <u>Anthony van Dyck, <i>Cupid</i> (detail), 1620-40.....</u>	26
Figure 9. <u>Title page (detail), <i>Comes Amoris; or The Companion of Love</i>, Book 1 (London: John Carr, 1687)</u>	26
Figure 10. <u>Circle of Jacques Stella, <i>Triumph of Galatea</i> (detail), 1596-1657.....</u>	27
Figure 11. <u>Louis Desplaces, <i>Venus in the Water</i> (detail), after 1717</u>	27
Figure 12. <u>Israhel van Meckenem the Younger, <i>Morris Dance</i> (detail), second half of the fifteenth century.....</u>	28
Figure 13. <u>Henry Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” <i>H.S.</i> 2, mm. 1-3</u>	39
Figure 14. <u>Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 4-7.....</u>	39
Figure 15. <u>Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 8-27.....</u>	41
Figure 15 (<i>continued</i>). <u>Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 8-27</u>	42
Figure 16. <u>Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 106-14</u>	42
Figure 17. <u>Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 42-56.....</u>	46
Figure 18. <u>Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 53-62.....</u>	47
Figure 19. <u>Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 69-87.....</u>	48

Figure 20. <u>Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 92-105</u>	49
Figure 21. <u>The scribe Thomas (illuminator and writer) of Eberbach, Germany, <i>Commentary on the Song of Songs</i> (detail), twelfth century</u>	54
Figure 22. <u>Bolognese <i>Bible</i> (detail), with text: beginning of the <i>Song of Solomon</i>, historiated initial ‘O(scleturn me),’ thirteenth century</u>	54
Figure 23. <u>Simone Martini, <i>Boston polyptych: Madonna and Child</i> (detail), ca. 1321-25</u>	55
Figure 24. <u>Master of St. Veronica (Cologne School), <i>Madonna with the Sweet-pea Blossom</i> (detail), middle panel of triptych altarpiece, ca. 1410</u>	55
Figure 25. <u>Marco Zoppo, <i>Madonna and Child</i> (detail), ca. 1470</u>	56
Figure 26. <u>Hans Baldung Grien, <i>Holy Family</i> (detail), 1511</u>	56
Figure 27. <u>Egyptian relief, <i>Ramses [Ramesses] III and Concubine</i>, 19th Dynasty</u>	57
Figure 28. <u>Archaic Greek vase painting, <i>Theseus Wooing Ariadne</i>, 675-40 BCE</u>	57
Figure 29. <u>Hellenistic, <i>Cupid and Psyche</i>, bronze statuette</u>	58
Figure 30. <u>Romanesque, <i>Herod and Salome</i>, ca. 1140</u>	58
Figure 31. <u>Unattributed, “A Divine Song on the Passion of our Savior,” H.S. 2, mm. 26-30</u>	65
Figure 32. <u>Unattributed, “A Divine Song on the Passion,” mm. 47-60</u>	66

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

app.	.....	Appendix
<i>ca.</i>	.....	Circa
fig(s).	.....	Figure(s)
fol.	.....	Folio
l(l).	.....	Line(s)
mm.	.....	Measure(s)
MS	.....	Manuscript
n.d.	.....	No date
<i>H.S.</i> 1	.....	<i>Harmonia Sacra</i> , Book 1 (London: Henry Playford, 1688)
<i>H.S.</i> 2	.....	<i>Harmonia Sacra</i> , Book 2 (London: Henry Playford, 1693)
posth.	.....	Posthumous
<i>sic</i>	.....	Error in original
s.n.	.....	No publisher listed
st.	.....	Stanza

INTRODUCTION

To reproach mystics with loving God by means of the faculty of sexual love, is as though one were to reproach a painter with making pictures by means of colors composed of material substances. We haven't anything else with which to love.

Simone Weil, "Notebooks" *

Musicologists have little difficulty identifying the exchanges between Monteverdi's Nero and Poppea as libidinal...But what of the church music of this period, much of which exceeds in its passionate expressions of desire even the staged encounters between profane lovers?

Susan McClary, "Libidinous Theology" †

Scholarly studies of early modern sexuality have helped normalize discourses of the body in the cultural analysis and performance of music. Studies by Robert Kendrick (*Celestial Sirens*, 1996), Susan McClary (*Desire and Pleasure in Seventeenth-Century Music*, 2012), and Lindsay Johnson's recent doctoral dissertation (2013), have enthusiastically engaged the expression of sexuality (and its meaning) in religious music.¹ "Armed with theological and historical research," writes McClary, "I no longer seem to be personally responsible for dragging sex into the study of religion."² While these musicologists are adjusting our understanding of music and early modern devotion, they have limited their study to church and convent music of the Italian *seicento*. They have not, for instance, addressed religious music of regions outside of Italy, such as England.

This thesis acknowledges the ordinary demands on early modern devotional practice in England. I show two examples of how seventeenth-century devotional song invited the body to feel desire, frustration, and a host of other physical *sensations*. Unsurprisingly, the dramatic conventions

* Simone Weil, *The Notebooks of Simone Weil*, trans. Arthur Willis (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1956), 132-3.

† Susan McClary, *Desire and Pleasure in Seventeenth-Century Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 12.

¹ Lindsay Johnson, "Performed Embodiment, Sacred Eroticism, and Voice in Devotions by Early Seventeenth-Century Italian Nuns" (PhD dissertation, UCLA, 2013), ProQuest (1377154275); also of note is Judith Peraino's chapter on the sexuality of chant and Hildegard of Bingen's community of nuns, "Songs of the Sirens," *Listening to the Sirens* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

² Susan McClary, *Desire and Pleasure*, 130.

of music for the English stage inform the construction of embodied devotions in domestic settings. Likewise, study of devotional song may also benefit our understanding of stage music, especially when it represents religious institutions and practice as ridiculous or dangerous.

Henry Playford (d. 1709), London's most prominent music publisher, issued from his shop in the Savoy two books of religious songs and "dialogues" in 1688 and 1693. *Harmonia Sacra* (H.S.) brought together some forty-six devotional solo songs and anthems from a diverse group of seventeenth-century composers. Though scholars have often described the collection as consisting of "domestic devotions,"—implying piety and privacy—these songs would have been performed much like secular music for wealthy English households. The rising non-noble middle-class (or gentry) often held musical gatherings for amateurs as well as professional musicians.³ Employing musicians from the continent was especially prestigious, and sometimes the host and the servants performed along with hired musicians.⁴

Domestic music gatherings were especially important to Samuel Pepys (d. 1703), a naval officer, amateur musician, and a frequent patron of John Playford's music shop (Henry Playford's father), which he simply referred to as "Playford's."⁵ Pepys wrote copiously about domestic music making during the Restoration era, and he made music almost everyday, whether with friends in their homes, with strangers in taverns, or in his dining room for passing neighbors:

21 November 1660

At night to my viallin (the first time that I have played on it since I came to this house) in my dining room, and afterwards to my lute there, and I took much pleasure to have the neighbors come forth into the yard to hear me.

³ Grace Tin-Yan Tam, "The Penitential Theology of Henry Purcell as Expressed in His Sacred Songs" (PhD Diss., UCLA, 2005), 18, ProQuest (908200522).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ 13 February 1660.

He paid for music lessons for himself, his wife, and his boy servant, whom he called, “my boy.”⁶

More than a mere pastime for Pepys, music was a means of projecting his wealth and increasing his social cachet.

As Grace Tam has shown, *H.S.* targeted London’s rising middle classes, people like Pepys, as another tool of “self-fashioning”:⁷

It [is] inaccurate [to] picture a dichotomy between the feigned and the godly. If good manners could be construed as theatrical and dissimulative, so could religiosity and piety be a persona for self-fashioning. Even activities that are ostensibly private and inward might be used to project a front; private worship (except closet devotion) was rarely performed without audience.⁸

Domestic devotional music was as much for worship as it was a way to display the wealth and cultural competency of the host. This explains the varied skill levels required to perform *H.S.*’s contents—from professional solo songs to four-part anthems suitable for amateurs. But the music was also a guidebook for how to perform the motions of religion and how to *feel* toward God. In what follows, I explore two of *H.S.*’s solo songs with an eye to the erotic, the carnal, and the material. In analyzing these songs for their erotic content, two important ideas about seventeenth-century religious practice arise: religion was a form of entertainment, and the body intensified devotions rather than hindered them.

Chapter 1 shows how piety can so easily embrace eroticism in seventeenth-century song. I argue that religious zeal and erotic desire join together in the first song of Book 2 to form a hybrid devotion. Henry Purcell’s *Divine Hymn* “Lord, what is Man” employs two conventions of

⁶ Music was so important for Pepys that he reserved a special room (the “musique-room”) in his home for his boy servant to study music: “And with so much disorder, among others, in the musique-room the boy that was to sing a song, not singing it right, his master fell about his eares and beat him so, that it put the whole house in an uprore” (23 March 1660); “Comes Mr. Caesar, my boy’s lute-master, whom I have not seen since the plague before” (12 February 1665).

⁷ Tam, of course, uses Stephen Greenblatt’s term, “self-fashioning,” or the construction of personal identity through the adoption and display of socially authorized behaviors and appearances. Writers of conduct manuals disseminated socially acceptable behaviors while artists projected appearance in religious iconographies of Christ (for men) and the Virgin (for women). See Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

⁸ Tam, “The Penitential Theology,” 26.

representing Restoration madness on the stage: religious enthusiasm and lovesick madness. Given the market for the public exhibition of madness and insanity in early modern London, I conclude this chapter by suggesting that the merging of lovesick madness and religious enthusiasm contributed to the commercial appeal of *H.S.*

Chapter 2 then examines one of Purcell's best-known mad songs, "The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation" (*H.S.* 2). The song fits easily within the stylistic and topical conventions of Restoration mad songs for the stage, especially the lovesick madwoman. However, rather than projecting these tropes onto a faceless poet, such as in "Lord, what is Man," the song depicts the Virgin Mary in the throes of lovesick devotion for her son. Drawing from contemporary theological writing about and visual representations of the sexuality of Jesus Christ, I argue that portraying the Virgin Mary as a lovesick mad woman humanized her, thus grounding devotion in the body.

In the final section of this thesis, I attempt to work in my ideas about the immediacy, pleasure, humor, and theatricality of erotic devotions into two ways of understanding the collection as a whole. On the one hand the moralizing aims of *H.S.* resemble other moral and religious institutions in late seventeenth-century London. On the other, its conservationist approach to anthologizing song aspired to a record of religion not bound to any particular moment in English history. The erotic currents that run through *H.S.* accord with both interpretations: in the first case, erotic devotions trigger the late seventeenth-century impulse to institutionalize transgression and in the second, the flexibility of erotic content assists in capturing a half-century of English religious practice.

CHAPTER 1

“THE MOST PROPER ENTERTAINMENT”

Unlike the undecorated first book of Henry Playford’s *Harmonia Sacra* (1688), the second book (1693) opens with an engraving by Simon Gribelin II (d. 1733).¹ Above an empty landscape, three cherubs (or archangels) play the lyre, lute, and gamba on clouds (app., fig. 6). Higher still, two putti, or secular angels, brandish a banner bearing the anthology’s title. Overseeing all is the *Tetragrammaton*: the unspoken name of God. While the frontispiece clearly shows that the reader is opening a volume of sacred music, the placement of putti next to cherubs also declares that the book is a new meeting place for both sacred and secular music. Though painters and engravers of the period often depicted secular putti *in nudis*, they were sometimes clothed. Rembrandt van Rijn’s *Cupid* (1634) and Anthony Van Dyck’s *Cupid* (1620-40) are contemporaneous examples of covered secular angels, indeed the god of erotic love himself (app., figs. 7-8).² Partially clothed musical putti also crowned the title page to John Carr’s 1687 book of popular love songs, *Comes Amoris: Or, the Companion of Love* (app., fig. 9).³

In the end, Gribelin’s angels are putti not because they are bare or dressed, but because of what they brandish. Putti often festoon their secular deities with garlands of flowers or banners of fabric. The connection to profane love becomes obvious when collocated with contemporaneous

¹ Elizabeth Miller writes that “[Gribelin’s] prints had a significant influence on the development of printmaking in England...[He] engraved illustrations after his own or others’ designs for John Dryden’s translation of Charles Alphonse Du Fresnoy’s *De Arte Graphica* (London: J. Heptinstall for W. Rogers at the Sun against St. Dunstan’s Church in Fleetstreet, 1695 and 1716); Lord Shaftesbury’s *Characteristics* (London: no printer listed, 1711 and 1714); Alexander Pope’s *Works* (London: W. Bowyer for Bernard Lintion between the *Temple-Gates*, 1717)... His designs were still being reprinted in the 1750s,” “Gribelin, Simon, II,” *Grove Art Online*, *Oxford Art Online* (Oxford University Press), [accessed November 5, 2013], <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T034886>.

² Conversely, naked putti often populated sacred settings as well, such as in Titian’s paintings of the “Assumption” (1516-18) with swarming throngs of putti *in nudis* or in his “Madonna of the Pesaro Family” (1519-26) in which putti use the cross of Christ as a kind of plaything.

³ John Carr, *Comes amoris, or, The companion of love being a choice collection of the newest songs now in use: with a thorow bass to each song for the harpsichord, theorbo, or bass-viol*, vol. 4 (London: Printed by Nat. Thompson for John Carr and Sam. Scott, and are to be sold by John Carr at his shop, 1687-94), digital facsimile of the original in the Huntington Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel positions: Wing/274:07, 136:4-7).

paintings and engravings of Galatea and Venus with putti waving banners, such as the mid-seventeenth-century *Triumph of Galatea* from the circle of Jacques Stella (d. 1657) or Louis Desplaces's (d. 1739) early eighteenth-century engraving of *Venus in the Water* after Antoine Coypel (app., figs. 10-11). Against the images of Galatea and Venus—the first, an object of desire, the second, desire incarnate—Gribelin's putti twosome suggests secular themes of sensuality and carnal desire. Indeed, the frontispiece introduces (and instructs) that *H.S.* is both a hymnbook of religious devotion as well as a song collection of erotic entertainment. Poetry and song come together in *H.S.* to form a hybrid devotion for God, one that both edifies with religion and amuses with erotica.

Though much study has been devoted to sexualized devotion, or sacred eroticism, in early modern poetry, little attention has been given to, as Playford writes in his letter “To the Reader,” how musicians “heighten[ed] their Devotion” with music that “[darts] it self through the Organs of Sense...[warming] and [actuating] all the Powers of the Soul.”⁴ In this chapter, I examine how Henry Purcell, the most prolific contributor and editor of both books of *H.S.*, accomplishes this merging of the sacred and erotic in his *Divine Hymn*, “Lord, what is Man,” by combining two conventions of Restoration song: religious enthusiasm and lovesick madness.⁵ During the English Restoration, two types of musical mad characters dominated the stage: the religious fanatic and the lovesick man or woman.⁶ The questioning, persistent, and euphoric text of “Lord, what is Man” tells of Christ's

⁴ Henry Playford, “To The Reader,” *Harmonia Sacra*, Book 1, ed. (in part) Henry Purcell (London in the Savoy: Printed by Edward Jones for Henry Playford at his shop near the Temple Church, 1688), [iv-v], digital facsimile of the original in the University of Illinois Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel positions: Wing/506:08, 1709:06).

⁵ Henry Playford's preface “To the Reader” states that “the *Musical Part*, though some of them are now dead, yet their Composures have been review'd by Mr. *Henry Purcell*, whose tender Regard for the Reputation of those great Men made him careful that nothing should be published, which, through the negligence of Transcribers, might reflect upon their Memory” (*H.S.* 1, 1688); Margaret Campbell, *Henry Purcell: Glory of His Age* (London: Hutchinson, 1993), 109.

⁶ For more on these two distinct types of musical mad characters see Amanda Eubanks Winkler, “Society and Disorder,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Henry Purcell*, ed. Rebecca Herrissone (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 269-302 and Winkler, “O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note”: *Music for Witches, the Melancholic, and the Mad on the Seventeenth-Century English Stage* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006). Notable examples of lovesick mad characters include Celania in William Davenant's *The Rivals* (“My Lodging it is on the Cold Ground,” popular tune, 1667), Dido from Nahum Tate's *Dido and Aeneas*, Z. 626 (“Thy Hand Belinda...When I am Laid,” Henry Purcell, ca. 1688), Lyonel who sings several notable lovesick mad songs (“I'll Sail upon the Dog Star,” “I Sigh'd and I Pin'd,” and “There's Nothing so Fatal as

“wond’rous Love” but also invokes Cupid to inspire the lovesick poet. With sudden shifts of affect and meter, hyperbolic speech, chromatic intervals, virtuosic coloratura, delirious ranting, and dancing, Purcell’s setting of “Lord, what is Man” has all the musical excess and agitation of the lovesick mad song, but also the elated devotion of the religious song. As in the frontispiece, “Lord, what is Man,” situates profane love between music and God’s name. That is, before our music can ascend to God it must first pass through the body.

Religious enthusiasm

Religious “enthusiasm” was understood as an expression of madness even before Purcell’s time. M. Andreas Laurentius explained in his *Discourse of the preservation of the Sight: of Melancholike diseases; of Reumes, and of Old age* (1599) that heating the humor black bile could arouse aspirations to become a “Philosphere,” “Poet,” and to “prophesie,” a condition he called “*Enthousiasma*.”⁷ As Amanda Eubanks Winkler explains: “[Religious] Enthusiasm ... allowed the sufferer to circumvent reason, to create great works of art, or even to communicate with the divine.”⁸ Madhouses for the insane often treated religious enthusiasts, such as at the infamous Bethlem Hospital in London (known as

Woman”) in Thomas D’Urfey’s *A Fool’s Preferment; or the Three Dukes of Dunstable* (1688), Cardenio in D’Urfey’s *The Comical History of Don Quixote, Part 1* (“Let the Dreadful Engines,” Purcell, 1694), Marcella in *Don Quixote, Part 2* (“I Burn, I Burn,” John Eccles, 1694), Altisadora from *Don Quixote, Part 3* (“From Rosie Bow’rs,” Purcell, 1694), Phylante in John Oldmixon’s opera, *The Grove, or, Love’s Paradise* (“Underneath a Gloomy Shade,” Purcell, 1700), and Memnon in Peter Motteux’s revival of John Fletcher’s *The Mad Lover* (1701) with new music by Eccles. For a catalogue of Restoration musical drama see Curtis Price, *Music in the Restoration Theatre: With a Catalogue of Instrumental Music in the Plays, 1665-1713* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979). Also see Lucyle Hook, “Motteux and the Classical Masque,” in *British Theatre and the Other Arts, 1610-1681*, ed. Shirley Strum Kenny (Washington, D.C.: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1984), 105-15. Examples of religious enthusiastic characters include the prophetess, Cumana, in Nathaniel Lee’s *Sophonisba* (“Beneath a Poplar’s Shadow Lay Me,” Purcell, early 1690s) and the Brahmin priest in Motteux’s revised *The Island Princess* (“Enthusiastick Song,” Richard Leveridge, 1699), see Winkler, “Enthusiasm and Its Discontents: Religion, Prophecy, and Madness in the Music for *Sophonisba* and *The Island Princess*,” *The Journal of Musicology* 23, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 307-330, doi: 10.1525/jm.2006.23.2.307.

⁷ “when this humour groweth hot, by the vapours of blood, it causeth as it were, a kind of divine ravishment, commonly called *Enthousiasma*, which stirreth men up to plaie Philosophers, Poets, and also to prophesie: in such maner, as that it may seeme to containe in it some divine parts,” M. Andreas Laurentius, *Discourse of the preservation of the Sight: of Melancholike diseases; of Reumes, and of Old age*, trans. from the French by Richard Supplet (London: Imprinted by Felix Kingston, for Ralph Iacson, dwelling in Paules Church yard at the signe of the Swan, 1599), 86, digital facsimile of the original in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: STC/290:02).

⁸ Winkler, “O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note,” 118.

“Bedlam” at the time but now Bethlem Royal Hospital). In their book, *The History of Bethlem*, Jonathan Andrews (et al.) traces a growing public skepticism of religious inspiration in the seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries. Those who shouted prayers loudly, such as the poet Christopher Smart (d. 1771),⁹ or disturbed public meetings or neighbors with their vehement praying were “seen as vainglorious and deluded” and confined to hospitals, such as Bethlem, St. Luke’s Hospital for Lunatics, or in private madhouses for the well-to-do.¹⁰

For some, religion was not just an expression of madness but also a frequent cause of it. Mere exposure to religious instruction could drive one mad, especially the weak minded.¹¹ By 1810, William Black had already recorded that ten percent of Bethlem Hospital’s insane suffered from “Religion and Methodism.”¹² This figure exceeds other causes that Black tallied, including lovesickness (“Love”), substance abuse (“Drinks and Intoxication”), and “Venereal” disease (“Small pox,” “Ulcers and Scabs dried up”).¹³

At the same time, English playwrights made use of religious madmen and women as a dramatic device on the stage. As a general rule, the inclusion of madmen in plays indicated moral decline but also added an element of entertainment. Jacobean drama was particularly eager to represent religion as a gateway to madness, perhaps because two important London theaters, The Curtain and The Theater, were right next door to Bethlem.¹⁴ Correspondingly, in John Webster’s *The tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy* (1623)—a drama about religious corruption, murder, and sibling incest—eight madmen, among them a “priest,”¹⁵ perform a disorderly dance and sing the dissonant

⁹ Smart was confined from May 1757 to January 1763 in St. Luke’s Hospital for Lunatics (Bethnel Green, London).

¹⁰ Jonathan Andrews, et al., *The History of Bethlem* (London: Routledge, 1997), 337.

¹¹ Winkler, “O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note,” 118.

¹² Roy Porter, *Mind-For’d Manacles: A history of madness in England from the Restoration to the Regency* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 33-4.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Andrews, et al., *The History of Bethlem*, 132.

¹⁵ John Webster, *The tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy As it was presented priuathly, at the Black-Friers; and publiquely at the Globe, by the Kings Maiesties Seruants. The perfect and exact coppy, with diuerse things printed, that the length of the play would not beare in the presentment* (London: Printed by Nicholas Okes, for Iohn Waterson, and are to be sold at the signe of the Crowne, in

song: "O let us howle some heavy note!" The Duchess's twin brother (who is also suffering from lycanthropia) sends the madmen to purge his sister's "mellancholly" with laughter. Notable too is that the sister knows that the dance will not cure her, though she permits them to sing and dance anyway for entertainment value:

Seruant.

Your brother hath entended you some sport:
A great Physitian, when the Pope was sicke
Of a deepe mellancholly, presented him
With seuerall sorts of mad-men, which wilde obiect
(Being full of change, and sport,) forc'd him to laugh,
And so th'impost-hume broke: the selfe same cure,
The Duke intends on you...

Duchess.

Let them loose when you please,
For I am chain'd to endure all your tyranny.¹⁶

The literary critic Frederick Kiefer argues that the actors danced the morris, a disruptive dance with a host of subversive associations, including folk paganism, witchcraft, Satanism, sexual perversion, chaotic noise, and ethnic debasement¹⁷ (cross dressing and black facing were common while dancers also wore characteristic leg bells).¹⁸ According to Philip Stubbes (d. 1610?), the morris had a tense relationship with the church: dancers often invaded sanctuaries or churchyards with clamorous singing and contorted bodies in a display of physical and audible noise (app., fig. 12).¹⁹ In addition, their uncoordinated movement and lack of uniform clothing undercut the church's supposed homogeneous approach to ceremony.

Musical and rhetorical characteristics that indicated religious enthusiasm on the stage included hyperbolic speech, incoherent ranting on religious matters, feverish singing and dancing,

Paules Church-yard, 1623), 35-6, digital facsimile of the original in the British Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: STC/944:18).

¹⁶ John Webster, *The tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy* (1623).

¹⁷ It is thought that the name of the dances comes from the word, "Moor."

¹⁸ Frederick Kiefer, "The Dance of Madmen in *the Dutchesse of Malfy*," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 17 (1987): 211-33, in Winkler, "O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note," 35-8, 128; Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (London: Printed...by Richard Jones, 1583), M2^{r-v}, in Winkler, "O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note," 36.

¹⁹ Ibid.

and chromaticism in their music, which connoted effeminacy and melancholy.²⁰ In Thomas Middleton and William Rowley's *The Changeling* (1653) the character Lollio, a madhouse assistant, explains that he could identify madmen by their fine dancing:

and 'tis no wonder, your best Dancers are not the wisest men, the reason is, with often jumping they joul't their brains down into their feet, that their wits lie more in their heels then in their heads.²¹

The dancing madmen and fools in *The Changeling* are also aware that they are performing for payment, whether for earthly "coin" or spiritual "credit." Act three closes with a sobering scene of madmen and fools literally dancing "for their supper":

The Madmen and Fools dance.
'Tis perfect well fit, but once these strains,
We shall have coin and credit for our pains.²²

When combined with religious topics, dancing to dissonant songs marked the character as a religious fanatic and closely tied it with other theatrical portrayals of the mad.²³

Henry Purcell composed several songs for religious enthusiastic characters, including "Beneath a poplars shadow lay me," Z. 590. Written for a revival of Nathaniel Lee's *Sophonisba* in the early 1690s, the song appears as, "A Mad SONG" in Playford's song collection, *Orpheus Britannicus* (1698, posth.). In this mad song the erstwhile divinely inspired prophetess, Cumana, becomes a ranting lunatic.²⁴ "Sleepy" with the smell of "Poppies," Cumana seeks relief from "raging Fires" and divine thoughts that "blind" her. Underneath the shade of a tree, she performs a self-exorcism:

lest my Bosom shou'd bur'st, for the secret to pass, and the Fury get out;
I cannot, I will not, I cannot, I will not be vex't any longer.

²⁰ Winkler, "Society and Disorder," 294.

²¹ Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, *The changeling as it was acted (with great applause) at the Privat house in Drury-Lane, and Salisbury Court* (London: Humfrey Moseley, sold at his shop at the sign of the Princes-Armes in *St. Paul's Church-yard*, 1653), 16-7, digital facsimile of the original in the Folger Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: Wing/75:05).

²² Rowley and Middleton, *The Changeling* (Act 3).

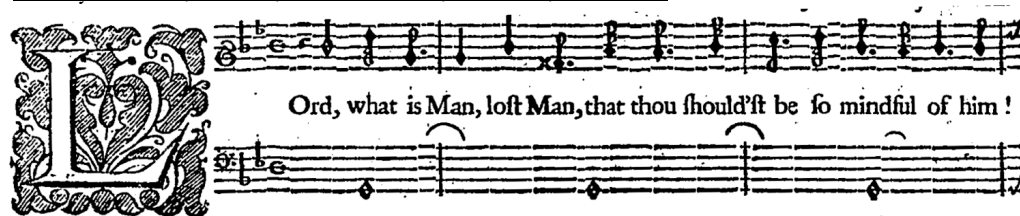
²³ Winkler, "Society and Disorder," 294.

²⁴ Ibid.

Significantly, Cumana's signals her divine madness with bursts of incoherent coloratura (mm. 1-5, 29-30, 38-9, 41), chromatic figures that droop and sigh (mm. 7-10), ecstatic, feverish speech (mm. 26-30) and a curtailed dance. While court culture increasingly associated dance with disciplining the body and aligning it with the social mores of the royal courts, the rapid shifts from a duple song to a triple dance (mm. 14-26) and back again (mm. 27-end) mark this as a dance for the disorderly, disturbed, and at the very least, undisciplined. Finally, because it was later extracted and included in Playford's *Orpheus Britannicus* (1698) this mad song had a performance history similar to the songs in Playford's *H.S.*

Published at the same time that *Sophonisba* went to the stage, "Lord, what is Man" is Purcell's setting of a devotional lyric by William Fuller, Lord Bishop of Lincoln (d. 1675). Questioning God directly, the text speaks with a persistent, direct voice: "Lord, what is Man, lost Man, that thou should'st be so mindful of him!" Purcell sets the text dissonantly with an eerie succession of descending intervals that end on a grating F-sharp above the G-minor continuo foundation—emphatic of the fall of "lost Man" (fig. 1).

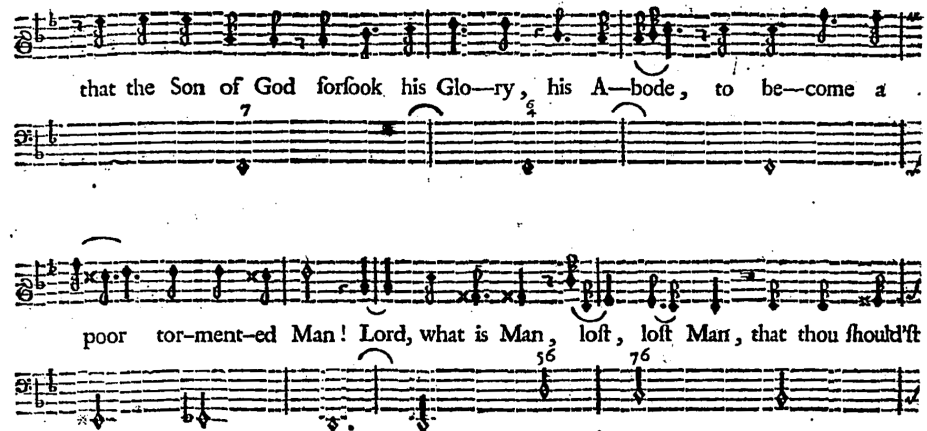
Figure 1. Henry Purcell, "Lord, what is Man," *H.S.* 1, mm. 1-3.



As in "Beneath a poplars shadow lay me," chromaticism pervades Purcell's setting of "Lord, what is Man," indicating the unsteadiness of the singer. The vocal line croons "poor tormented Man" (mm. 9-10) over a chromatically falling bass line (F—E-natural—E-flat—D) (fig. 2).²⁵

²⁵ There is also a deliberate cross relationship (B-natural over a G-minor chord) that ends the phrase, "that Man shou'd be assum'd into the Deity" (mm. 39-40).

Figure 2. Purcell, “Lord, what is Man,” mm. 7-13.



With rising chromatic intervals, the singer eventually answers the opening question: Christ died out of “wondr’ous Love! for me” (mm. 21-6) (fig. 3).

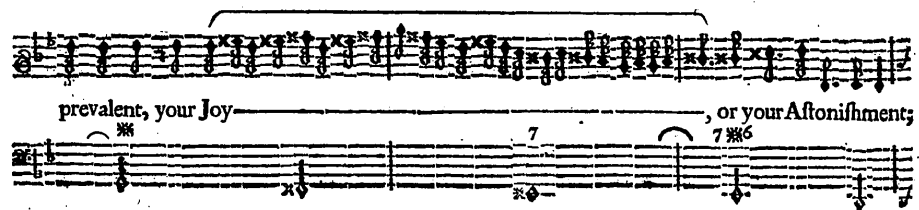
Figure 3. Purcell, “Lord, what is Man,” mm. 17-28.



Virtuosic vocal displays are also a musical expression of the religious enthusiast’s feverishness. The febrile coloratura that ends the recitative section (on the word, “Joy”) anticipates the song’s wild ending (fig. 4). The speech here is also hyperbolic. Extending over a range of an octave and a fourth,

Purcell juxtaposes divine “Joy” and “Astonishment” with leaps of fourths in a high tessitura and the repetitious striking on D-natural. The octave descent on the final word brings the statement to a dramatic close.

Figure 4. Purcell, “Lord, what is Man,” mm. 36-8.



Similar to Cumana, the singer moves from an expository section in duple to an ungainly dance in triple meter (mm. 46-92). A final section of twenty-six iterations of “Hallelujah” reinforces this expression of religious enthusiasm—an impassioned display of delirious ranting and excess (mm. 92-121). Notable, too, is that Purcell seems to have added the “Hallelujah” section for ecstatic impact (fig. 5). Fuller’s poem, which Nahum Tate late published in his textual companion, *Miscellanea Sacra* (1696), does not close with a “Hallelujah.”²⁶

The hyperbolic speech on religious matters, chromaticism, effusive coloratura, the ungainly dance in triple meter, and the final ranting “Hallelujah” all mark this song as one of religious fervor, and the singer a religious enthusiast.

²⁶ Nahum Tate, comp., *Miscellanea Sacra, or, Poems on Divine and Moral Subjects* (London: Hen. Playford in the Temple-Change, in Fleetstreet, 1696), 5, digital facsimile of the original in Union Theological Seminary Library, New York, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: Wing/370:04).

[3]

The musical score consists of six systems, each with a vocal staff (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment staff (bass clef). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are written below the vocal staff.

le-lu-jab, Hal-le-lu-jab, Hal-le-lu-jab,

Hal-le-lu-jab, Hal-le-

lu-jab, Hal-le-lu-jab, Hal-le-lu-jab, Hal-le-lu-jab, Hal-

le-lu-jab, Hal-le-lu-jab, Hal-

le-lu-jab.

Though some of these musical features, when combined with religious subject matter, indicate one kind of madness known as religious enthusiasm, “Lord, what is Man” is also evocative of lovesickness madness. Driven mad from disappointed love, the lovesick mad character exhibited

obsessive, irrational, and melancholic behavior while also relishing the excesses of passion that undercut the cultural elite's principled self-control and moderation. Though indebted to Shakespeare's lovesick Ophelia (1603), conventions of portraying lovesick madness crystallized during the Restoration with the emergence of specialist actresses, especially Letitia Cross, Anne Bracegirdle, and Moll Davis.²⁷

Actors and actresses required mastery of their text, music, and comportment to portray lovesick madness on the Restoration stage convincingly. Though physicians, such as Jacques Ferrand and Thomas Burton, contested the boundaries between melancholy and madness, the physical expression of lovesick madness bound itself to women's bodies.²⁸ Principally disseminated by Renaissance Neoplatonists, such as Marsilio Ficino and others, lovesickness in men, or "lovesick melancholy," became cultivated intellectualism rather than a disorder of the body.²⁹ While causing social alienation, masculine melancholy improved retention of memory, sharpened one's mind, and was a mark of creative genius.³⁰ In his groundbreaking book, *Mind Forg'd Manacles*, Roy Porter synthesizes several views on melancholy and creativity:

In Aristotle's formulation, the man superabundant in black bile [melancholic] was of course prey to fear, suspicion and misanthropy; yet such a melancholy would also characteristically be sharp of intellect, trenchant in criticism, acute in perfection, pungent in expression—a genius no less.³¹

In exchange for their isolation, melancholic men received enriching and productive private thoughts.

²⁷ For more on the careers of Anne Bracegirdle and Moll Davis see, Curtis Price, *Henry Purcell and the London Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 86-9, and Winkler, "O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note," 96-105. For a discussion on celebrity in the eighteenth century, see Cheryl Wanko, *Roles of Authority: Thespian Biography and Celebrity in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University, 2003).

²⁸ Winkler, "O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note," 116.

²⁹ Ibid., see also ibid., "Society and Disorder," 294.

³⁰ Ibid., "O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note," 116 quoting Marsilio Ficino's reading of Aristotle's *Problemata*, "Why is it that all those who have become eminent in philosophy or politics or poetry or the arts are clearly melancholics?" *Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art* (New York: Basic Books, 1964), 18-29; Andreas Laurentius who claimed that melancholy "maketh men witty, and causeth them to excel others," *A Discourse in the Preservation of the Sight...* (London: Imprinted by Felix Kingston for Ralph Jacson, 1599), 86; and Robert Burton, "their memories are most part good, they have happy wits an[d] excellent apprehensions," *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, book 1 (Oxford: Printed by Iohn Lichfield and Iames Short for Henry Cripps, 1621), 383-84.

³¹ Porter, *Mind Forg'd Manacles*, 21.

Back to women. In *The History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault theorizes that the late early modern female body—in a process he calls, “hysterization”—came to be understood as “thoroughly saturated with sexuality.”³² From then on, medical knowledge and practices absorbed women’s bodies, and because medical knowledge is civic knowledge, it is at this juncture that women’s bodies entered public discourse. The female body was then—as both a subject of medical intrigue and the reproductive center of society—the most visible body that stood at the vector of sex and public knowledge. Perhaps this is why mad songs for women characters greatly outnumbered those for men of the period.³³ That is, the madness of women rather than that of men was far more visible and available to public audiences in late seventeenth-century drama.

With the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, women appeared more frequently on stage as boys no longer played female roles to preserve the actresses’ propriety.³⁴ Permitted to perform on stage for the first time, the mad woman used music and text but also her body to signal her lovesickness. Erratic motions, aimless wandering, and stripping and tearing at her clothing signified the irrationality of the character and its close association with women’s bodies. As Winkler points out, embodied lovesickness also created a “sexually charged fantasy of female transgression” for the appetites of Restoration audiences.³⁵

Adding to the sexual fantasy of actresses, rumors of the sexual escapades of actresses off the stage infused the spectacle of performing lovesick mad songs *on* the stage. Winkler writes that increasingly, “actresses made their names playing bawdy roles in comedies, cross-dressing (sometimes singing and dancing) in breeches to show off their legs, which under normal circumstances were modestly hidden.”³⁶ She continues that “while this performance practice

³² Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1 (New York: Random House, 1978), 103-4.

³³ Winkler, “Society and Disorder,” 291.

³⁴ Ibid., “*O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note*,” 64.

³⁵ Ibid., 85-6.

³⁶ Ibid., “Society and Disorder,” 278.

increased [actresses] popularity...it also cause them to be labeled as whores.”³⁷ This may have been true to some degree as reports of actresses being paid for sex survive. Letitia Cross (d. 1737), for instance, who became famous for her portrayals of lovesick women and for whom Purcell wrote the song, “From Rosie Bow’rs” in Thomas Durfey’s *The Comical History of Don Quixote, Part 3* (1694) may have received 500 English guineas for performing sexual favors for Peter the Great during his 1698 visit to London.³⁸ Rumors of actresses’ lasciviousness, true or not, gave their stage characters an erotic intrigue even before they began to sing.

Perhaps only twelve years old at the time that *Don Quixote* premiered in 1694, the young Letitia Cross’s portrayal of Altisadora demanded erotic and ribald use of her body. “Perhaps too young [to be Don Quixote’s lover],” begins Altisadora,

but I’ll so swell my Breasts, and heave and fall, and mould ‘em with my Hands to make ‘em grow—pull down my Stays, that they may shew themselves, and Jett it up and down.³⁹

Here, expressing Altisadora’s lovesick madness demands bawdy exhibition of the body. Typical of Restoration mad songs, ragged Altisadora also indicates her lovesick madness by wanting to “lay down [her] Love-sick Head,” and threatens to “thaw” her frozen heart or “drown” while pulling out her hair and disrobing (“Robes, Locks shall thus be tore”).

In addition, D’Urfey’s stage directions in the original publication of the play indicate how Cross was to perform lovesickness physically. Altisadora is to “[Jett] up and down the Stage,” in a “*freakish Fit*.”⁴⁰ In the middle of her conversation with Don Quixote she must also stop suddenly to “[Sigh], and [look] amorously on him.”⁴¹ Thus, Cross’s success at transmitting Altisadora’s

³⁷ Winkler, “Society and Disorder,” 278.

³⁸ Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson, “Cross, Letitia,” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), [accessed March 18, 2014], <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/06873>.

³⁹ Thomas D’Urfey, *The comical history of Don Quixote as it is acted at the Queens Theatre in Dorset-Garden, by Their Majesties servants, Part 3* (London: Printed for Samuel Briscoe, 1694-1696), 48, digital facsimile of the original in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: Wing/93:01).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 47-8

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

lovesickness to audiences depended as much on her physical delivery of her character as on her music and text.

It is no surprise, then, that the tensions between effeminizing sexuality and creativity in “Lord, what is Man” come to a head in a dance. To begin to see the erotic strains that grow into lovesickness in “Lord, what is Man,” we need to take a closer look at the text of the dance:

Oh! for a Quill drawn from your Wing,
To write the Praises of th'Eternal Love,
Oh! for a Voice, like Yours, to sing
That *Anthem* here, which once you sung Above. [ll. 15-8]

But whose wing? And what kind of “quill” would be worthy to write of love that is “Eternal”? I suggest that the wing is that of the blind son of Venus and god of Love, Cupid. To be sure, the depulming of Cupid’s wings to write of love has antecedents in earlier poetry. Richard Crashaw’s collection of sacred epigrams, *Epigrammatum sacrorum liber* (1634), opens with just such a reference in the “Lectori” (“To the reader”):

Saepe puer dubias circum me moverat alas;
Jecit & incertas nostra sub ora faces.
Saepe vel ipse sua calamum mihi blandus ab ala,
Vel matris cygno de meliore dedit.
Saepe Dionaeae pactus mihiserta coronae;
Saepe, Meus vates tu, mihi dixit, eris.⁴² [ll. 43-8]

[Often the boy moved his fluttering wings around me and hurled his unpredictable darts around my face. Often that flatterer gave me a quill from his own wing or a better one from his mother’s swan. Often he promises me garlands from the Dionaeian crown; often he said to me “You will be my poet.”]⁴³

⁴² Richard Crashaw, *Epigrammatum sacrorum liber* (Cantabrigiae: Academiae celeberrimae typographeo, 1634), digital facsimile of the original in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: STC/830:10).

⁴³ Claire Warwick, trans., “‘Love Thou Art Absolute’: Richard Crashaw and the Discourse of Human and Divine Love,” in *Sacred and Profane: Secular and Devotional Interplay in Early Modern British Literature*, ed. Helen Wilcox, Richard Todd, and Alasdair MacDonald (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1996), 240; Crashaw would later publish a poem in his *Steps to the Temple. Sacred Poems, With other Delights of the Muses* (1646), demonstrating how devotional poetry could serve erotic ends. In “On Mr. G. Herberts book,” the speaker presents George Herbert’s book of sacred lyrics, *The Temple* (1633), as a gift to a “Gentlewoman.”

Here, the poet takes a quill from either Cupid or the swan of Venus. That Cupid invades Fuller/Purcell's sacred song in much the same way charges it with a similar erotic energy. As in Crashaw's sacred epigrams, the poet in "Lord, what is Man" is similarly struggling to express divine love and calls on Cupid to inspire his pen.

In fact, Cupid freely invades both secular and sacred literature of the period, including Purcell's mad songs for the irrational and obsessed lovesick mad characters. One of Purcell's best-known lovesick mad songs, "From Rosie Bow'rs where Sleep's the God of Love" is the final song in D'Urfey's *Don Quixote* (1694). "From Rosie Bow'rs" exhibits many of the same musical and rhetorical features of the religious enthusiast but is about disappointed love. Altisadora's song shifts wildly from an invocation of Cupid, the god of love, beseeching "little waiting Cupids" to come "hither" to a "brisk and Airy" dance. Performed on stage the year after the publication of *H.S. 2*, Altisadora's mad song is similar to "Lord, what is Man," in that it also features eruptions of coloratura (mm. 6, 35-6) and two short dances in triple time that call on Cupid and putti for support before moving into a final section of excessive ranting that begins with feverish iterations of the words "No, no, no, no, no" and "Mad, mad, mad, mad, mad" (mm. 134-6).⁴⁴ This chatter-style establishes a clear relationship between language and comedy, and within the context of Bedlamites as a source of humor, the chatter-text is meant to be humorous rather than frightening. Indeed, the tongue twisting, "chatter-style" texts of these devotional and theatrical songs may even anticipate the patter songs of eighteenth-century *opera buffa*.

Illustrating that mad songs were comical is the fact that Altisadora's mad song is "feigned." That is, Altisadora intends to appear lovesick to Don Quixote to "teize" and mock him, creating a comical "Scene" for onlookers:

I intend to teize him now with a whimsical variety, as if I were possess'd with several degrees of Passion—sometimes I'll be fond, and sometimes freakish; sometimes

⁴⁴ Winkler, "Society and Disorder," 292.

merry, and sometimes melancholy,—sometimes treat him with Singing and Dancing, and sometimes scold and rail as if I were ready to tear his eyes out. Go you to your peeping place, and you shall see such a Scene.⁴⁵

Not only does this scene suggest that audiences understood the behaviors of madness, but that stage actors emulated the insane in the service of comedy.

When compared to Purcell's religious and lovesick mad songs, we see that in "Lord, what is Man" religious enthusiasm and lovesickness merge. Thematically, the song exhibits the fanaticism of the religious song but resonates with mid-century erotic poetry and dance by invoking Cupid. Textually, the song exhibits the excess of the mad song in its hyperbolic language and excessive iterations of "Hallelujah." Finally, the dramatic shifts in meter and affect, the wide intervallic leaps and chromaticism, and torrid vocal virtuosity are musically evocative of both lovesickness and religious enthusiasm concurrently portrayed on the English stage. Moreover, understanding these devotional songs as theatrical performances of madness opens up new ways to hear and see them as devotional comedy.

Conclusion: Laughing and giving

Early modern madhouses, such as Bethlem, served a double-function as edifying institutions of Christian charity and as sites for secular entertainment.⁴⁶ A place to contain and care for the insane, sightseers in London considered Bethlem Hospital a "must see." A popular seventeenth-century tour through the city, called Crook's tour, stopped at Westminster Abbey, Whitehall, London Bridge, the Tower, the theaters and the gardens of London, The Zoo, and Bethlem, and two known travel guides for foreign visitors featured it—*Les Délices d'Angleterre* (1707) and *Travels in London*

⁴⁵ D'Urfey, *The Comical History of Don Quixote*, Part 3, 46.

⁴⁶ The motivations to give to charity were diverse, from Christian duty to the community to building credit in Heaven, from securing family legacies to affirming non-religious loyalties, see Andrews, et al., *The History of Bethlem*, 170.

(1710).⁴⁷ Visitors as diverse as Samuel Pepys, Lord Percy, Ben Jonson, and Abraham Cowley wrote about their recreational visits to Bedlam.⁴⁸ As reported by these writers, the public came to donate to London's poor insane as much as to laugh at them, thereby satisfying their moral obligation to improve their community while also affirming their social superiority.⁴⁹

Seizing the public demand for voyeurism, Bethlem nurtured a culture of spectacle around the mad: they boosted their donations by commissioning priests to deliver sermons, sponsored processions of dignitaries, hospital staff, and poor children, while (not unlike today) vanity plaques displayed the names of wealthy benefactors to hospital visitors that secured their legacy among the moral elite.⁵⁰ Around 1670, the governors of Bethlem constructed a more opulent building and moved to Moorfields.⁵¹ The new building privileged the appetites of visitors over the needs of the patients that resided there; thus, the galleries and the front gardens were off limits to patients, and in the latter case eliminated the need to build an impenetrable wall so that the hospital was more visible to the passing public.⁵² Though the pamphleteer Thomas Tryon admonished those who visited Bedlam for entertainment alone, he also “[acknowledged] that Gallant Structure of *New Bethlam* to

⁴⁷ Quarell and Mare, op. cit. 51-2; J. Beeverell, *Les Délices de la Grand Bretagne* (Leiden: P. vander Aa, 1707), in Andrews, et al., *The History of Bethlem*, 186-7.

⁴⁸ Samuel Pepys in 1669, paid for a holiday in London for his cousin's children “to see Bedlam” and to shop, dance, dine, and visit the theater, op. cit. ix, 19 February 1669, 454; Thomas Tryon recorded in his *Dreams and Visions* (1689), that the hospital “[admitted] such Swarms of People, of all Ages and Degrees” visiting during their spare time and on “Holy-dayes,” *A treatise of dreams & visions* (London: s.n., 1689), 289, digital facsimile of the original in the Huntington Library and Gallery, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: Wing/2158:25); an Irish visitor to London (Mockmode) in George Farquhar's *Love and a Bottle* (1697), mentions only two places he wants to see: Westminster Abbey “and Bedlam”: “Of all the Rarities of the Town, I long to see nothing more than the Poets [Corner in Westminster Abbey] and Bedlam,” George Farquhar, *Love and a bottle a comedy, as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane by His Majesty's servants*, (London: Richard Standfast, next door to the *Three-Tun Tavern*, near Temple-Bar; and Francis Coggen, in the *Inner-Temple-lane*, 1699), 20, digital facsimile of the original in the Huntington Library and Art Gallery, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: Wing/379:37); in Andrews, et al., *The History of Bethlem*, 187.

⁴⁹ See Tryon's admonishment of visitors to Bethlem that provoke the unwell: “First, Tis a very Undecent, Inhumane thing to make, as it were, a *Show* of those Unhappy Objects of *Charity*...to the Idle Curiosity of every Boy, petulant Wench, or Drunken Companion, going along from one Apartment to the other, and Crying out; This Woman is in for Love; That Man for Jealousie; He has Over-studied himself, and the Like. Secondly, This staring Rabble seldom fail of asking more then an hundred impertinent Questions. --- As, what are you here for? How Long have you been here, &c. ...the wicked people, who think it a rare Diversion...fall a Laughing and Hooting,” *A treatise of dreams & visions*, 291-2.

⁵⁰ Andrews, et al., *The History of Bethlem*, 170, 182.

⁵¹ Ibid., 152.

⁵² Ibid., 170, 182.

be one of the Prime Ornaments of the City of *London*, and a Noble Monument of *Charity*.”⁵³ Still, the joining of Christian obligations and the exploitation of the sick for entertainment bothered few.

Harmonia Sacra, as a new anthology, aligns well with a culture that comfortably combines religion with leisure. Just as Bethlem Hospital exploited the insane for social and spiritual capital, so did Henry Purcell’s “Lord, what is Man” exploit conventions of the religiously and lovesick mad to amuse while it edified. In both cases, the rising non-noble leisure class could advance their spiritual wellness by observing the unwell. It should be noted too that as a published book for sale, *H.S.* was a commercial enterprise as much as it was fine religious art.⁵⁴ In every edition, Playford advertised secular and sacred songbook collections next to each other;⁵⁵ in the prefatory material, Playford calls the anthology, “the most proper Entertainment” for the “best of Men.”⁵⁶ And so we come back to what the frontispiece had introduced from the beginning: Early Moderns had no trouble merging the sacred and the secular, and they sought new formats (songbooks) and new venues (the home) in which to do so. Said another way, the public had no qualms about purchasing a piece of sacred erotica for domestic entertainment.

Lovesick madness is not only a condition of the inspired poet. Though “Lord, what is Man” does not have a dramatic context, devotional songs of lovesickness often have historical settings with well-defined characters. In the next chapter, I argue that the erotic currents in *H.S.* leave no religious subjects untouched. I engage not only gendered lovesick devotion but also a mother’s

⁵³ Tryon, *A treatise of dreams & visions*, 290.

⁵⁴ The *London Gazette* and *The Term Catalogue* first advertised the anthology, and subscription buyers could feel that they were patrons of nuanced London art. In his “To the Reader,” (*H.S.* 1), Playford calls his subscribers “worthy” and “the best of Men,” *London Gazette* 2253, (20-23 June 1687), in *ibid.*, 2291 (31 October-3 November 1687); Susan Tara Brown, “English Devotional Song as a Mirror of Seventeenth-Century Anglicanism: A Thematic and Musical-Rhetorical Analysis of Henry Playford’s *Harmonia Sacra*” (PhD diss., Claremont Graduate School, 1995), 96-9, Proquest (907531522).

⁵⁵ Playford advertises *Apollo’s Banquet*, a collection of secular instrumental music, just above “a Large Imperial Bible...fit for any cathedral or chapel,” Playford, *H.S.* 2 (1693), viii.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, “To the Reader,” *H.S.* 1 (1688).

devotion in examining the longing of the Virgin for her child Jesus in Purcell's "The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation," Z. 196.

APPENDIX



Figure 6.

Simon Gribelin II, frontispiece, *H.S. 2*, engraving (London: Henry Playford, 1693).



Figure 7.

Rembrandt van Rijn, *Cupid* (detail), unsigned, n.d. (ca. 1634), canvas, 74.5 x 92 cm., Bredius 470, Vienna Museum, Lichtenstein, in Gary Schwartz, *The Rembrandt Book* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2006), 276.



Figure 8.

Anthony van Dyck, *Cupid* (detail), 1620-40, in Gustav Glück, *Van Dyck: Des Meisters Gemälde in 571 Abbildungen* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlag-Anstalt, 1931), 266.



Figure 9.

Title page (detail), *Comes Amoris; or The Companion of Love, the first book* (London: John Carr, 1687).



Figure 10.

Circle of Jacques Stella, *Triumph of Galatea* (detail), 1596-1657, oil on canvas, unframed: 109.9 x 97.8 cm., The J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Center (78.PA.194), Los Angeles.



Figure 11.

Louis Desplaces, *Venus in the Water* (detail), after 1717, engraving, Bibliothèque National, Paris (cat. n° 72), in Nicole Garnier, *Antoine Coypel, 1661-1722* (Paris: Arthena, 1989), fig. 142.



Figure 12.
Israhel van Meckenem the Younger, *Morris Dance* (detail), second half of the fifteenth century, copper plate engraving, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

CHAPTER 2

“LONGING EYES” A MOTHER’S DEVOTION

Nahum Tate’s poem, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation” carries the subtitle: “When our Saviour (at *Twelve Years of Age*) had withdrawn himself, &c. *Luke 2. V. 42.*” The biblical allusion appended to the subtitle tells the story of the Virgin Mary frantically searching for her missing son. She later finds him teaching rabbis in the temple:

And when he was twelve years old, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it*...
And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.
And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.
And when they say him, they were amazed.¹

[*Bible*, 1680; Lk 2: 42, 46-8]

As the only canonical account of Christ’s adolescence, it marks a significant moment for both mother and child: Jesus separates from his mother for the first time, and in a precocious display of rhetorical power, it is also the first act that signals his maturation from Jesus to the Christ. In reading Jesus’ life through his relationship with his mother, Albert Korschorke points out that

the stages in the life of the Christian Messiah can be read as stages in a process of detachment, which compels the grown son, filled by the sense of spiritual mission, to alienate himself from his origins and his mother...the Gospels present something like a model of emancipation, and their power lies in the fact they do not conceal the resulting conflicts.²

Conflicts indeed, for Jesus ultimately rejects his earthly family, only to be rejected by his disciples on the eve of his passion, and finally recovered by his mother at the foot of the cross in those iconic

¹ *The Holy Bible containing the Old Testament and the New, Newly translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised by His Majesties speciall command; appointed to be read in churches* (Cambridge: Printed by John Hayes, printer to the Universitie, 1683; New Testament has special title page dated at 1680), digital facsimile of the original in the National Library of Scotland, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: Wing/2714:03).

² Albert Korschorke, *The Holy Family and Its Legacy: Religious Imagination from the Gospels to Star Wars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 28.

images of the Pietà. While Korschorke notes that these family conflicts arise from Christ's growing spirituality, they also arise from his maturing body.

As a human being, Jesus' adolescence is not only the beginning of his intellectual maturation, but also his development into manhood.³ Literature and the visual arts directed strong attention to the adolescence of boys in the early modern period, and their bodies became a symbol of erotic love. As Roger Freitas writes, the image of "the boyish male lover" was idealized in early modern literature and art, but was "also the object of much real-life desire, by both men and women."⁴ Luciano Marcello noted in his *Società maschile e sodomia* that Florentine men often prowled the streets looking for adolescent boys to sodomize as a "right of passage."⁵ Other seventeenth-century writers asserted a medical dimension, arguing that sex with boys was both natural and clean (i.e., free of venereal disease), as in Antonio Rocco's *L'Alcibiade fanciullo a scola* (ca. 1651).⁶

In such a culture that celebrated and idolized the bodies of adolescent boys as sexually desirable, we can be assured that early modern writers took notice of this biblical juncture, when Jesus becomes both engaged in his ministry and, perhaps, physically beautiful. In the early modern interpretive literature of the Bible, Christ becomes not only a formidable spiritual leader, but also a desirable young man. Scottish poet Alexander Ross (d. 1654) devoted an entire chapter in his *Mystagogus poeticus, or, The muses interpreter explaining the historicall mysteries and mysticall histories of the ancient Greek and Latine poets* (1647) to explicating how the mythological story of "Ganimedes"—the beautiful boy-Prince of Troy—applies to his conception of Christ's desirable body. "Our Saviour

³ The second chapter of Luke's Gospel ends with the verse: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature [Or, age], and in favour with God and men," *The Holy Bible containing the Old Testament and the New, Newly translated* (1680).

⁴ Roger Freitas, "The Eroticism of Emasculation: Confronting the Baroque Body of the Castrato," *Journal of Musicology* 20, No. 2 (Spring 2003): 210.

⁵ Luciano Marcello, *Società maschile e sodomia* (n.d.), 122-24, quoted in *ibid.*, 211-12.

⁶ Antonio Rocco, *L'Alcibiade fanciullo a scola* (ca. 1651), quoted in *ibid.*, 212.

Christ is the true *Ganimede*,” claims Ross, he is “the fairest among the sons of men.”⁷ Never far from royal circles, Ross was once Chaplain-in-Ordinary to the conservative court of Charles I (d. 1649). Though imagining Christ as Ganymede may seem fanciful, members of court may have deemed Ross’s religious writing acceptable.

While Ross was working the classical literature of Ganymede into a Christian theology of the body, Ganymede was also a loaded term with immediate social meaning. Thomas Blount explained in his dictionary, *Glossographia* (1661), that the word was slang in seventeenth-century English. A “Ganymede,” according to Blount, was a “Catamite,” an “Ingle,” or “any Boy, loved for carnal abuse.”⁸ As apparatus to flagrant sexuality, ganymedes appear frequently in contemporaneous poetry and satires. In John Marston’s “Satyre III: Redde, age, quae deiceps risisti” (1598), the character Luscus

hath his *Ganimede*,
His perfum’d shee-goate, smooth kemb’d, high fed
At Hogsdon now his monstrous lust he feasts,
For there he keepes a bawdy-house of beasts.⁹

And in Ben Jonson’s “On Sir Volvptvovs Beast” (1616):

In the past pleasures of his sensuall life,
Telling the motions of each petticoate,
And how his GANIMEDE mou’d, and how his goate.¹⁰

⁷ Alexander Ross, *Mystagogs poeticvs, or, The muses interpreter explaining the historicall mysteries and mysticall histories of the ancient Greeke and Latine poets* (London: Printed by Richard Whitaker, 1647), 96-7, digital facsimile of the original in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, *Early English Books Online* (Bibliography Name/Number: Wing/R1964).

⁸ Blount also cross-referenced “Ganymede” in his definitions for a “catamite” and an “ingle,” *Glossographia, or, A dictionary interpreting all such hard words of whatsoever language now used in our refined English tongue with etymologies, definitions and historical observations on the same: also the terms of divinity, law, physick, mathematicks and other arts and sciences* (London: Printed by Tho. Newcombe for George Sawbridge, 1661), digital facsimile of the original in the Bodleian Library, *Early English Books Online* (Bibliography Name/Number: Wing/B3335).

⁹ John Marston, “Satyre III: Redde, age, quae deinceps risisti,” from *The scourge of villanie Three bookes of satyres* (London: Printed by I[ames] R[oberts] and are to be sold by Iohn Buzbie, in Paules Church-yard, at the signe of the Crane, 1598), digital facsimile of the original in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, *Early English Books Online* (Bibliography Name/Number: Pforzheimer/II:664).

¹⁰ Benjamin Jonson, *The Works of Benjamin Jonson* (London: Printed by W. Stansby, and are to be sould [sic] by Rich: Meighen, Ano D. 1616), 775, digital facsimile of the original in British Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: STC/756:01).

A Ganymede is a trapping of the “sensuall life”: they belong in the company of “baudy” men who “pleasure” themselves with boys and beasts. As literary critic Richard Rambuss suggests, if Christ is a Ganymede, then his body must take on both religious and erotic meanings.¹¹

Nahum Tate chose this precise biblical moment in Christ’s maturity, midway between boy and man, to transform the familiar Bible story into a scene of amorous rejection, informed by the theological and artistic contexts of the Mary/Christ dyad as well as the contemporaneous literature of disappointed love. Hardly studied for its erotic content, Henry Purcell’s setting of Tate’s erotically-inflected, agitated poem, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation” (*H.S.* 2, 1693), follows this line in employing all the tropes of lovesick madness used on the Restoration stage: raging coloratura, chatty text, obsessive repetition of musical content, harmonic volatility, and the unpredictable swings from recitative to dance-like aria. In addition, the evocations of dance rhythms provide a physical basis to the Virgin’s jarring temporal displacements between present and past. However, unlike in Purcell’s “Lord, what is Man,” which expresses amorous longing for an immaterial godhead, here the Virgin aims her lovesick devotion at a warm body: her son. Thus, even the most sacred couple, the Virgin and her son, makes contact with the erotic currents that permeate *Harmonia Sacra*. More than a mere mixing of religious distress and erotic devotion, I argue that in setting the “Virgin’s Expostulation” as a lovesick mad song, a genre he exploited on the stage, Purcell was activating a humanizing strategy for (re-)embodying devotional practice. To understand the interplay of madness, sexuality, and sacred devotion in “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” we need to visit the theological and visual contexts that inform it.

¹¹ Richard Rambuss, *Closet Devotions* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), n. 66, 152.

Theological and visual contexts

Visual representations of the Virgin and Christ that predate Purcell's musical setting of Tate's poem convey the profound flexibility of their union. From the Middle Ages emerge icons of Mary as the earthly spouse or lover of Christ. *Sponsus-sponsa* imagery unites Christ and Mary as sovereigns of the spiritual and secular world: Jesus, the Prince of Peace and Mary, the Queen of Heaven.¹² In illuminated manuscripts of *The Song of Songs*, Mary appears as the personification of Christ's "bride" (app., figs. 21-22). The scene in which Christ and his spouse embrace within illuminated capitals makes the sensuality of this topos visible: "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth: for thy breasts are better than wine" ("*Osculetur me osculo oris sui quia meliora sunt ubera tua vino*," Sg. 1).

Similarly, Renaissance visual representations of the child Jesus often emphasized his sexuality, evidence that Christ was God made *man*. Through the Renaissance, visual artists drew, painted, and engraved infant Christ reaching for his mother's chin—an encoded gesture of carnal desire (app., figs. 23-26).¹³ Though the gesture hardly seems erotic to modern eyes, the "chin-chuck" motif has symbolized amorous affection and erotic persuasion between lovers since antiquity. It appears in Egyptian reliefs of Ramses [Ramesses] III with his concubine (app., fig. 27), on Greek shields of Priam and Achilles (600-550 BCE), and on Greek vase paintings of Theseus and Ariadne (app., fig. 28). We also see it in Hellenistic bronze statues of Cupid and Psyche (app., fig. 29) and a twelfth-century Romanesque cloister capital of Herod and Salome from the Cathédrale de Saint-Étienne de Toulouse (app., fig. 30).

Leo Steinberg has mapped out this tradition in visual art as not just an aesthetic conceit, but as a completely coherent corporeal theology.

¹² Korschorke, *The Holy Family and Its Legacy*, 36.

¹³ Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 3-5.

By assigning [a gesture of erotic persuasion] to the Christ Child, the artist was designating Mary's son as the Heavenly Bridegroom who, having chosen her for his mother was choosing her for his eternal consort in heaven.¹⁴

Steinberg traces these erotic motifs to Saint Augustine's "Infant Spouse": "His Appearance as an Infant Spouse, from his bridal chamber, that is, from the womb of a virgin."¹⁵ Moreover, Christ's sexual agency becomes critical if his sacrifice is to be solvent. For Christ to be an acceptable sacrifice, he must be *fully* man. Images of Christ affectionately cupping a woman's chin (even if his mother's) are a sign of his human agency, his completeness from birth, and his capacity to love. These artists demonstrated that incarnate Christ was truly a "lamb without blemish" (1 Pet. 1:19); that is, he was not a man without sin but without *impairment*. In addition, the strength of this double union between mother and son, wife and husband, could be the source of the Virgin's possessive devotion when separation threatens her bond with Jesus.

An erotic, agitated text

Nahum Tate's poem reflects the same sensual energy that permeated medieval and Renaissance visual representations of the Virgin and Christ.¹⁶ While expressing the Virgin's distress in searching for her son, Tate also inflected her text with erotically charged language:

Where does my Soul's sweet Darling stray[?]. . .
Why, fairest Object of my Love,
Why dost Thou from my longing Eyes remove? [ll. 2, 8-9]

"Fairest," "sweet," and "Darling," are terms normally reserved for addressing a lover. For instance, Venus calls young Adonis both faire and "sweet" in William Shakespeare's long love-poem, *Venus and Adonis* (1593):

¹⁴ Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ*, 3-5.

¹⁵ Saint Augustine, "Sermon IX, 2, Ben 1.91" *Sermons for Christmas and Epiphany*, trans. Thomas Comerford Lawler (Ancient Christian Writers: Westminster, Maryland, and London, 1952), 109, quoted in *ibid.*, 5.

¹⁶ Tate later collaborated with Henry Playford to produce *Miscellanea Sacra or, Poems on divine & moral subjects* (London: Henry Playford, 1696), a textual companion to *H.S.* Also containing a frontispiece engraved by Thomas Gribelin II, the miscellany was the first publishing of some of Tate's poems while also reproducing many of the poetic texts that appear in *H.S.*

Thrise fairer then my selfe, (thus she began)
 The fields chiefe flower, sweet about compare,
 Staine to all Nymphs, more louely then a man,
 More white, and red, then doves, or roses are:
 Nature that made thee with her selfe at strife,
 Saith that the world hath ending with thy life.¹⁷ [st. 2]

The young Adonis, the *object of her love*, is both “more louely then [*sic*] a man” and exceeds the beauty of Venus, the goddess of carnal love. Consider also how a groom addresses his young bride in John Donne’s “The Brides going to bed” (1633):

Therefore thou maist, *faire* Bride, to bed depart,
 Thou art not gone, being gone, where e’r thou art,
 Thou leav’st in him thy watchfull eyes, in him thy loving heart.¹⁸ [ll. 9-11]

Even after the body departs, it is the fairness, according to Donne, that we remember. Notice how Andrew Marvell’s “Fair Singer” (1681) conquers men with her double “Beauties” of “Eyes” and “Voice.”¹⁹ Finally, recall how Alexander Ross describes Christ as Ganymede who is “fairest among...men.”

In addition to employing the idioms of desire, The Virgin’s text also uses rhythmic and metric deviations to express her intense agitation. While Tate sets the poem, for the most part, in the common iambic pentameter, the high frequency of trochaic substitutions complicates the categorization of the poem as truly iambic. The first line, indeed the first disyllable, immediately departs from the dominant meter with a trochaic substitution:

¹⁷ William Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis* (London: Imprinted by Richard Field, and are to be sold [By J. Harrison I] at the signe of the white Greyhound in Paules Church-yard, 1593), digital facsimile of the original in the Bodleian Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: STC/081:03).

¹⁸ John Donne, “IX. The Brides going to bed,” from “Eclogue: 1613. December 26,” in *Poems, by J.D. With elegies on the authors death* (London: Printed by M[iles] F[lesher] for Iohn Marriot, and are to be sold at his shop in St Dunstons Church-yard in Fleet-street, 1633), 133, digital facsimile of the original in the Harvard University Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: STC/881:25).

¹⁹ Andrew Marvell, “The Fair Singer,” *Miscellaneous poems* (London: Printed for Robert Boulter, 1681), 25, digital facsimile of the original in the British Library, *Early English Books Online* (Bibliography Name/Number: Wing/M872).

/ ~ ~ / ~ / ~ / ~ /
 Tell me some pitying Angel, quickly say
 / ~ ~ / ~ / ~ /
 Where does my Soul's sweet Darling stray,

Writers typically associated iambs, or an unstressed syllable followed by one that is stressed (~ /), with natural speech as iambs generally agree with the cadence of spoken English; lines of iambs have the added benefit of providing an easy flow toward the end of the line. Unsurprisingly, poets usually assigned iambic meters in English to topics of balance, tranquility, eminence, and justice. John Ash would later explain in his *New and Complete Dictionary of the English Tongue* (1775) that the iambic measure “as to sound, has all the majesty and perfection,” and is “best suited to the more important and serious subjects.”²⁰

Conversely, writers on poetry and meter associated the hammering quality of trochees, a stressed syllable followed by one that is unstressed (/ ~), with negative emotions, inversions, exclamations, and upset. Though John Mason did not expressly link trochaics to femininity in his *Essay on the power of numbers, and the principles of harmony in poetical compositions* (1749), he used the language of femininity when he described trochees as “languid,” “flowing,” the “melting [of] Love,” and “Sorrow.”²¹ As an example, he then quoted a poem by John Dryden (d. 1700) about a woman abandoned by her lover. The river in Dryden’s poem is significant because it reinforces the cultural notions of the watery nature of feminine despair.

Observ. VIII. This Measure which is naturally languid and flowing is extremely well
 fitted for the Description of the most tender and melting Passions either of Love or
 Sorrow...

²⁰ John Ash, *The new and complete dictionary of the English language. In Which All The Words are introduced, The Different Spellings preserved. The Sound of the Letters occasionally distinguished, The Obsolete and Uncommon Words supported by Authorities, And the Different Construction and Uses illustrated by Examples. To which is prefixed, a comprehensive grammar, In two volumes*, vol. 1 (London: printed for Edward and Charles Dilly In The Poultry; and R. Baldwin In Pater-Noster Row, 1775), 25-6, digital facsimile of the original in the British Library, *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* (Gale document: CW114965944).

²¹ John Mason, *An essay on the power of numbers, and the principles of harmony in poetical compositions* (London: printed by James Waugh, for M. Cooper, at the Globe in Pater-Noster Row, 1749), 67, digital facsimile of the original in the Harvard University Houghton Library, *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* (Gale document: CW3316872858).

*On a bank beside a Willow,
 Heaven her Covering, Earth her Pillow,
 Sad Amynta sighs alone!
 From the cheerless Dawn of Morning
 Till the Dews of Night returning;
 Singing thus she made her Moan,
 "Hope is banish'd,
 Joys are vanish'd,
 "Damon my Belov'd is gone!"*²²

Poetic meters also have connections to the humoral system; in this case, trochees and trochaics correspond to the cold, moist, watery "phlegmatic" humor, often linked to femininity.²³ Dryden formed a relationship between poetic meters and the four humors in his Pythagorean poem, "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day," written for the 1687 feast of Saint Cecilia. Giovanni Battista Draghi (d. 1708) set the poem to music for the occasion; later, George Frederic Handel famously set the poem into the cantata, *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*, HWV 76 (1739). The first stanza of Dryden's poem lists the possible combinations of hot and dry, cold and moist that form the four humors (sanguine, choleric, melancholic, and phlegmatic). The speaker commands them to "leap" to their positions ("stations") and obey "MUSICK'S Pow'r."

FROM Harmony, from Heav'nly Harmony
 This Universal Frame began.
 When Nature underneath a heap
 Of jarring Atoms lay,
 And cou'd not heave her Head,
 The tuneful Voice was heard from high,
 Arise ye more than dead.
 Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,

²² Mason, *An essay on the power of numbers*, 67.

²³ Thomas Walkington explained that "if water bee in his vigour, the body is said to be phlegmaticke." He continued that the "phlegmaticke" will even "dreame of surou[n]ding waters, of swimming in riuers of torrents and suddaine showers, &c.," *The optick glasse of humors. Or The touchstone of a golden temperature, or the Philosophers stone to make a golden temper wherein the foure complexions sanguine, cholericke, phlegmaticke, melancholicke are succinctly painted forth, and their externall intimates laide open to the purblind eye of ignorance it selfe, by which euery one may iudge of what complexion he is, and answerably learne what is most sutable to his nature* (London: Imprinted by Iohn Windet for Martin Clerke, and are to be sold at his shop without Aldersgate, 1607), 39, 77, digital facsimile of the original in Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: STC/724:01).

In order to their stations leap,
And MUSICK'S Pow'r obey.²⁴

Stanzas two through five of Dryden's "Song" then demonstrate with rhythm, meter, and rhyme the character of each humor, a combination of hot and cold, dry and moist. For instance, Dryden writes stanza four in trochaic tetrameter and mentions the "jealousy," "desperation," and "frantick" "fury" that align with the phlegmatic humor (cold and moist). Notable too, is that Dryden equates this collection of despair with femininity (a "disdainful Dame"):

Sharp VIOLINS proclaim
Their jealous Pangs, and Desperation,
Fury, frantick Indignation,
Depth of Pains, and height of Passion,
For the fair, disdainful Dame.²⁵

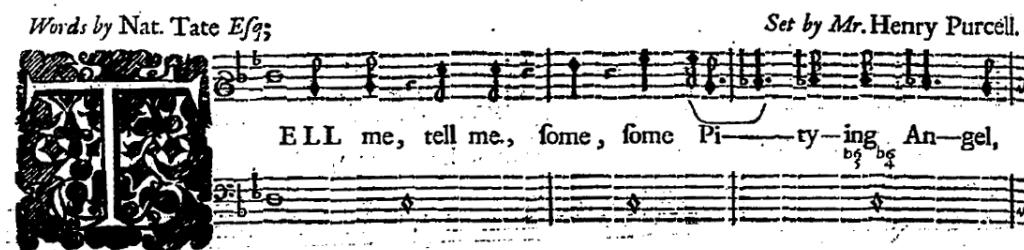
As Katherine Hodgekin writes, "within the humoral system women are constructed as the unruly sex: female bodies, composed predominantly of cold and wet humours...[they are] apt to *go out of frame*" (emphasis mine).²⁶ Thus, the first trochaic demand we hear in Tate's "Expostulation" is a particularly feminine cry of distress. Conscious of the disruption from the poetic meter, Purcell repeats the trochee, separating them with the dramatic use of rests (fig. 13). To intensify the effect of the repetition, Purcell also doubles the pitches (G-G) and then raises it a fourth (C-C). The setting balloons the trochaic substitution into a breathy, hammering imperative that sets the impatient tone for the entire poem:

²⁴ John Dryden, "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day, 1687," *Examen poeticum being the third part of miscellany poems containing variety of new translations of the ancient poets, together with many original copies by the most eminent hands* (London: Printed for R.E. by Jacob Tonson, 1693), 242-3, digital facsimile of the original in the Harvard University Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/number: Wing/D2277).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 245.

²⁶ Katherine Hodgekin, ed., *Women, Madness and Sin in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010), 67.

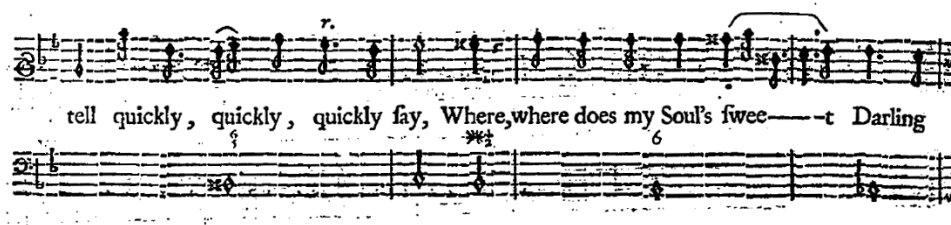
Figure 13. Henry Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” *H.S.* 2, mm. 1-3.



Much like how “Lord, what is Man” begins with an eerie succession of intervals to signal spiritual disquiet, the Virgin’s expostulation in Tate/Purcell immediately opens with metric dissonance that reflects maternal despair.

As mentioned above, the poem is full of trochaic substitutions, appearing most often when the Virgin makes demands of her missing angel. The next trochee (“quickly”) is also in lines 1 and 2: “quickly, say | Where does my Soul’s sweet Darling stray.” Appropriately, Purcell sets the trochee, “quickly” much like the opening, “Tell me,” by repeating the word three times (fig. 14), correctly placing stress on the forward syllable in three different ways: a descending interval of a fourth (tonic accent), a *tierce* (or ascending *coulée*), and an ornament (trill):²⁷

Figure 14. Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 4-7.



These transgressions from the dominant meter of the poem produce a rhythm that *sounds* uneven and persistent, fitting for an expostulation. However, dissonance arises when we consider that this is a monologue for the Virgin Mary, the complaisant maiden whose room (and womb) is invaded and who demurely obeys instruction: “Behold, the handmaid of the Lord: Let it be done unto me

²⁷ The letter “t” is missing from the abbreviation for trill (tr.) in the first edition (1693).

according to thy will” (Lk 1:38). Rather, Tate/Purcell’s Virgin is demanding and agitated. Contained in these beginning lines is the first indication that the Virgin has lost control, transgressing into fury, rage, and desperation for her son. Indeed, she more closely resembles Queen Phaedra and Phoebus’s nymph, two literary women who also express frustration in profane love.

The literature of abandonment

“The Expostulation” also draws from contemporaneous literary-musical sources on the amorous rejection of women. The first is a mid-seventeenth-century English translation of the *Heroides*, Ovid’s letters “penned” by women addressed to their male lovers who have abandoned them. Appearing shortly before the printing of *H.S.* 1 and 2 (1688, 1693), Nahum Tate, along with Carr Scope, John Dryden, and Thomas Otway newly translated the *Heroides* as *Ovid’s epistles translated by several hands* (1680).²⁸ The most striking likeness to Tate’s Virgin is in Otway’s translation of Phaedra’s letter to Hippolytus (*Epistle IV*). Queen Phaedra, wife of Theseus, falls in love with her young stepson, Hippolytus. Unable to admit her love for Hippolytus openly, she writes a letter expressing her desire for her “Lovely Boy.” Notably, she compares her love for Hippolytus to the idealized love of Venus for young Adonis:

IF Thou’rt unkind, I ne’re shall health Enjoy;
Yet much I wish to thee, my Lovely Boy:
[...]
Under the spreading shades her Am’rous Boy
The fair *Adonis* *Venus* could enjoy,
Atlanta’s Love too *Meleager* sought,
And to her Tribute paid of all he caught;
Be Thou and I the next blest *Sylvan* pair:
Where Love’s a Stranger Woods but Desarts are.²⁹

²⁸ Jacob Tonson the Elder (d. 1736) reprinted this collaborative translation in 1681, 1683, 1688, and 1693, all in London; erroneously, Johnson in 1681.

²⁹ *Ovid’s epistles translated by several hands (Heroides)*, trans. Dryden, Scope, Tate, et al. (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson at the Sign of the Judges Head Chancery Lane, near Fleet-Street, 1680), 203, 209, digital facsimile of the original in the Princeton University Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/number: Wing/O659).

Phaedra's love for her stepson is just as noble as Venus's love for adolescent Adonis: "Be Thou and I the next blest *Sylvan* pair." Much like in Tate's "Expostulation," in which the Virgin Mary wishes her lost "Love" to return unharmed from dangerous "Desarts" and "the Wilderness, where...Salvages resort" (ll. 5-7), Phaedra also wishes Hippolytus safety from the "Desarts" where love is scarce. In Purcell's song, the Virgin fears for her child in bouts of paranoia, expertly set with sudden effusions of coloratura, especially when imagining him trapped in "a Tyrant's [Herod's] Court" (fig. 15).

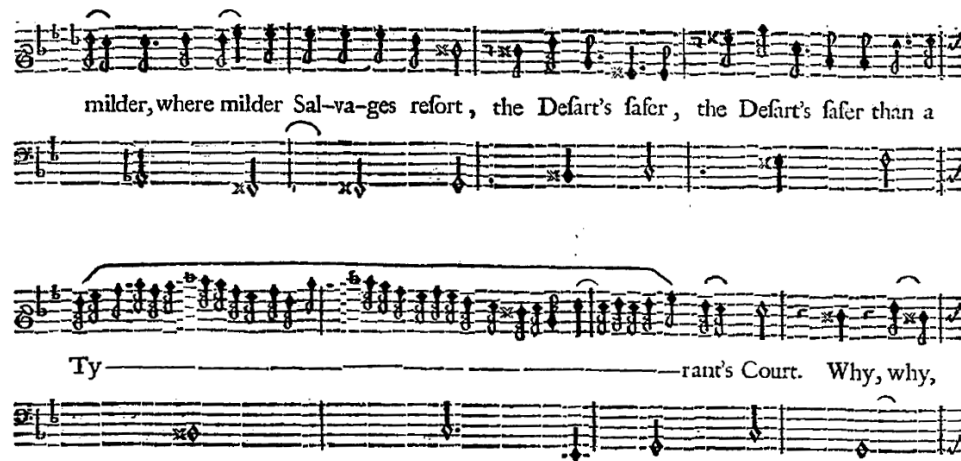
Figure 15. Purcell, "The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation," mm. 8-27.

Stray, in Tygers, or more cru-el, more cru-el, cruel Herod's

way? Ah! Ah! ra-ther, ra-ther let his lit-tle, lit-tle Foot-steps

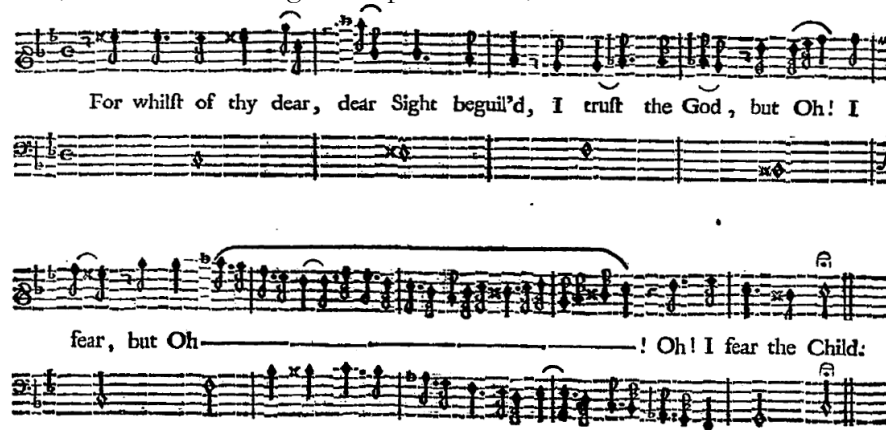
prefs un-re-gar-ded throu-gh the Wilderness, where mild-cr,

Figure 15 (continued). Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 8-27.



Likewise, the song also ends with inconsolable “fear” (fig. 16). Because we know that Jesus is safe in the temple, we hear her hopelessness as excessive panic.

Figure 16. Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 106-14.



Phaedra’s likeness to the Virgin is clearest when Phaedra admits that her unrequited love has driven her mad, wilder than the ribald of a Bacchanal and as mad as “Cybele’s Priests”:

Now like a *Bacchanal* more wild I stray,
Or Old *Cybele’s* Priests, as mad as They
When under *Ida’s* Hill They Offerings pay:
Ev’n mad as those the Deities of Night
And Water, *Fauns* and *Dryads* do afright.³⁰

³⁰ *Ovid’s epistles translated by several hands*, 206.

The following stanza is, by far, Phaedra's boldest proposition and merits lengthy quotation. Phaedra claims that incest is but a notion that does not disgust ("[afright]") her but excites ("enflames") her. She argues that there is no better way for Hippolytus to honor Theseus's memory than to copulate with her in his father's bed ("Though in my Bed Thou'rt seen, 'twill gain Applause").³¹ Moreover, carnal love between family members is natural, as is practiced by the gods.

Rather thou fairest Thing the Earth contains,
 I wish at first 'had dy'd of Mothers pains:
 How canst thou rev'rence then thy Fathers Bed,
 From which himself so Abjectly is fled?
 The thought afrights not me, but me enflames;
 Mother and son are notions, very Names
 Of worn out Piety, in fashion Then
 When Old dull *Saturn* Rul'd the Race of men:
 But braver *Love* taught pleasure was no sin,
 And with his Sister did himself begin.
 Nearness of Blood, and Kindred best we prove,
 When we express it in the closest Love.
 Nor need we fear our Fault should be reveal'd;
 'Twill under near Relation be conceal'd,
 And all who hear our Loves, with praise shall Crown
 A Mothers kindness to a grateful Son.³²

Incestuous desire does not dissolve the boundary between mother and son. Rather, incest reinforces and strengthens familial ties. In reading Tate, then, we see how the Virgin's erotic desire for Jesus is not so much a perversion of familial love but an intensification of it.

Purcell's setting of Tate's poem also bears striking topical resemblance to *seicento* amorous vocal music. Claudio Monteverdi's ninth "madrigal of love," *Lamento della ninfa* (1638) is also an "expostulation" in which a lovesick nymph wanders aimlessly when her divine lover, Phoebus—god of art, music, and poetry, and paragon of male beauty—abandons her. In her examination of representations of madwomen, Susan McClary writes that Monteverdi's *Lamento* is a

prolonged soliloquy sung by the nymph, and it is for this segment that the piece is justly famous. The particular brand of madness generating the lament is that of

³¹ *Ovid's epistles translated by several hands*, 212.

³² *Ibid.*, 211.

obsession: the nymph is fixated on memories of a lover who has abandoned her...Her responses and reminiscences range widely with respect to affect (self-pity, anger, grief, envy, erotic longing, hopelessness, etc.).³³

Much like in Tate's "Expostulation," Monteverdi's madrigal of romantic abandonment catapults the nymph into paroxysms of lovesickness. Thus, the religious characters in Tate's "Expostulation" parallel those in Monteverdi's secular dyad. Just as Mary is to the abandoned maiden (Ninfa), so too is Christ the Ninfa's lover (Phoebus): divine and endowed with rhetorical skill and physical beauty.

Volatility

While Purcell's musical setting is in many ways a typical mad song—with a chatty, paranoid text and raging coloratura—Purcell also employs structural conventions to assist in setting this distraught, amorous poem. First, Purcell chose the chamber cantata of *seicento* Rome to accommodate the Virgin's volatility. Colin Timms (et al.) write(s) that the chamber cantatas of Giancarlo Rossi (d. 1692), Giacomo Carissimi (d. 1674), and Antonio Cesti (d. 1669) were particularly popular with English composers both before and after Purcell:

John Blow and William Croft are known to have copied Italian cantatas, and Purcell too must have been acquainted with them. Several of his later solo vocal pieces outside the plays—for example...*The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation*—reveal in points of both style and structure some attempt to emulate cantatas emanating from Rome and Venice in the middle of the seventeenth century. These extended alternations of declamatory arioso and formalized air with a distinct Italianate flavour are cantatas in all but name.³⁴

In addition, Peter Holman (et al.) writes that the "Virgin's Expostulation" "is perhaps the closest Purcell came to writing an Italianate cantata."³⁵ The texts of the *seicento* Roman cantata are "normally lyrical monologues, i.e. the direct expression of a named or unnamed personage, articulated by a

³³ Susan McClary, "Excess and Frame: The Music Representation of Madwomen," in *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 86-7.

³⁴ Colin Timms, et al., "Cantata," *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), [accessed March 14, 2014], <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/04748pg4>.

³⁵ Peter Holman, et al., "Purcell," *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, (Oxford University Press), [accessed March 27, 2014], <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/41799pg3>.

poet and composer and delivered by a singer.”³⁶ Accommodating the uninterrupted complaints of the Virgin, Tate’s monologic text is an ideal candidate for a solo cantata setting.

Of the solo cantata varieties, *arie di più parti* were the most flexible. Meaning “arias in several sections,” *arie di più parti* were characteristic for their blending and juxtapositions of aria, arioso, and recitative depending on the demands of the text. Thus, *arie di più parti* writing is particularly well suited to Tate’s poem, with its volatile shifts in mood and time. Accordingly, Purcell’s setting features no fewer than four shifts between recitative, arioso, and lyrical aria in contrasting keys and tempi. While most other cantata writers, such as Rossi, preferred the strophic “short aria” cantatas or *ariette corte*, Carissimi devoted the majority of his cantata output to these *arie di più parti*. Indeed, Henry Playford aligned his publications with Italian song writing when he included a setting of Carissimi’s, “Lucifer, Cælestis” in *H.S.* 2.

Temporal displacement

Throughout the five sections of the song, the Virgin continually swings her focus between the present and the past, an experience perhaps related to psychotic hallucinations. These displacements in time, assisted by shifts in tempo, meter, and keys, are concurrent with the delirious ranting common in the Restoration mad song, and are fitting for the Italian *arie di più parti* that blends recitative, arioso, and dance-like aria. The song is roughly divided into five parts: 1) a long exclamatory recitative that explores both the present and past in C minor (mm. 1-55); 2) a dance-like aria in triple entirely set in the past in C major follows (mm. 56-75); 3) a short recitative section that shifts back to the present in C minor (mm. 76-81); 4) another aria/dance that carries on her thoughts about the present, but this time in duple (mm. 82-105); 5) a final recitative on her hopelessness over the fate of her son in the key of C minor (mm. 106-114).

³⁶ Holman, et al., “Purcell,” *Grove Music Online*.

The above breakdown shows how Purcell's construction links the perception of time to the key orientation of each section. In short, C minor is for present terror and C major is for bygone peace. The most striking example of this is between the first recitative and the following dance in triple. The long recitative section has several subdivisions but concludes resolutely with despair. She calls to the Angel Gabriel who had announced Jesus' coming with a flattering salute: "Hail Mary, full of grace." After her shrieking calls for Gabriel—on repeated high G's—go unanswered, the Virgin bids "farewell" to her "flatt'ring Hopes" with "sighing" melodic figures at mm. 51 (fig. 17).

Figure 17. Purcell, "The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation," mm. 42-56.



The next section begins immediately in the parallel C major and recounts in dance-like triadic melodies at mm. 56 the glorious past when "Me *Judah's* Daughters once Cares'd" (fig. 18). An accompanied aria in triple differentiates this section from the one prior—a sparsely accompanied *secco* recitative, illustrating her solitude.

Figure 18. Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 53-62.



The modal shifts from C minor to its parallel major assist in aural differentiation, but they also embed the sections of the text with their own affective meanings. At the surface level, key areas had an emotional and psychological impact for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century listeners.³⁷ In his *Méthode Claire* of 1691, Jean Rousseau called C minor the key of “complaints and lamentations,” and Marc-Antoine Charpentier claimed in his *Nouveau traité* (1696) that C Minor is effective for expressing the “gloomy and sad.”³⁸ Accordingly, C minor is the key that Purcell gives to the Virgin’s complaints that bookend the blissful arias in C major and jolts her back to the present gloom.

Likewise, Johann Jakob Heinse most clearly articulated the character of the key C major in his *Hildegard von Hohenthal* (1795-6). Heinse describes C major as the “[signifier] for us, as it were, the state of nature; virginal chastity and purity, lovely innocence of youth, patriarchal living, golden age...Young joyful life...Innocence...the soul as pure, [and a] completely beautiful nature.”³⁹ He also stresses that the tone C is the proverbial “beginning” as both the starting place of most tuning systems and, often, the lowest note in the vocal range of a soprano.⁴⁰ Though Heinse was writing a century after the publication of *H.S.*, it is striking that Purcell also chose C major to express the

³⁷ Rita Steblin has compiled a comprehensive list of commentary on the affective signification of keys in her book, *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, 2nd ed. (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2002).

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 230.

³⁹ Johann Jakob Heinse, *Hildegard von Hohenthal* (1795-6), in Steblin, *A History of Key Characteristics*, 106-7, Appendix: 227.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

virginity, purity, patriarchal complaisance, and innocence of the Immaculate Conception, especially as the Virgin remembers when all of Judah “called [her] of Mothers, the most Bless’d.”

The clearest example of how modal shifts aid in the dramatic flailing to and away from the present is between the reminiscence of the “Bless’d” pregnancy in C major and the following recitative section (mm. 66) that moves to a dance/aria in C minor at mm. 73 (fig. 19). The text jerks suddenly into a recitative that moves through several sonorities (F-minor⁴¹—[C-minor]—+6—G) while the vocal line sings more “sighing” figures on “Now fatal Change of Mothers most Distress’d” (mm. 76-81). Wandering through keys sonorities works to dissolve the C major affect and pulls us from the past to the present in C minor.

Figure 19. Purcell, “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” mm. 69-87.

Mothers, the moft, the moft, the moft, the moft Bleſſ'd.

Now fa—tal Change, now fa—tal Change of Mothers, of Mo—thers moft,

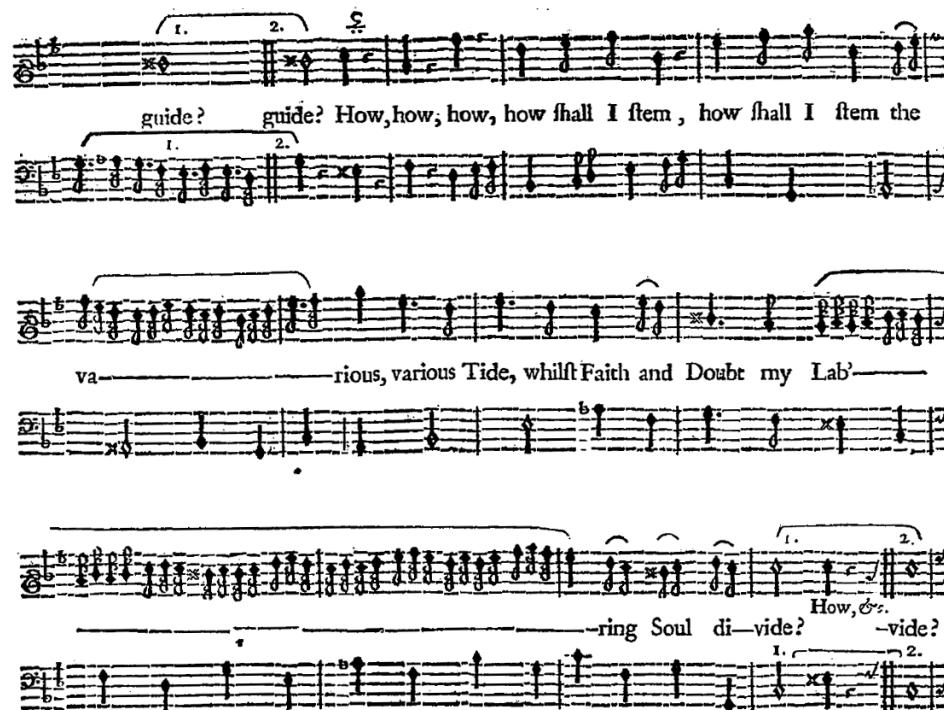
moft Di—ſtreſſ'd, of Mo—thers moft, moft Di—ſtreſſ'd,

How, how, how ſhall my Soul its Mo—tions guide? How,

⁴¹ The first edition (1693) included an E-flat in the basso continuo part; later editions corrected the error as an F-minor chord tied over two measures (mm. 76-77).

Another dance section in C minor on the Virgin's present distress (mm. 82-105) follows this short recitative. In addition, the rapid coloratura of this section (especially on the word "Laboring," mm. 100-3) and the obsessive repetition on the word, "How, how, how, how?" at mm. 93-5 contrasts with the easy lyricism and triadic skipping of the earlier dance in triple on past glory (fig. 20).

Figure 20. Purcell, "The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation," mm. 92-105.



Conclusion: "Where's Gabriel now?"

It is significant that the Virgin calls for Gabriel in her moment of distress. Shrieking for a second visitation or another "Waking Dream" she is ostensibly asking for a second pregnancy—for to conceive again is to be filled with God's favor. How else will she be able to "stem the various Tide" and tame her wandering soul ("How shall my Soul its Motions guide?")? The Virgin's obsessive retelling of her pregnancy and childbirth, then, does not express her desire to return to the past so much as it pulls the past forward into the present. "Where's *Gabriel* now?" Her calls are in the

present (“I call, I call!”) and indicate that the moment for intervention is now. To be filled again with the Holy Spirit, to conceive, and have another “Wondrous birth” is to return her body to its position of glory and peace.

The notion that pregnancy and childbirth are the highest attainment of women (and perhaps of mankind) has historical precedence in the gendered treatises of mid-sixteenth-century theologians. Of note are Henricus Cornelius Agrippa Knight von Nettesheim’s (d. 1535) writings on the mysteries of the female body. His fanciful treatise, *The glory of women: or, A treatise declaring the excellency and prebeminence [sic] of women above men, which is proved both by scripture, law, reason, and authority, divine, and humane* draws from occult philosophy, astrology, theology, and alchemical belief to construct theories of the beauty, wholeness, and superiority of women. In 1652, Edward Fleetwood of Ghent translated Agrippa’s *The glory of women* into English “for the vertuous and beautifull female sex of the Commonwelth of England.”

Do not we see that in the procreation of mankind, nature preferreth women before men? [...] For, as the law saith, that is the greatest and cheifest office of women, to conceive, and to nourish the thing conceived.⁴²

In another treatise, Agrippa argues that men are “imperfect” and incomplete because, among other reasons, they cannot produce offspring.⁴³ Using the example of the Virgin Mary’s spontaneous pregnancy, Agrippa writes that women are “a *Draught* of the whole Creation in *Miniature*, or a *Copy* of that vast Volume done in exquisite *Short-band*.”⁴⁴ Running against the early modern “one-sex model” championed in Thomas Laqueur’s, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (1992) that

⁴² Henricus Cornelius Agrippa Knight, *The glory of women: or, A treatise declaring the excellency and prebeminence [sic] of women above men, which is proved both by scripture, law, reason, and authority, divine, and humane*, trans. Edward Fleetwood (London: printed for Robert Ibbitson, 1652), 10, digital facsimile of the original in the British Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel position: Wing/100:E.655[7]).

⁴³ Ibid., *Female pre-eminence, or, The dignity and excellency of that sex above the male an ingenious discourse*, trans. H.C. (London: Printed by T. R. and M. D. and are to be sold by Henry Million, 1670), 14, digital facsimile of the original in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/number: Wing/A784).

⁴⁴ Ibid., 17.

ventured women as incomplete, Agrippa's treatises purport that women are wholly perfect (and perfectly whole) by nature of their ability to produce children independent of man's influence.

Tate/Purcell's Virgin is expressly concerned with returning to physical wholeness, completeness, and "glory." In recalling Gabriel's private visitation (and demanding a second), her virgin pregnancy, and childbirth, she raises the question of her own sexuality. By definition, she had never had intercourse with a man, but this does not make her a sexless woman. As Judith Peraino explains, the Virgin was a highly sexualized symbol:

As the ultimate symbol of sanctified inwardness, the Virgin Mary not only redeemed (virgin) women from the curse of Eve, she also placed them beyond the physical, in the realm of the pure idea. But in this realm the relationship to the idea of sexuality was still strong.⁴⁵

Peraino continues by quoting R. Howard Bloch who notes that "in the patristic totalizing scheme of desire, there can be no difference between the state of desiring and of being desired."⁴⁶ Here, Peraino argues that virginity assumes sexual desire. Moreover, the boundary between sex and sexless collapses in the ideal of the virgin, for "to look at, to speak of, to think about a virgin was to defile her."⁴⁷

Just as early interpretive literature of the Bible sexualizes Christ as a Ganymede, and thus humanizes him, so too does this song sexualize his mother as a lovesick madwoman. She, like anyone, has desires, complaints, moments of hopelessness, and grieves when rejected. In setting Tate's poem as a lovesick mad song, Purcell calls attention to the Virgin's human body, her sexuality, and her devotion to Jesus as both lover and son. In inviting us into her desire, Tate and Purcell present a human figure that entertains and startles us, while, at the same time, resides with us. Unlike most Restoration era mad songs that isolate the subject as an irrational and disorderly "other," this

⁴⁵ Judith Peraino, *Listening to the Sirens: Musical Technologies of Queer Identity from Homer to Hedwig* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 45.

⁴⁶ R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 99.

⁴⁷ Peraino, *Listening to the Sirens*, 45.

mad song does the opposite. Rather than alienate the Virgin as an entirely mystical being free of sin, her mad song instead allows us to recognize her as an entirely mortal, devoted body.

APPENDIX



Figure 21.

The scribe Thomas (illuminator and writer) of Eberbach, Germany, *Commentary on the Song of Songs* (detail), twelfth century, The Bodleian Library (MS. Laud Misc. 150, fol. 003r.), London.



Figure 22.

Bolognese *Bible* (detail), with text: beginning of the *Song of Solomon*, historiated initial 'O(*sculetur me*)', thirteenth century, The Bodleian Library (MS. Canon. Bibl. Lat. 48, fol. 238r.), London.



Figure 23.

Simone Martini, *Boston polyptych: Madonna and Child* (detail), ca. 1321-25, tempura on panel, 113 x 63 cm., Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, in Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion*, 2nd ed., revised and expanded (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 7.



Figure 24.

Master of St. Veronica (Cologne School), *Madonna with the Sweet-pea Blossom* (detail), middle panel of triptych altarpiece, ca. 1410, tempura on panel, 53 x 34 cm., Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne, in *ibid.*, 111.



Figure 25.

Marco Zoppo, *Madonna and Child* (detail), ca. 1470, oil on canvas, 40.8 x 29 cm., The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., in Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ*, 7.



Figure 26.

Hans Baldung Grien, *Holy Family* (detail), 1511, woodcut, 37.5 x 24 cm., Geisberg 59, in *ibid.*, 9.



Figure 27.

Egyptian relief, *Ramses [Ramesses] III and Concubine*, 19th Dynasty, Medinut Habu: Mortuary Temple of Ramesses III, in Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ*, 110.



Figure 28.

Archaic Greek vase painting, *Theseus Wooing Ariadne*, 675-40 BCE, height: 31.8 cm., Heraklion Archaeological Museum, Crete, in *ibid.*, 111.



Figure 29.
Hellenistic, *Cupid and Psyche*, bronze statuette, Musée du Louvre, Paris, in Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ*, 6.



Figure 30.
Romanesque, *Herod and Salome*, ca. 1140, Cathédrale Saint-Étienne de Toulouse, in *ibid.*, 6.

EPILOGUE

The book as a historical artifact

The past thus conjured up is, to be sure, largely an artifact of the present.

David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* ‡

More than a collection that provided immediate amusement, *Harmonia Sacra* was also a preservation project. It brought together poets and composers from every strata of English society: the contributors were courtiers, diplomats, prominent academicians, clergymen, and a king.¹ Of the twenty-two named contributors, about half were dead before the publication of Book 1 (app., Table 1).² Between its earliest poems (collections by George Herbert and John Donne in 1633) and the publication of *H.S.* 1, England underwent a Civil War that ended in regicide (1649), reconfiguration of the government into a republic (1649-60), and the restoration of the monarchy (1660). Late in 1688, the Protestants William III of Orange and his wife, Mary II, dethroned her Catholic father, James II (and VII).

H.S. was a testament to English religious diversity and conflict. Reflecting the tumultuous shifts in religious sympathies over four governments, contributors to *H.S.* were Anglican, Puritan, converts to and away from Catholicism, and mystics. Playford's dedication of Book 2 to the Reverend Henry Aldrich, D.D., dean of Christ-Church, Oxford, affirms that it was the publisher's "care indeed to save [these Papers] from Oblivion." Thus, in buying *H.S.*, one was investing in the conservation of English religious music history of the past half-century, ensuring its performance,

‡ David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), xvi.

¹ Purcell, for instance, set a poem attributed to Charles I in *H.S.* 1., 77.

² Every title page reads, "Composed by the Best Masters of the last and Present Age." It should also be noted that many of the texts do not attribute authorship and several of the songs do not name the composer.

or, at least, its ownership, into perpetuity. Though, the question of how the publishing market might benefit from *H.S.* still remains.

The publishing of *H.S.* coincided with a printing boom in England during the seventeenth-century. The easy reproduction of past documents coupled with the new ability to compare historical texts created an impression in modern print cultures of dominating over the past.³ As David Lowenthal explains, “the diffusion of printed materials engendered confidence that men would transcend their predecessors’ achievements.”⁴ That is why the panegyrics that open *H.S.* 2 begin by denigrating the past:

Long had Dark Ignorance our isle o’erspread,
Our *Musick* and our *Poetry* lay dead:
But the dull Malice of a Barb’rous Age,
Fell most severe on *David’s* Sacred Page.⁵ [ll. 1-4]

And:

Musick and *Verse* have been abus’d too long,
Idly to furnish out some Wanton *Song*,
To varnish Vice, to make loose Folly *shine*,
And gild the vain Delights of Love, or Wine:
Both Heav’nly-born, but both constrain’d to fall
So far below their great Original,
The Erring World, not knowing how to trace
Through Vile Employments their Celestial Race.⁶ [ll. 1-8]

While publishing ensure the preservation of history, it also provided moderns an opportunity to challenge the credibility of the past.⁷ Lowenthal, again: “Since each present could now build on all preceding pasts, their accumulated inheritance made moderns *ipso facto* superior.”⁸

³ Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, 88-9.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ T. Brown, “*To his unknown Friend, Mr. Henry Purcell, upon his excellent compositions in the First and Second Books of Harmonia Sacra*,” *H.S.* 2 (London: Henry Playford, 1693).

⁶ An Unknown Hand, “*To my Worthy Friend, Mr. Henry Playford, upon his Harmonia Sacra*,” in *ibid.*

⁷ Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, 89.

⁸ Ibid.

Accordingly, the panegyrics in *H.S.* 2 not only acknowledge the skill of Playford and Purcell (et al.), but also their skill above all predecessors:

What Praises, *Purcell*, to thy Skill are due;
Who has to *Judab's* Monarch been so 'True?
[...]
This Tribute from each *British Muse* is due,
Our whole Poetic Tribe's oblig'd to you.
For where the Author's scant Words have fail'd
Your happier Graces, *Purcell*, have prevail'd.
And surely none but you have equal Ease
Could add to *David*, and make *Durfy* please.⁹ [ll. 1-2, 27-32]

And:

The Church as yet could never boast but Two
Of all the Tuneful Race, from *Jubal* down to *You*.¹⁰ [ll. 45-6]

Perhaps, then, we read *H.S.* differently—that from a conservationist spirit emerged a reparative orientation to history. The above lyrics clearly construct a binary of a past that had lapsed into inadequacy and a present that can (or has) correct(ed) it. The contributors to *H.S.* represent the merits of the present; accordingly, all of Britain thanks them for their efforts (“Our whole Poetic Tribe’s oblig’d to you”). They were so successful, in fact, that they even corrected the biblical canon (“And surely none...Could add to *David*”). As we have seen, *H.S.* supports a range of cultural elitist strategies: from sanism to chronocentricity.

The book as an asylum

While we can understand *H.S.* as a religious history and an object with which to measure the merits of the present against the past, a more complex matter is making sense of these two religious songbooks that are full of dangerous spiritual experiences. Crucial to the above is a coherent taxonomy that includes lovesick madwomen, religious enthusiastic poets, crucifixion scenes, and

⁹ T. Brown, “*To his unknown Friend*, Mr. Henry Purcell,” *H.S.* 2.

¹⁰ H. Sacheverell, “*To Dr. John Blow, and Mr. Henry Purcell, upon the First and Second Books of Harmonia Sacra*,” in *ibid.*

divine séances (“In guilty Night,” *H.S.* 2). These are the very epistemological questions of classification that troubled Foucault in *The Order of Things* (1966) when he looked for coherence in “other” taxonomies of knowledge. Foucault ultimately concludes that “the fundament codes of a culture” govern the epistemologies of “language, its schemas of perception, its exchanges, its techniques, its values, the hierarchy of its practices.”¹¹

Foucault had five years earlier detailed a taxonomy of madness and insanity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹² Beginning in the seventeenth century, religious, political, and moral institutions rounded up the fools, the lovesick, the destitute, the diseased, and the over-zealous and confined them together in madhouses. Though owing their madness to dissimilar causes, one trait seemed to unite them: all were unproductive laborers and thus, poor. The fear of insanity alone did not motivate confinement; rather, rampant unemployment initiated an effort to contain poverty:

In the classical age, for the first time, madness was perceived through a condemnation of idleness and in a social immanence guaranteed by the community of labor. This community acquired an ethical power of segregation, which permitted it to eject, as into another world, all forms of social uselessness. It was in this other world, encircled by the sacred power of labor, that madness would assume the status we now attribute to it.¹³

But rampant poverty, unemployment, and idleness were merely symptoms of a larger moral crisis. Foucault continues:

In fact, the relation between the practice of confinement and the insistence on work is not defined by economic conditions; far from it. A moral perception sustains and animates it. When the Board of Trade published its report on the poor in which it proposed the means “to render them useful to the public,” it was made quite clear that the origin of poverty was neither scarcity of commodities nor unemployment, but “the weakening of discipline and the relaxation of morals.”¹⁴

¹¹ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1970), xx.

¹² Foucault refers to the period between the Renaissance and the Enlightenment—roughly the entire seventeenth century—as the “classical” age, epoch, or period.

¹³ Ibid., *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Random House, Inc., 1965), 54, 58-9.

¹⁴ Ibid.

It is at this same moment that *H.S.* appears in print available to the public. The songbook may be its own madhouse for each song is a window into a cell in which resides a subject of great spiritual need. In the same moralistic impulse that established the asylum, Playford expressly aspired to a moral cause, positioning the collection against undisciplined and immoral employments of music that merely “[gratified] a delicate Ear, and a wanton Curiosity.”¹⁵ Instead, in marketing it to “pious Persons” who wished to “heighten their Devotion,” Playford moralized and sanctified commercial art.¹⁶ Buying *H.S.* thus affirmed the economic and spiritual assets of the purchaser.

In this way, *H.S.* diverges from other songbooks published at the same time. For instance, songs in John Carr’s five volume anthology of love songs, *Comes Amoris; or the Companion of Love* (1687-94) limit themselves to lighthearted topics: frivolous love and courtship, and musical catches with ribald word play. Few songs exceed two pages, and none require the high levels of vocal skill, stamina, and the histrionics of “The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation” or “Lord, what is Man.” Notably, the notation in *Comes Amoris* is also quite large, requiring little effort to read. The publication seemed to codify that love was simple, fast, and obvious. In addition, publishing five volumes of love songs seems to say that love is faddish.

Though the letter to the reader in the first book is unreadable in the British Library’s copy, the fourth book (1693) contains a dedication to Lionell Duckett that gives us some indication of the purpose of the collection. “‘Tis the utmost of our Ambition,” write John Carr and Samuella Scott, that the volume serve as “a Diversion of Gentlemen whose souls are refin’d enough to relish the Charms of Musick.”¹⁷ Quite different than Henry Playford’s lofty “Letter to the Reader,” whose

¹⁵ Henry Playford, “To the Reader,” *H.S.* 1.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ “Dedication page to Lionell Duckett,” *Comes amoris, or, The companion of love being a choice collection of the newest songs now in use: with a thorow bass to each song for the harpsichord, theorbo, or bass-viol, Volume Four* (London: Printed by Nat. Thompson for John Carr and Sam. Scott, and are to be sold by John Carr at his shop, 1687-94), digital facsimile of the original in the Huntington Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/reel positions: Wing/274:07, 136:4-7).

goals were to “Heighten” devotions, to “[actuate] the Powers of the Soul, and fill the Mind with the brightest and most ravishing Contemplations.”¹⁸

The most solemn song in *Comes Amoris* is the first printing of Henry Purcell’s lengthy song, “O, Solitude” in volume 1 (1687) that does require considerable stamina to accommodate its long phrases. However, the song’s melody is almost entirely stepwise over a simple diatonic ground bass. There is neither coloratura nor difficult recitative while much of the opening melodic material appears again at the close. Though “O, Solitude” was exceptional in the collection for its considerable length (modern recordings run anywhere from four to six minutes), it also exemplifies the “melody-centered,” unornamented, and easy styles of the songs found in *Comes Amoris*.¹⁹

Harmonia Sacra differs from *Comes Amoris* in nearly every way. Unlike John Carr’s love songs “currently in use,” never to be reprinted after their initial publication, Playford (et al.) continuously edited and reprinted *H.S.* into the eighteenth century.²⁰ According to Nahum Tate, projects like *H.S.* (along with his textual companion, *Miscellanea Sacra*) preserved the work of the English “divines” into perpetuity; conversely, *Comes Amoris* was ephemera.²¹ Playford and Purcell carefully considered, compiled, and edited the music found within *H.S.* In a way, the collection was its own kind of roundup, and it served as, like in Foucault’s assessment of the “great hospitals” of the classical age, a “[house] of confinement, [an establishment] of religion and public order, of assistance and punishment, of governmental charity and welfare measures.”²² *H.S.* offered the public several exhibitions of unproductive devotion. As the previous fifty years of English history had shown, devotional practice was neither easy nor was it always successful.

¹⁸ Playford, “To the Reader,” *H.S.* 1.

¹⁹ Matthew Head’s term, “melody-centered,” is useful here for describing the easiness of *Comes Amoris*, “‘If the Pretty Little Hand Won’t Stretch’: Music for the Fair Sex in Eighteenth-Century Germany,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 52, No. 2 (Summer, 1999): 214.

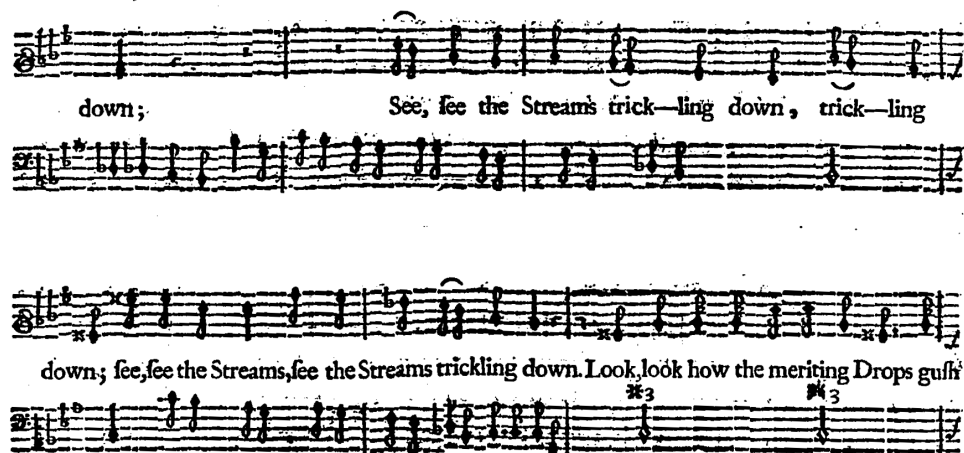
²⁰ Known new editions and reprintings appeared in 1703, 1714, 1726, 1757, 1760, 1780, 1781, 1790, and 1800.

²¹ Nahum Tate, “Preface,” *Miscellanea Sacra, or, Poems on Divine & Moral Subjects* (London: Printed for Henry Playford, 1696), unnumbered page, digital facsimile of the original in the Union Theological Seminary Library (New York), *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography/number: Wing/T195).

²² Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, 43.

The “Divine Song on the Passion of our Savior,” (*H.S.* 2), an anonymous musical setting of an unattributed text, exhibits just this kind of static, unproductive devotion. The song is essentially a series of short, descriptive statements that lead nowhere. Transfixed at the foot of the cross (“My op’ning Eyes are purg’d”), the melodic setting is strangely *dispassionate*. In several places, the slow, calm melodic writing seems more interested in describing the scene than forcing an impassioned reaction of grief. The anonymous composer set the twice repeated line, “See, see the streams trickling down,” in unhurried cascading figures that merely reflect the blood “[gushing] from their wide Wound” (fig. 31):

Figure 31. Unattributed, “A Divine Song on the Passion of our Savior,” *H.S.* 2, mm. 26-30.



While this song is odd for its disturbing text and expressionless melody, the fixation on Christ’s body is also worrying. The speaker first identifies his body on the cross by his physical signifiers:

With ghastly Wounds his Body torn, his Limbs with ruder Scourges worn, no room
for Doubt, Alas! Alas! ‘tis He!

His body then becomes a landscape, which the speaker maps painstakingly.

See, see the Streams that haste to meet another head-long bloody Tide, from his
Hands, and from his Side, to his no less wounded Feet, trickling down, trickling
down.

Like so many other songs in *H.S.*, this song finds no resolution, no revelation. What we get, instead, is nauseating repetition. It is difficult in writing to recreate the song's sickening close with its seven slow repetitions of "Ah see 'em [streams of blood] how they fall!" (fig. 32):

Figure 32. Unattributed, "A Divine Song on the Passion," mm. 47-60.

flo—w: Profuse, and Pro-di-gal, as worthless Streams; Ah see 'em how they fall!

Ah see 'em how they fall! Ah see 'em how they fall! Profuse, and

Pro-di-gal, as worthless Streams; Ah see 'em how they fall! Ah see 'em how they

fa—ll! Ah see 'em, see 'em how they fa—ll! Ah see 'em how they fall!

This Passion song is one of the most transgressive in the collection not just because of the grotesque text, but because it replaces spiritual advancement with goalless fixation.

Many of the other songs in the collection feature a despondent subject who is incapable of finding spiritual resolution. Indeed, the most memorable line in Purcell's "In the Black dismal Dungeon of Despair" (*H.S.* 1) is an angry cry of hopelessness: "*Jesu!* is there no Redemption, no Relief?" The texts cry desperately for redemption, such as in "With sick and famish'd Eyes," (*H.S.* 1)

(“Lord, hear! Shall he that made the Ear, not hear?”), but receive no reply (“The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation,” *H.S.* 2).

If confinement of these transgressors was a “police matter” as Foucault understands it, then the careful editing stands as the policing of the book.²³ Purcell and Playford, compiled (confining), edited (corrected), and published (presented) the book for a public eager to hear, see, and perform it. Like many religious publications of the time, Tate’s *Miscellanea Sacra* (1696), which reproduced many of the song texts in *H.S.*, also claimed to be “a Book design’d for Publick Benefit.”²⁴ If understanding *H.S.* as, in part, a project to assist the poor still seems dubious, Playford appended to the second edition of *H.S.* 1 (1703) Henry Purcell’s choral anthem setting of Psalm 41: 31, “Blessed is he that considereth the Poor and needy.” Here at the end of the book is a collective summons (in four parts) to the “welfare [measure]” that the songbook aspired.²⁵ Amateurs at home could sing this anthem together to remind themselves to give generously to the poor while resting assured that they would be rewarded handsomely: “the Lord shall deliver,” “preserve,” and “comfort him.”

* * *

Where Musick and Devotion joyn
The Way to *Canaan* pleasant is;
We travel on with Songs Divine,
Ravish’d with Sacred Extasies.

Epigraph, *H.S.* 1 (2nd ed., 1703)

Erotica does more than excite us toward ecstasy; it also opens up ways to feel a range of emotions and sensations: from pleasure to frustration, from humor to somberness. The erotic devotions in *H.S.* allowed persons of non-noble pedigree to perform songs of fixation, uninhibited zeal, and excessive desire under a moral and religious aegis. Moreover, as the title epigraph suggests (1703),

²³ Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, 43.

²⁴ Tate, “Dedication to: Her Royal Highness, the Princess Anne of Denmark,” *Miscellanea Sacra*, unnumbered page.

²⁵ Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, 43.

performing devotional songs erotically is a “Way” of spiritual “travel.” Far from simple hedonism, physical pleasure felt in music is a direction and an orientation in devotions: a “[Path] to Heav’n above led thro’ a Heav’n below” (l. 8).²⁶ Ecstatic song delivers us to Canaan, the proverbial Promised Land, while making the journey more “pleasant.” As George Herbert wrote of “Church-Musick”: “SWeetest of sweets...if I travell in your companie, you know the way to heavens doore” (1633, ll. 1, 11-2).²⁷

There is more work to be done on the entire collection as a cultural artifact, such as a study of its editing and publication history, as well as a critical comparison with Playford’s *Divine Companion* (1701). His second collection of devotional songs—a collection of new songs that he commissioned himself—the *Divine Companion*’s release ran concurrently with subsequent editions of *H.S.* Despite these openings for future investigation, exploring the erotic discourses at key moments in *H.S.* clarifies what the body was required, forbidden, and, perhaps, longed to do in seventeenth-century devotional song.

²⁶ Title epigraph, *H.S.* 1, 2nd ed. (1703).

²⁷ George Herbert, “Church-Musick,” *The Temple: Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations* (Cambridge: Thom. Buck and Roger Daniel, 1633), 57, digital facsimile of the original in the British Library, *Early English Books Online* (UMI bibliography name/reel position: STC/890:03).

APPENDIX

Table 1. Named Contributors to *Harmonia Sacra* (1688, 1693), organized by death year.

Poet	Death year	Composer	Death year
Unnamed Lady	?	[Bonifatio] Gratiani	1664
John Dunne [Donne]	1631	Giacomo Carissime [Carissimi]	1674
George Herbert	1633	Pelham Humphrey	1674
Charles I	1649	Matthew Locke [Lock]	1677
Abraham Cowley	1667	Henry Purcell	1695
Jeremy [Jeremiah] Taylor	1667	John Blow	1708
William Fuller	1675	Daniel Purcell	1717
Thomas Flatman	1688	Robert King	1726?
[Bernard Martin]		William Crofts [Croft]	1727
Barrincloe [Berencloew]	1704?	William Turner	1740
Thomas Ken	1711		
John Norris	1711		
Nahum Tate	1715		
Thomas Dereham	1739		

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