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# Barbara Strozzi, *virtuosissima cantatrice*: The Composer's Voice

By ELLEN ROSAND

BARBARA STROZZI was a singer and the author of eight volumes of vocal works published in Venice between 1644 and 1664.<sup>1</sup> All but one of her extant publications are secular; their contents—madrigals, arias, and cantatas—place her directly within the cantata tradition of the mid-seventeenth century, along with such major figures as Luigi Rossi, Giacomo Carissimi, and Antonio Cesti, as well as a host of less well-known composers like Benedetto Ferrari, Nicolò Fontei, Filiberto Laurenzi, Francesco Luccio, Francesco Mannelli, Martino Pesenti, and Giovanni Felice Sances. Objectively, her name stands out in this context because of her sex. Indeed, with the notable exception of her somewhat older contemporary, Francesca Caccini (1589–c. 1640), she is the only known woman among the many aria and cantata composers of seventeenth-century Italy, and, one therefore assumes, among the very few women of the period to have pursued a career as a composer and to have achieved some measure of public recognition.

Although this historical distinction attracted attention to her works early in the present century, when the music of most of her contemporaries still remained relatively ignored, appreciation of her style was predictably limited to an isolation of its supposedly feminine qualities, “great spontaneity, exquisite grace, marvelously fine taste, and characteristics of true femininity.”<sup>2</sup>

If such an appreciation appears irrelevant as well as polemical in its incompleteness, we are now in a better position—with regard to both historical knowledge and social awareness—to attempt a fuller consideration and more just evaluation of a figure like Barbara Strozzi, to measure her achievement within the contexts, social and aesthetic, in which she created. The present study is an attempt to explore some aspects of the milieu in which Strozzi lived and worked and to consider some of the connections between her life and her art.

Barbara Strozzi was born in 1619 in Venice;<sup>3</sup> she lived, apparently for

<sup>1</sup> A list of Strozzi's works will be found below, in footnote 73.

<sup>2</sup> Arnaldo Bonaventura, “Le donne italiane e la musica,” *Rivista musicale italiana*, XXXII (1925), p. 524: “. . . una grande spontaneità, una grazia squisita, una mirabile finezza di gusto e caratteri di vera femminilità.”

<sup>3</sup> Her baptismal record, in the archives of the parish church of Santa Sofia, now housed in the church of San Felice in Venice (*Battezzati* no. 3, 1606–23), is dated 6 August 1619. The document lists her mother as Isabella Griega and her father as “incerto.”

many years, in the home of Giulio Strozzi, a renowned poet and leading figure in the Venetian intellectual scene. First mentioned in a will signed by Giulio in 1628, she is identified as Barbara Valle, daughter of Isabella Garzoni, called “la Greghetta,” Giulio’s long-time servant and heir-designate to his Venetian effects. The will stipulates that, in case of La Greghetta’s death, Barbara is to replace her as heir.<sup>4</sup>

Twenty-two years later, in his final will of 1650, Giulio named Barbara the sole heir of his Venetian possessions, which included his unpublished writings, referring to her as “Barbara di Santa Sofia mia figliuola elettiva, e però chiamata comunemente la Strozzi.”<sup>5</sup> She had evidently assumed his surname sometime earlier, perhaps shortly before 1638, since in that year her name appears in print for the first time as Barbara Strozzi,<sup>6</sup> whereas just two years earlier she had been called merely “la virtuosissima cantatrice” of Giulio Strozzi.<sup>7</sup> Giulio’s expression “figliuola elettiva” may be interpreted as “adopted daughter”: very likely it was also a euphemism for “illegitimate.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Venice, Archivio di Stato, *Notarile, Testamenti chiusi, Atti Erizzo*, Busta 1182.4, 27 April 1628: “Dei mobili, scritti, contratti, e danari, che si troveranno al tempo della mia morte in Venetia . . . voglio, e intendo che sia mia legataria Madonna Isabella Garzoni detta la Greghetta, e questo senza alcun cativo interesse, ma solo per la fedele, e lunga servitù, che insieme con la figliola mi ha prestata in molti anni, non havendo havuto da me alcuna mercede ne salario, onde questo legato le sarà più tosto un dovuto pagamento del servitio prestatomi, che un lascito volontario, e gratuito, che per questo capo doverà esser preferita ad ogni altro, e mancando lei, vadi tutto questo in madonna Barbara Valle sua figliola, a tal che s’ella premorisse s’intenda da M<sup>a</sup> Barbara consegnir il sopradetto beneficio. . . .”

I have been unable to discover when or how Barbara acquired the surname Valle, nor whether “la Greghetta” (the little Greek, an appropriate diminutive for Griega), was already Isabella Garzoni when she gave birth to Barbara or whether, perhaps, she married a Garzoni (or a Valle) afterwards. Could Isabella Griega or “la Greghetta” have been the Venetian courtesan “la Grega detta anche la Greghetta” mentioned in a poem attributed both to Gian Francesco Busenello and Giovanni Garzoni, “Epitaffi iscritti al Garzone dalle puttane”? (Cf. Arthur Livingston, *La vita veneziana nelle opere di Gian Francesco Busenello* (Venice, 1913), pp. 245 f., n. 2, and 424.) The poem is preserved in manuscript, I Vmc, Codice Cicogna 1229, pp. 181 f. (Throughout this article, library sigla are those of the Répertoire Internationale des Sources Musicales.)

<sup>5</sup> Venice, Archivio di Stato, *Notarile, Testamenti, Notaio Claudio Paulini*, B. 799, no. 269, 1 January 1650: “pubblicato in morte il 31 Marzo 1652.” A third will of Giulio Strozzi, dated between the two already mentioned, 15 January 1637, and listed among the *Testamenti chiusi* (Venice, Archivio di Stato, *Notaio Bianchi*, 123.99), seems to have disappeared. If found, it might provide more information about Barbara, perhaps even indicating the date after which she came to be known as Barbara Strozzi.

<sup>6</sup> *Veglia prima de’ Signori academici Unisoni havuta in Venetia in casa del Signor Giulio Strozzi. Alla Molto Illustre Signora la Sig. Barbara Strozzi* (Venice: Sarzina, 1638), dedication to her dated 20 December 1637. The volume contains three *Veglie*, each with its own title page; but the title pages bear the same date and dedication to Barbara Strozzi. A general title page, *Veglie de’ Signori Unisoni*, without either date or dedication, opens the volume.

<sup>7</sup> See Nicolò Fontei, *Delle bizzarrie poetiche . . . libro secondo* (Venice: Magni, 1636), dedication: “Questi armoniosi concerti, detti Bizzarrie Poetiche [furono] animati in gran parte della penna gentile del Sig. Giulio Strozzi per uso della di lui virtuosissima cantatrice. . . .”

<sup>8</sup> Giulio himself was the illegitimate son of Roberto Strozzi, in turn also illegitimate.

Whatever their actual relationship may have been, Barbara's presence in Giulio's household had significant consequences for her career: it guaranteed her an early and full exposure to Venetian musical and literary society.

Although a member of an illustrious Florentine family, Giulio Strozzi had been born in Venice in 1583, and by 1620 he was already a figure of considerable importance in the cultural life of that city. Founder and active member of a succession of academies and a prolific poet and dramatist, he was an energetic supporter of theatrical entertainments—dramatic as well as musical, private as well as public. In providing librettos for many of the operas performed on Venetian stages during the 1630s and '40s, he collaborated with every composer active in the early phase of Venetian opera.<sup>9</sup> Two of his operas inaugurated theaters, and he was involved in the founding and management of one of the most important opera houses of the 1640s, the Teatro Novissimo.<sup>10</sup> Not the least of Strozzi's claims to fame is his authorship of the text that, perhaps more than any other, stimulated the creative faculties of Claudio Monteverdi: *La finta pazza Licori*. Indeed, the disappearance of both the libretto and music of this work must be regarded as one of the great losses in the history of opera.<sup>11</sup>

Through Giulio, then, Barbara Strozzi became acquainted with the intellectual elite of Venice. Indeed, by virtue of her adoption, if not of her birth, she was enabled to enter a world which was, apparently, closed to other members of her sex. A comparative glance at the background of the most prominent and successful Italian woman composer of the period, Francesca Caccini, daughter of professional musicians and exposed *per forza* to music

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Roberto Strozzi died in Venice. He may have been buried in the church of Santa Sofia, to which he had donated the funds for a chapel. Indeed, this Strozzi family connection with the church in which Barbara was baptized lends further credence to the supposition that she was born a Strozzi. See Pompeo Litta, *Delle famiglie celebri di Italia*, VI (Milan, 1839), "Strozzi," tavola XIX.

<sup>9</sup> Composers who collaborated with Giulio Strozzi during the 1630s and '40s included Claudio Monteverdi (*La Proserpina rapita*, 1630), Francesco Manelli (*La Delia*, 1639), Francesco Sacrati (*La Finta pazza*, 1641), Filiberto Laurenzi, Tarquinio Merula, Carlo Crivelli, Alessandro Leardini, Benedetto Ferrari (*La Finta savia*, 1643), and possibly Francesco Cavalli (*Il Romolo e Remo*, 1645), but see below, n. 62.

<sup>10</sup> For further information on Strozzi's life and works, in addition to Litta, *Famiglie*, see: *Le glorie degli Incogniti ovvero gli buomini illustri dell'accademia de' Signori Incogniti* (Venice: Valvasense, 1647), pp. 281 ff.; Claudio Sartori, "La prima diva della lirica italiana: Anna Renzi," *Nuova rivista musicale italiana*, I (1968), pp. 432 f.; Sartori, "Un fantomatico compositore per un'opera che forse non era un'opera, *ibid.*, V (1971), p. 797, n. 10; Lorenzo Bianconi and Thomas Walker, "Dalla 'Finta pazza' alla 'Veremonda': Storie di Febiarmonici," *Rivista italiana di musicologia*, X (1975), pp. 410 ff., and Benito Brancaforte and Charlotte Lang Brancaforte, *La primera traducción del 'Lazarillo de Tormes' por Giulio Strozzi* (Ravenna, 1977), pp. 8 f.

<sup>11</sup> See Monteverdi's especially revealing correspondence with Alessandro Striggio on the subject of Strozzi's libretto among the letters of 1627: Domenico de'Paoli, ed., *Claudio Monteverdi: Lettere, dediche, e prefazioni* (Rome, 1973), letters 91–104, pp. 240 ff.

from infancy, suggests that such an environment may have been essential for the development of a female composer.<sup>12</sup>

For most of Barbara's career—first as a singer, later as a composer—the guiding and sustaining hand of her father is perceptible in the background. From at least as early as 1634 Giulio arranged for her to sing informally at his home, where she was evidently heard and appreciated by various *letterati* and musicians. At least one of these, Nicolò Fontei, was inspired to compose two volumes of songs for her, his *Bizzarrie poetiche* of 1635 and 1636, a project most likely encouraged by Giulio, who supplied most of the texts himself.<sup>13</sup>

Soon thereafter, in 1637, Giulio institutionalized her performances with the creation of an academy, the Accademia degli Unisoni, designed, at least in part, to exhibit her talents to a wider audience;<sup>14</sup> its meetings continued to be held in his own house. A publication of that academy, *Le Veglie de' Signori Unisoni* (1638), which is dedicated to Barbara, cites the members by name and describes three of their gatherings.<sup>15</sup> These consisted of discourses by the various academicians, rhetorical exercises on typical debating subjects. While the topic of the first session was whether slander stimulates or inhibits virtue, the second and third sessions both concerned love: what fortune a particular flower will bring in love, and whether love causes happiness or unhappiness. And these presentations were liberally interspersed with music.

Barbara Strozzi apparently functioned as mistress of ceremonies, suggest-

<sup>12</sup> For the most up-to-date biographical information concerning Francesca Caccini see Liliana Pannella, "Francesca Caccini," *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, XVI (Rome, 1973), pp. 19 ff.

<sup>13</sup> *Bizzarrie poetiche* [vol. 1] (Venice: Magni, 1635); dedication signed 13 September 1635: "A V. S. . . . consacro queste armonie, uscitemi dalla penna per compiacerne principalmente la gentilissima, e virtuosissima donzella la Signora Barbara.

"Ella diede à me occasion di comporle, e à V. S. di sentirle alcuna volta honorar di quella Gratia, ch'è nata per agguagliarsi all'altre Gratie, e quasi decima sorella per avanzarsi con l'età sopra il choro dell'altre Muse.

"Il Signor Giulio Strozzi, chi porge campo franco à si degni gareggiamenti, mi somministrò l'armi delle parole." For the relevant passage of the dedication to vol. II of the *Bizzarrie poetiche*, see above, n. 7.

<sup>14</sup> The founding of academies came naturally to Strozzi. He had already established one in Rome, the Ordinati (1608), and another in Venice, the Dubbiosi (see Francesco Saverio Quadrio, *Storia e ragione d'ogni poesia* (Bologna, 1739), VII, p. 8; and Michele Maylander, *Storia delle accademie d'Italia* (Bologna, 1926–30), II, pp. 224 f., and IV, p. 140).

<sup>15</sup> See above, n. 6. The *Veglie* provided the chief source of information about the Unisoni to subsequent scholars: see, e.g., Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane* (Venice, 1824–53), V, pp. 278 f. and 663. Regarding the probably brief life span of the group, Cicogna, p. 279, theorizes: "Io tengo fermo che questa accademia abbia avuta corta vita, perche lo Strozzi pochi anni dopo la sua fondazione, forse nel 1645, dovette girsene a Roma; ed avendola egli eretta nella propria casa, e consacrata ai distinti talenti, ed al valor nel canto, e, sto per dire, viepiù alla bellezza e alle grazie della sua figliuola adottiva, ch'era corteggiata da'suoi adoratori e perciò stesso accademici, non è fuor di ragione ch'abbia ad un tratto cessato nella dura dipartita, e tanto più che ci mancano sin qui documenti a poterne prolungare la sua esistenza." See also Maylander, *Storie delle accademie*, V, pp. 396 f.

ing the subjects on which the members were to display their forensic ingenuity, judging the discourses, and awarding prizes to the best of them; she also performed songs during the course of the meetings.<sup>16</sup> In addition, on at least one occasion, she read both sides of an argument written by two of the academy's most illustrious members, Giovanni Francesco Loredano and Matteo Dandolo. The subject of this debate, to which we shall return, concerned whether tears or song be the more potent weapon in love, and it seems to have been explicitly designed for Barbara herself.<sup>17</sup>

The members of the Unisoni mentioned in the *Veglie* were all notable figures in the cultural life of Venice. Moreover, almost without exception they belonged as well to an older and much larger Venetian academy, the Accademia degli Incogniti. Indeed, the Unisoni seem to have functioned as a musical sub-group of the Incogniti, whose own meetings do not appear to have included music.<sup>18</sup> The Accademia degli Incogniti was founded in 1630 by the patrician Giovanni Francesco Loredano. Nearly every intellectual of any importance in Venice, and many from other Italian cities as well, belonged to the group, which represented a major political and intellectual force in mid-seicento Venetian society. The Incogniti were united by a libertine philosophy derived in part from the teachings of the Aristotelian Cesare Cremonini at the University of Padua.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Veglia seconda*, p. 4: "Havevano i Musici fatta pompa delle maraviglie della loro Virtù, con applauso, e con ammirazione de gl'ascoltanti; quando la Signora Barbara . . . invitò con quest'Aria gl'Academici al Discorso." And the text of her song, "Dite amanti il vostro fiore," follows on p. 5. At the end of the same session she sings again (p. 117): "... Dopo la Signora Barbara invitò la Virtù de gli Academici per la futura Veglia con i seguenti versi . . . ; Così cantò." And there follows another text, which begins: "Io da parte di Thebi" (p. 118). Unfortunately, no music for these texts has as yet come to light, either among Strozzi's own works or those of her contemporaries.

Barbara Strozzi was evidently not the only musician present at the meetings, for the *Veglie* make several references to groups of singers (e.g., p. 10: "[hanno cantato] le più rare voci del secolo"). For the intriguing possibility that Monteverdi may have performed at a meeting, see below, n. 34.

<sup>17</sup> Although not mentioned in the *Veglie*, the text of this debate was printed twice in the same year and by the same publisher as the *Veglie*. See *La Contesa del canto e delle lagrime. Discorsi academici. Recitati dalla Sig. Barbara Strozzi nell'academia de gli Unisoni* (Venice: Sarzina, 1638), I Vmc Op. Cic. 400. 17; and Giovanni Francesco Loredano, *Bizzarrie academiche* (Venice: Sarzina, 1638), pp. 182 ff. This text is discussed in fuller detail below, pp. 278–80.

<sup>18</sup> For some idea of the nature of their meetings, see the *Discorsi academici de' Signori Incogniti havuti in Venetia nell'academia dell'Illustrissimo Signor G. F. Loredano* (Venice: Sarzina, 1635).

<sup>19</sup> For general information on the Incogniti, see Michele Battaglia, *Delle accademie veneziane* (Venice, 1826), pp. 41 ff., and Maylander, *Storia delle accademie*, III, p. 205. Biographies of 106 of the members, including a portrait of each, are printed in *Le glorie degli Incogniti*. For a more specific discussion of the Incogniti within the context of 17th-century libertinism, see Giorgio Spini, *Ricerca dei libertini. La teoria dell'impostura delle religioni nel seicento italiano* (Rome, 1950), pp. 139 ff. Further bibliography on various aspects of the academy is found in Bianconi and Walker, "Dalla 'Finta pazza'," p. 418, n. 165.

The academy comprised poets, philosophers, historians, and clerics—all of them prolific writers—and their publications included a large number of popular novels and romances, poetry of various kinds, letters, historical and religious tracts, academic discourses, and opera librettos.<sup>20</sup> In fact, the Incogniti membership rolls listed nearly every name associated with the opera libretto in Venice of the 1640s, the decade that witnessed the establishment of opera as a regular, seasonal occurrence, a central part of Venetian life.<sup>21</sup> Among the Incogniti librettists we find Gian Francesco Busenello, Giacomo Badoaro, Pietro Paolo Bissari, Nicolò Beregan, Giovanni Battista Fusconi, Scipione Errico, Maiolino Bissaccioni, and, of course, Giulio Strozzi. Other members, although they did not actually write librettos, provided the subject matter, the *invenzioni*, on which librettos were subsequently based.<sup>22</sup>

The nature of Barbara Strozzi's relationship to the Incogniti is somewhat ambiguous. Although her contact, through the Unisoni, with various Incogniti is documented by the *Veglie* and by her settings of some of their poetry, she was evidently not considered an official member of the academy. Whether this was because she was a woman or a musician is uncertain, since neither of these groups seems to have been represented among the elite membership. Although occasionally invited to attend academic meetings as special guests, women evidently were not traditionally admitted to membership in academies—at least not in Florence, and there is no evidence to suggest that Venetian academies were any more liberal in this regard.<sup>23</sup> Musicians—who, on the

<sup>20</sup> A number of the Incogniti publications are briefly described in Cicogna, *Saggio di bibliografia veneziana* (Venice, 1847), pp. 558 f. (nos. 4228–33).

<sup>21</sup> The attendant changes in the conception of opera during this period, and its development from an essentially private, academic entertainment to a commercial theatrical undertaking, are fully discussed in Bianconi and Walker, "Dalla 'Finta pazza,'" pp. 410 ff.

<sup>22</sup> One such member was Pietro Michele. See his *Rime . . . parte prima* (Venice: Guerigli, 1642), where a prefatory note signed by Niccolò Bertini and dated 20 November 1642 informs the reader that a libretto printed just a short time earlier, under the title *Amore innamorato*, by Giovanni Battista Fusconi, was actually Michele's own *Psiche*, which in turn was based on a subject provided by Loredano himself. Bianconi and Walker, "Dalla 'Finta pazza,'" p. 422, n. 179, suggest that a thorough investigation of Incogniti collections such as the *Cento novelle amorose dei signori accademici* (Venice: Guerigli, 1651) might reveal additional sources for the subject matter of various librettos of the period. In a more general way, the Incogniti's libertine philosophy would seem to provide a key to the interpretation of some of these same librettos, particularly such problematic texts as Busenello's *Incoronazione di Poppea*. For a tentative interpretation along these lines, see Francesco Degrada, "Gian Francesco Busenello e il libretto della *Incoronazione di Poppea*," *Claudio Monteverdi e il suo tempo*, ed. Raffaello Monterosso (Verona, 1969), pp. 81 ff.

<sup>23</sup> For Florentine academic traditions, see Eric W. Cochrane, *Tradition and Enlightenment in the Tuscan Academies, 1690–1800* (Chicago, 1961), pp. 5 ff. See also Edmond Strainchamps, "New Light on the *Accademia degli Elevationi* of Florence," *Musical Quarterly*, LXII (1976), pp. 514 ff.

Sixteenth-century Ferrara, however, offered a striking and exceptional example of an academy for women: the gatherings of "nobilissime e graziosissime dame," during which three renowned ladies, Tarquinia Molza and Lucrezia and Isabella Bendidio, contributed to the

other hand, often enjoyed full academic status—were apparently also excluded from the Incogniti, although their participation in the Unisoni meetings is, of course, clearly documented.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the fact that there were no women academicians among the Incogniti, the academy itself, involved with all the controversial moral and intellectual issues of the day, was manifestly interested in the question of feminism. Academic concern with the position of women in society had been sparked by the appearance of a series of anti-feminist and feminist tracts, pseudo-scientific, intentionally polemical pamphlets arguing, for example,

academic discussions as well as to the musical entertainment. See Annibale Romei, *Dialoghi* (Ferrara, 1585), *passim*, and Angelo Solerti, *Ferrara e la corte Estense* (Città di Castello, 1900), pp. 186 ff. and 205 ff.

The presence of women at some meetings of the Vicentine *Accademia Olimpica* provided the occasion for an academic publication by the poet—Olimpico as well as Incognito—Pietro Paolo Bissari, *Le scorse olimpiche* (Venice: Valvasense, 1648). Bissari's introduction to the volume cites the presence of female guests among the reasons for the high quality of the discourses delivered at the academy (and published by him): "... Il numero, e qualità delle Musiche, il nome di quell'accademia, la maestà del Teatro, e di quel concorso; ciò tutto par, che ricerchi altezza, e gravità di materie, quanto per altro in ragionar per lo più a gentiliss. Dame per che concetto non s'ammetta, che soave non sia, e gentile." Several of the discourses, moreover, are specifically directed toward justifying women as worthy participants in academies. In the first one, "Le dame academiche," after listing the accomplishments of various famous women, living and dead, Bissari invokes the renowned Ferrarese exception. "... In tanto io mi dilungo, & inavveduto non vedo, che soverchi son questi giri per capitar al centro, che già proposi, e che lasciata ogni altra, una sola Tarquinia Molza mi vi conduce. Cercasi, se sian habili le donne alle scienze? il mostro questa Dama ad'ogni huomo di sua età in molte scienze primaria, in nessuna seconda: Chiedesi forse se sian ammesse per Academiche le Dame? fù ammessa questa, orò, discorse nelle più famose Academie: trattasi d'instituir Academia di Dame? l'institui questa nella gran corte di Ferrara, condotta per ciò da quel magnanimo Alfonso, che ben vide refflesso da questa il più bel raggio de' Suoi splendori."

The Incogniti evidently hosted women as guests but not as members. One of Loredano's writings makes the distinction quite clear. In his discourse "Se ami più ardentemente l'huomo ò la donna, Introduzione al problema" (*Bizzarrie academiche*, Venice: Guerigli, 1670, parte seconda, p. 165), he refers to one of the female guests: "Una di queste Virtuossissime Dame . . . versata nelle vaghezze de i Poeti, e nella dottrine de' Filosofi, che honora di continuo con la sua bellissima presenza i nostri congressi; mentre attendevo l'hora dell'Academia con l'occasione d'un Discorso mi ricercò, se amasse più ardentemente l'huomo ò la Donna." During the course of his own argument in favor, naturally, of men as lovers, he reports that he was interrupted by the woman who offered arguments in support of her own sex. He concludes his report of their conversation by admitting that he was moved by his adversary's arguments: "Io veramente . . . all'eloquenza di questa Signora sono rimasto se non convinto, almeno confuso." Loredano allows the lady to have the last word only because the formal meeting is about to begin: "Essendo dunque sopravvenuta l'hora di proporre il Problema, hò risoluto supplicarvi à giudicare le nostre differenze, & a risolvere con la vostra inimitabile virtù, se la Donna ama più ardentemente dell'huomo." The argument was clearly extra-curricular to the formal academic meeting.

<sup>24</sup> Academies of musicians and poets were a specialty of late-16th- and early-17th-century Florence, and 16th-century Venetian academies certainly included musician members. See, for example, the *Accademia Veneziana seconda*, founded in 1593, whose statutes required that a musician be included among the members; see Domenico Maria Pellegrini, "Prospetto dell'Accademia veneziana seconda," *Giornale dell'italiana letteratura*, XXXII (1812), p. 364.

whether women had souls or even belonged to the human race.<sup>26</sup> The Incogniti fueled the fire of this debate by encouraging publication of these and other similar pamphlets and by writing some of their own; this activity must be viewed as part of their fundamental desire to explode accepted dogma, a feature of their libertine posture. For a number of them the problem of women cloistered in nunneries took on special importance: These represented ideal objects of interest for the Incogniti, a natural fusion of their anti-clerical and licentious predilections.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to being fashionable, the feminist issue, both pro and con, well suited the Incogniti's particular brand of salacious iconoclasm. The intentional ambiguity inherent in the issue for them, as well as its centrality to their concerns, is epitomized by their adoption for the emblem of the academy the motto *Ignoto Deo*. One of several invented justifications for the origin of their name, this motto appears on the title page of one of Loredano's many lascivious volumes, the *Sei dubbi amorosi* (1647). It is inscribed at the base of a veiled statue, which Loredano identifies as the unknown woman whose questions provided the *raison d'être* of his book. In his characteristically irreverent manner, he equates her with the unknown god worshipped by the Athenians, as reported by St. Paul.<sup>27</sup> Similarly veiled women, although unaccompanied by the motto, grace the title pages of several subsequent works by Loredano as well.<sup>28</sup> That the symbolic god of the Incogniti should be a veiled woman seems quite appropriate: their objectives and ideals, their infusion of irreverence into serious moral issues, their insistent association of religion and sex—all this seems quite properly symbolized in the worship of such an idol.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Spini, *Ricerca dei libertini*, pp. 203 ff.

<sup>27</sup> For a discussion of the polemics of feminism during the 17th century, in addition to Spini (n. 25 above), see Emilio Zanette, *Suor Archangela monaca del Seicento veneziano* (Venice-Rome, 1961), pp. 211 ff. The illustrious Incognito Busenello was particularly interested in the ambivalent feelings of women cloistered in nunneries. See, on this subject, Livingston, *La vita veneziana*, pp. 160 ff., and 254 ff. Indeed, Busenello addressed a number of his love poems to Venetian nuns: see his *Sonetti morali ed amorosi*, ed. Arthur Livingston (Venice, 1911), pp. 107 ff.

An allusive and exceedingly topical confirmation of Unisoni (and Incogniti) involvement in the feminist issue occurs in the *Veglia seconda de Signori Unisoni*, p. 47. The speaker is the cleric Giovanni Battista Toretti. Having described a lengthy dream sequence in the realm of Cupid, he reports that he was rudely awakened by the printer Giacomo Sarzina, who brought him six of his *Apologie*, recently gone to press, in favor of "Lusso, e de gl'Ornamenti Donneschi." This is a reference to Toretti's rejoinder to a much-publicized anti-feminist satire by Francesco Buoninsegni, the *Satira menippea contro il lusso donnesco*, which had appeared in Venice in 1638. In fact, Toretti's response, inspired by Loredano, was actually published by Sarzina in the same year (see Zanette, *Suor Archangela*, p. 258).

<sup>27</sup> *Sei dubbi amorosi*, reprint in Loredano, *Opere*, II (Venice: Guerigli, 1656), p. 5: "... Gli Atheniesi essero un Tempio a un Dio non conosciuto, non sarà dunque gran cosa, che v'adori senza conoscervi."

<sup>28</sup> For a full discussion of the iconography of the Incogniti emblem see Lionello Puppi, "Ignoto Deo," *Arte veneta*, XXIII (1969), pp. 169 ff.

The rhetorical stance assumed by the academy as a group toward the female sex did not, however, preclude respectful intellectual relationships with women. The correspondence of Loredano, for example, with the controversial nun Archangela Tarabotti indicates that he took seriously both her abilities as a writer and her position as an ardent and angry feminist.<sup>29</sup> Barbara Strozzi may well have enjoyed a similar respect. She was, in any case, clearly an initiate into their occult world, for her *Opus 3* (1654) prominently displays the academy's trademark: the inscription *Ignotae Deae* appears in the center of the page normally reserved in her other publications for the dedication.<sup>30</sup>

Compared to the ambiguity surrounding her relationship to the Incogniti, Barbara's position within the Unisoni would seem rather clear: she was publicly acknowledged as its hostess and guiding spirit. Yet this position evidently raised questions in the minds of her contemporaries. To at least one seventeenth-century Venetian observer, Barbara's function seems to have evoked the traditional association between music-making and sexual license so well documented in Cinquecento Venice. For a manuscript series of satires describing meetings of the Unisoni finds numerous opportunities to impune every aspect of the academy, including the virtue of its hostess. The manuscript, some seventy-five folios in length, consists of eight rather biting satires

<sup>29</sup> See Loredano, *Lettere . . . parte prima . . . decimanona impressione* (Venice: Guerigli, 1676), pp. 24, 233, 318, 320, 413, and 418. The sarcastic tone of several of these letters might cast doubt on the sincerity of some of the more appreciative ones, but Loredano's remarks concerning Tarabotti's works in letters addressed to others confirm his support (see for example, the letter to Giovanni Polani praising Tarabotti's *Paradiso monacale*, (*Lettere*, pp. 45 ff.)). Tarabotti evidently corresponded regularly with several Incogniti in addition to Loredano, among them Bissari, Giovanni and Matteo Dandolo, Nicolò Crasso, and Francesco Pona. Two members of the academy, in fact, seem to have been instrumental in securing the publication of her correspondence (Tarabotti, *Lettere* (Venice: Guerigli, 1650)). The author dedicates her volume to Loredano: ". . . Conoscendo, poscia epilogarsi in V. Eccel. tutte le qualità, ch'hò ammirate in altri, risolvo di raccogliere tutte le Lettere in un solo volume, e con esso riverir la di lei persona . . ." (p. 3); and her dedication is followed by a letter to the publisher signed by Giovanni Dandolo, which defends the letters, in addition to various other works by Tarabotti, as being worthy of publication. His letter concludes: ". . . Per fine vi ringrazio della stima, ch'havete fatto del mio giuditio, e vi prego darmi occasione di farvi servitio. . . ."

<sup>30</sup> In addition to its lack of dedication, Strozzi's *Op. 3*—her first publication since the death of her father in 1652—differs from her other volumes in a number of ways. Considerably shorter, it contains only 11 pieces—fifty-five pages of music—in contrast to the other prints, all of which contain well over 100 pages of music. Moreover, the longest—and most interesting—piece in the collection, the lament on pages 15–22, had already been published three years before in her *Op. 2*, the only instance of a repetition in all of Strozzi's printed works. These two features, the brevity of the volume and the reuse of a lament, suggest that the publication may have been hurried for some reason. Since not a single text here bears an attribution, it seems plausible to suggest that the poets may have been Incogniti and that Strozzi may have intended the volume as a kind of compliment or tribute to the group. See below, n. 82, for the suggestion that Loredano may have been responsible for these texts. (The special relevance of the repeated lament text for the Incogniti is discussed below, p. 000). Might Strozzi's use of the feminine form of the motto, *Ignotae Deae*, possibly be read as a subtle and spirited correction of the title page of the *Sei dubbj amorosi* (see above, n. 27), where the motto is given in the masculine form even though it is supposed to symbolize a woman?

in the form of dialogues and letters;<sup>31</sup> the final two letters, in their own defense, are purportedly signed by Giulio and Barbara Strozzi.<sup>32</sup> The second and third satires are dated 23 November and 21 December 1637, and the rest of the contents of the manuscript probably originated at about the same time, that is, perhaps slightly before the appearance of the Unisoni publication, the *Veglie*.<sup>33</sup>

Although the author of the *Satire* is not named, a signature at the end of

<sup>31</sup> *Satire, et altre raccolte per l'Accademia de gl'Unisoni in casa di Giulio Strozzi* (I Vnm Classe X, codice 115 (7193)). The manuscript comprises the following sections: i (1<sup>r</sup>–13<sup>v</sup>): “Sentimenti Gioiosi Havuti in Parnaso per l'Accademia de gl'Unisoni”; ii (15<sup>r</sup>–28<sup>r</sup>): “A Giulio Strozzi. L'Accademico senza nome,” signed “Di Parnaso li 23 Novembre 1637. Dei Sentimenti Gioiosi avuti in Parnaso per l'Accademia de gl'Unisoni, Parte Seconda”; iii (31<sup>r</sup>–47<sup>v</sup>): “Li furti Del Vendramino dalle muse puniti”; iv (51<sup>r</sup>–53<sup>r</sup>): “Copia di lettera scritta al Ecc.mo Crasso di ragguaglio dell'ultima Academia dello Strozzi,” signed “Di Venetia li 21 dicembre 1637. L'Incognito”; v (55<sup>r</sup>–62<sup>r</sup>): “De i sentimenti gioiosi in Parnaso per l'Accademia de gl'Unisoni”; vi (63<sup>r</sup>–65<sup>r</sup>): “All. m.<sup>to</sup> III<sup>e</sup> come Fratello Il Sig<sup>r</sup> Giulio Strozzi. Venetia,” signed “L'academico spensierato”; vii (67<sup>r</sup>–70<sup>v</sup>): “Condoglianza fatta avanti la maestà d'Apollo dal Sig. Giulio Strozzi per una Satira uscita fuori con[tra] di lui l'anno 1637”; viii (73<sup>r</sup>–74<sup>v</sup>): “Difesa della Sigra Barbara Strozzi per la Quinta Satira fatta sopra gl'Unisoni.”

Two other manuscript versions of excerpts from the *Satire* are located in the Biblioteca Correr in Venice: Miscellanea P. D. 308C/IX contains both satires i and ii and is dated 23 November; Codice Cicogna 2999/18, “Sentimenti Giocosi havuti in Parnaso Per l'Accademia delli Unisoni” contains satire 1. (This may be the manuscript to which Cicogna (*Iscrizioni veneziane*, V, p. 279) referred as Correr Miscellany 1008.)

<sup>32</sup> The letter signed “Barbara Strozzi” is at once too insipid and too bawdy to have been written as a serious defense, while “Giulio's” letter only succeeds in compounding the insults it ostensibly attempts to counter.

<sup>33</sup> Although the Marciana *Satire* manuscript is in a single hand, its two different dates (23 November and 21 December 1637) and two ostensibly different signatures (“L'Incognito,” and “L'academico spensierato”) suggest that it is probably a contemporary copy of various satires written at slightly different times, possibly by different authors. The manuscript versions of satires i and ii in the Biblioteca Correr, moreover, are different enough from each other and from the more complete Marciana manuscript to indicate that both they and the Marciana manuscript were copied from another source, or more probably several others. In fact, this evidence seems to indicate that anti-Unisoni satires, particularly satire i, may have been in general circulation late in 1637. Could the satires have preceded the *Veglie de Signori Unisoni*? Could they have provoked a published response?

Although the *Veglie* bear a dedication date of 20 December 1637, the full title page indicates that the volume was not published until 1638. *More veneto*, this means it appeared after March 1st, more than two months (and possibly as much as fourteen months) later than the date of its dedication; and it follows the two dated satires, ii and iii, by approximately the same length of time. Since the first satire is obviously earlier than the second, even though it is undated, we may assume that it preceded the *Veglie* by more than three months.

In fact, it is clear from its contents that the first *Veglia*, at least, was a response to the first satire. The debating topic of the *Veglia*, whether slander increases or detracts from virtue (“Se la maledicenza sia sprone, ò freno della Virtù”)—the only non-amorous subject in all the *Veglie*—is specifically directed toward the satire. Various debaters proclaim the impotence of slander in the form of satires, and one of them, Vincenzo Moro, speaks directly to the issue of the effect of slander on academies, concluding, positively, that “. . . le maledicenze sono formenti, sono sproni alle virtuose operationi dell'Academie . . .” (p. 32).

Furthermore, the debate reported in the first satire, the dressing of Cupid, is not published

one of them ("L'Incognito") and their pervasively libertine tone suggest that an Incognito may indeed have been responsible for them.<sup>34</sup> Among the slurs against Barbara Strozzi's virtue we might cite the remark made following a description of her distribution of flowers to the academicians: "It is a fine thing to distribute the flowers after having already surrendered the fruit,"<sup>35</sup> or, somewhat earlier, among the comments on her chastity, that "to claim and to be [chaste] are very different; all the same, I too consider her extremely chaste since as a woman with a liberal upbringing she could pass the time with some lover, yet she nevertheless concentrates all her affection on a castrato."<sup>36</sup> And

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in the *Veglie* although the first *Veglia* contains several references to a previous session during which Cupid was clothed. The discussions described in the subsequent satires, on the other hand, are all recognizable from the *Veglie*. (At least one of the discourses on the dressing of Cupid, that delivered by Loredano, was published, although not in the *Veglie*. See Loredano, *Bizzarrie accademiche*, 1638, pp. 93 ff., where it is followed by those two of his speeches that were published in the *Veglie*.)

<sup>34</sup> *Satire* ii (Marciana MS, 18<sup>r</sup>) discusses the identity of the author of the first satire. Various Incogniti names are mentioned and discarded, among them Busenello, Ferrante Pallavicino, and Toretti, and the speaker finally concludes by proposing Loredano as the author "perche egli non può offerire in Venetia altre Accademie che la sua." As with almost everything in the *Satire*, the veracity of this remark must be questioned, especially since Loredano (as well as the other Incogniti mentioned) was himself a participating member of the Unisoni.

It seems possible that Busenello was responsible for the *Satire*, particularly those most caustic against Paolo Vendramin. Not only had the two poets quarreled at around that time, but Busenello was a notorious satirist; further, he was not an active Unisono. In any case, he surely knew the *Satire* well since he mentions them in a letter against Vendramin written to Cardinal Ottoboni in Rome in 1639; in tone and style, moreover, this letter is not unlike the *Satire*. See Arthur Livingston, "Una scappatella di Polo Vendramin e un sonetto di Gian Francesco Busenello," *Fanfulla della domenica*, XXXIX (24 September 1911), p. 6. Livingston surmises elsewhere (*La vita veneziana*, p. 97), that Vendramin attributed the *Satire* to Busenello.

According to the *Satire*, the Unisoni seems to have provided a central meeting place for all of cultured Venice. One intriguing passage, in the fifth satire (61<sup>v</sup>), should at least be mentioned since it concerns Claudio Monteverdi's musical participation at a session and, more importantly, asserts his guiding role in the origins of public opera in Venice. The relevant passage of dialogue reads as follows: "*Momo*: [Strozzi] gode di fare affaticare nelle compositioni musicali del continuo Il Monteverde, che mi fà compassione non sapendo molte volte dove dare del capo con quelle sue poesie bizare, e fantastiche. *Apollo*: Anco il Monteverde capita in quel luogo? *Momo*: Vi vien condoto non so perchè, et Dio voglia non se avanzi anco sopra delle scene dove tutti li altri sono per capitare una di queste sere con una Comica, et musicale rappresentatione. *Aristotile*: Se non vi sarà in atto vi potrà essere in potenza perche haverà consigliato forte il tutto."

If this satire actually dates from late 1637 or early 1638, and if these remarks can be trusted (in fact, satiric intent does not seem particularly appropriate here), it documents Monteverdi's *retroscena* involvement in the earliest Venetian operas, even though his own works for the stage did not begin to appear publicly in Venice until the revival of *Arianna* in 1640.

<sup>35</sup> "Bella cosa donare i fiori dopo aver dispensati i frutti" (44<sup>r</sup>).

<sup>36</sup> "... Il professare è l'essere sono termini differenti, tuttavia io anco la vedo castissima, mentre potendo è come femina, è come educata in libertà passarvi il tempo con qualche amore ella nondimeno impiega tutte le sue affettioni in un castrato" (12<sup>v</sup>).

later, her relationship to a castrato is offered as the explanation for her never having become pregnant!<sup>37</sup>

To be sure, a strong link between courtesans and music existed during the sixteenth century in Venice,<sup>38</sup> and music was not considered a particularly suitable occupation for a well-brought-up woman.<sup>39</sup> That a similar connection still existed in the seventeenth century is illustrated by the colorful history of such singers as Anna Maria Sardelli, notorious for her combination of amorous and musical exploits.<sup>40</sup>

It would be unfair, on the basis of the slanderous (even if jesting) remarks in some anonymous satires against her and the traditional yet general association between courtesans and music making, to venture an opinion on the morals of Barbara Strozzi—unfair, and perhaps irrelevant. Nevertheless, in view of the nature of her music, her choice of texts, her subject matter, her concentration on love themes (which will be discussed in detail below), it is not inconceivable that she may, indeed, have been a courtesan, highly skilled in the art of love as well as music.

If the anonymous *Satire* impugned her virtue, her musical talents were celebrated, on the other hand, by a number of different observers. First and most specifically, in 1634, Nicolò Fontei praises her “bold and graceful manner” of singing.<sup>41</sup> The *Veglie* are more expansive, if less specific, in their

<sup>37</sup> “Che ringratii pure la moda, overo l’infecundità di castrati?” (257).

<sup>38</sup> See Rita Casagrande, *Le cortigiane veneziane nel cinquecento* (Milan, 1968), pp. 189 and 199, for a brief discussion of some of the Venetian courtesans who were particularly well-known for their musical abilities. See also the description of the funeral of the famous courtesan-musician Angela Trevisana in Marino Sanuto, *I Diarii*, ed. Rinaldo Fulin et al., XIX (Venice, 1887), col. 138: “[A di 16 Ottobre 1514] In questa matina, fo seputa a Santa Caterina Lucia Trevisana, qual cantava per excellentia. Era dona di tempo tuta cortesana, e molto nominata apresso musici, dove a caxa sua si riduceva tutte le virtù. Et morite eri di note, et ozi 8 zorni si farà per li musici una solenne messa a Santa Caterina, funebre, et altri officii per l’anima sua.”

<sup>39</sup> See Pietro Aretino’s declaration (published in his *Primo libro de le lettere* of 1538) that “i suoni, i canti e le lettere che sanno le femmine [sono] le chiavi che aprono le porte della pudicizia loro,” and—as if confirming this judgment—Pietro Bembo’s response to his daughter’s request to learn to play an instrument (10 December 1541): “Quanto alla gratia che tu mi richiedi, che io sia contento che tu impari di sonar di monacordia, ti fo intender quello che tu forse per la tua troppa tenera età non puoi sapere: che il sonare è cosa da donna vana et leggera. Et io vorrei che tu fossi la più gentile e la più casta et pudica donna che viva . . . e contentati nell’essercito delle lettere et del cucire. . . .” Both statements are quoted and translated in Alfred Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal* (Princeton, 1949), I, pp. 94 f., 181 ff.

<sup>40</sup> See Bianconi and Walker, “Dalla ‘Finta pazza,’” pp. 441 f. Musical and sexual activities were linked in a variety of ways during the sixteenth century; musical terms were frequently overlaid with sexual meaning, as in Busenello’s poem in Venetian dialect, “Tastizè su sto tasto da vu soli,” (quoted in Livingston, *La vita veneziana*, p. 237) or the text of the last piece in Barbara’s Op. 2: “La mia donna perche canta, non vuol dir ne si ne no; Ma parlar sempre si vanta, con la sol fà mi re do. . . .”

<sup>41</sup> “S’io potessi portar nel libro l’ardita, e leggiadra maniera con la quale questa pudica Sirena [la Barbara] e solita di spiegarle [queste armonie], varrebbe assai à V. S. l’esser un nuovo Ulisse, acciò con l’innata & ammirata sua prudenza si potesse difender dalle lusinghe del canto.” Fontei, *Bizzarrie poetiche* . . . [vol. I], dedication signed 13 September 1634.

admiration. The dedication of the volume to her is an elaborate, typically rhetorical appreciation of her feminine charms and her abilities as a singer,<sup>42</sup> and these compliments are echoed and embellished in several sonnets included in the volume.<sup>43</sup> In the descriptions of the meetings themselves her voice is likened to that of Amphion and Orpheus and to the sound of the harmonies of the spheres, and her grace is compared to that of the figure of Primavera.<sup>44</sup> Her voice is praised, again in general, almost cliché, terms in the biography of Giulio Strozzi printed in the *Glorie degli Incogniti* (1647).<sup>45</sup> Still more general and less informative are two poems published the following year by the Incognito Pietro Michiele, for “Barbara Cantatrice.” Hardly inspired, indeed almost grudging, these brief poems depend for their effect on the *Barbara-barbaro* conceit; and they praise Barbara’s beauty without even mentioning her voice.<sup>46</sup>

Even taken all together these passages fall far short in enthusiasm of the volumes of *Applausi* and *Glorie* published in honor of other singers of the day.<sup>47</sup> Yet, although they provide little in the way of precise qualitative or critical description, they do, nonetheless, clearly document Barbara Strozzi’s activities as a singer. Contemporary references to her as a composer, however—by far the more remarkable aspect of her career—are rare indeed, and hardly more specific. The *Veglie*, for example, refer to the high quality of the music performed at the Unisoni meetings, but, although Strozzi herself must have written at least some of it, no composer is ever mentioned. Only Loredano, in an undated letter to a friend, mentions her music, commenting that “had she been born in another era she would certainly either have usurped or enlarged the place of the muses.”<sup>48</sup> The main evidence of her

<sup>42</sup> “... Ragionevolmente si possa stimare un terreno Paradiso quel luogo, in cui nel vagheggiare le sue bellezze si diletta lo sguardo, e nell’eccellenza del suo canto gode l’orecchio. Inchineranno dunque il merito di V.S. questi fogli vergati da gl’inchiostrati, che servono d’ombra à colori della sua virtù; e mentre portano in fronte il suo nome assicurano di partorire l’ammirazione de’ suoi pregi in ogni cuore, che habbi senso per le bellezze d’una Venere, ò per la melodia d’un Angelo. . . .”

<sup>43</sup> See the sonnet by Francesco Belli, “Bella, ò Barbara sei: mille già’l sanno” (*Veglia prima*, p. 81), and the anonymous sonnet “Per la Sig. Barbara Strozzi, mentre dispensava Fiori nell’Academia de gl’Unisoni,” “Questa (Amanti) è una Musa; eccol’espresso” (*Veglia prima*, p. 71).

<sup>44</sup> *Veglia seconda*, pp. 4, 117; *Veglia prima*, p. 67.

<sup>45</sup> p. 281.

<sup>46</sup> Pietro Michiele, *La benda di Cupido . . . terza parte* (Venice: Guerigli, 1648), pp. 296 f. The first, addressed to “Barbara Cantatrice (Ad istanza d’Amico),” begins “Barbara sei di nome.” The second, “(Per la medesima),” opens “Chi Barbara ti chiama.”

<sup>47</sup> See, for instance, *Teatro delle glorie della Signora Adriana Basile* (Venice: Deuchino, 1623); *Applausi poetici alle glorie di Leonora Baroni* (Bracciano: Fei, 1639); *Glorie della Signora Anna Renzi Romana* (Venice: Surian, 1644); *Echi poetichi all’armonia musicale della Signora Isabella Trevisani Romana* (Bologna: Ferroni, 1648).

<sup>48</sup> “La musica [dei madrigali] è della Sig. Barbara Strozzi, che se fosse nata in altro secolo, haverebbe al sicuro ò usurpato, ò accresciuto il luogo alle muse” (letter addressed to Domenico Andreis in Loredano, *Lettere*, II (Geneva: Widerhold, 1669), p. 249).

activity as a composer is, of course, the music itself. Yet the very preservation of her compositions represents a highly unusual phenomenon.

Although numerous contemporary reports and descriptions bear witness to the existence of highly skilled female singers who graced the courts and theaters of seventeenth-century Italy, we know of very few compositions by women of the period. It is difficult to believe, however, that such publicly acclaimed singers as Adriana Basile, her equally renowned daughter Leonora Baroni, or Ippolita Recupito (Cardinal Montalto's celebrated singer) did not also write music, at least for their own use. There seems no reason to assume that, in this respect, they would have differed in ability from esteemed and famous male singers like Francesco Rasi or Sigismondo d'India, to mention only two of the ubiquitous male singer-composers of the early part of the century.

Several female singers, in addition to Strozzi and Caccini, are known to have written music. Adriana Basile, for example, in a letter of 1620, refers to one of her own works,<sup>49</sup> and her compositional abilities as well as those of her two sisters, Vittoria and Margherita, are evidently taken for granted by Monteverdi when he suggests, in a letter of 1616, that the three of them compose as well as sing their own parts in a forthcoming Mantuan entertainment.<sup>50</sup> And a contemporary report implying that as a composer Adriana was inferior in talent to Francesca Caccini at least confirms public awareness of her compositional activity.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> See Adriana's letter of 26 June to Isabella of Savoy and Isabella's response, printed in Alessandro Ademollo, *La bell'Adriana ed altre virtuose del suo tempo* (Città di Castello, 1888), pp. 264 f.

<sup>50</sup> This is Monteverdi's much-quoted letter of 9 December 1616 concerning his dissatisfaction with the "favola marittima delle nozze di Tetide," in which he articulates his theory of the affections. "... Vedendo che in questa più deitati che altro parlano, le quali mi piace udire le deitati cantar di garbo, direi che le tre Sig.<sup>re</sup> Sorelle cioè Sig.<sup>ra</sup> Andriana et altre le potrebbero cantare et altresì comorsele, così il Sig.<sup>r</sup> Rasco la sua parte, così il Sig. D. Francesco parimenti, et via discorrendo neli altri Sig.<sup>ri</sup> et qui imitare il Sig.<sup>r</sup> Cardinal Mont'Alto che fece una comedia che ogni soggetto che in essa intervienevi si compose la sua parte" (de'Paoli, ed., *Lettere*, p. 87).

<sup>51</sup> See the report by Antimo Galli, a Florentine agent in Rome, on Gian Battista Marino's comparison-test of Adriana and "La Cecchina," quoted in Anna Maria Crinò, "Virtuose di canto e poeti a Roma e a Firenze nella prima metà del seicento," *Studi seicenteschi*, I (1960), p. 180: "... Ritrovandomi io seco [con Marino], il che succede spesso. sentendoli celebrare l'Adriana l'invitai a voler sentir la Cecchina, et poi giudicare, ma l'huomo non potendo credere, che si trovasse altro soggetto non mi diede quasi occhio pure alla fine ci si lassò condurre, talche rimase chiarito, tanto più che per farne maggior esperienza mandò subito all'improvviso per il suo poema dell'Adone et trovatole certe ottave le cantò all'improvviso senza ne anche haverle lette con tanto stupore suo, che nulla più, et tornato la sera seguente dall'Adriana con le istesse ottave si avide della differenza, onde tornò hiersera dalla Cecchina celebrandola sovra tutti i soggetti di questa professione, essendo stato forzato a confessare che questa sia di molto più sapere, et padrona dell'arte, et in quell'altra alquanto miglior voce, et artificiosa negli affetti, et così va celebrando per tutta Roma il valore della Signora Francesca . . ." (letter to Dimurgo Lambardi, Florentine Secretary of State, 11 November 1623).

Seventeenth-century references to compositions by women are considerably better preserved than the works themselves. Tourists in Italy seem to have been particularly struck by the complete musical accomplishments of women. The Frenchman André Maugars, writing from Rome in 1639, remarks on Leonora Baroni's abilities as a composer as well as a singer: "... she is endowed with a lively intellect, possesses excellent judgment in distinguishing bad from good music, which she understands surpassingly well, and in fact she even composes. . . ." <sup>52</sup> And the English traveler John Evelyn, writing from Padua in 1645, raves about the daughter of one Signor Domenico Bassano "that played and sung to nine severall instruments, with that skill and adresse as few masters in Italy exceeded her; she likewise compos'd divers excellent pieces. I had never seene any play on the Naples viol before. She presented me afterwards with two recitativos of hers, both words and musiq." <sup>53</sup>

Such observations may not offer entirely objective testimony, however, for their response to women composing may perhaps also be interpreted as evidence of the noteworthiness of the phenomenon. Still, they do confirm that, despite the lack of extant music, women did compose. In fact, creating at least some of the music they performed may well have been such an integral aspect of their activity that it was simply taken for granted, viewed as a normal part of the performer's task. If such music has not survived, part of the reason must lie in the fact that it was neither printed nor copied in manuscripts. It may have been partly or totally improvised, and thus never committed to paper, even originally. <sup>54</sup> For whatever the reason, it was apparently not prized as an object independent of its performance. <sup>55</sup>

For most of these musicians, vigorously sought after and generously rewarded by the highly sophisticated and competitive courts of seventeenth-century Europe, composition was evidently merely an adjunct to performance. As women they were celebrated for their physical attributes, their beauty,

<sup>52</sup> *Response faite à un curieux sur le sentiment de la musique d'Italie, écrite à Rome le 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1639* (Paris, 1639): "Je me contenterai seulement de vous dire, qu'elle est douée d'un bel esprit, qu'elle a le jugement fort bon pour discerner la mauvaïse d'avec la bonne musique, qu'elle l'entend parfaitement bien, voire même qu'elle y compose . . ." (passage quoted in Alessandro Ademollo, *I primi fasti della musica italiana a Parigi* (Milan, n.d.), pp. 8 f.)

<sup>53</sup> *Memoirs of John Evelyn, Esq.; Comprising his Diary from 1641 to 1705-6*, ed. William Bray (London, n.d.), p. 173.

<sup>54</sup> Improvisation such as that of Adriana Basile and Francesca Caccini described above, n. 51, evidently played an important role in performances by the leading chamber singers of the day. Leonora Baroni, for example, was also known for her improvising skills (see Ademollo, *Primi fasti*, p. 12).

<sup>55</sup> Evidently their private, occasional function rendered inappropriate the publication of most 17th-century cantatas. We owe the preservation of cantatas by such major figures as Carissimi and Luigi Rossi primarily to the interests of various patrons who collected their works in manuscript.

their voices. As musicians they were appreciated for their public, ornamental value, for their abilities as performers.

Against this background, Barbara Strozzi's determination to publish her works assumes a special significance. Despite the precedent of Francesca Caccini,<sup>56</sup> she herself must have been well aware of her unusual position as a publishing composer, for she alluded rather self-consciously to her femininity in the prefaces of several of her publications. In Opus 1 she writes: "I must reverently consecrate this first work, which as a woman, I publish all too anxiously, to the Most August Name of Your Highness, so that under an oak of gold it may rest secure against the lightning bolts of slander prepared for it";<sup>57</sup> and in Opus 2: "The lowly mine of a woman's poor imagination cannot produce metal to forge those richest golden crowns worthy of august rulers."<sup>58</sup> With all their conceit, these statements have the modest, even self-deprecating tone typical of dedicatory messages. Yet by Opus 5 Strozzi could explicitly dissociate her creative efforts from the condition of her sex. Her dedication of that volume concludes: "... and since feminine weaknesses restrain me no more than any indulgence of my sex impels me, on lightest leaves do I fly, in devotion, to bow before you."<sup>59</sup> She makes no mention of her femininity at all in her last three dedications. Perhaps by then she had gained recognition for her works.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that she had achieved a new peak of success between the publication of her Opus 5 in 1655 and of her Opus 6 in 1657: compositions by her appear, along with those of such figures as Francesco Cavalli, Giovanni Rovetta, Pietro Antonio Ziani, Horatio Tarditi, and Maurizio Cazzati, in two collections, both published in 1656. Bartolomeo Marcesso includes her among the

<sup>56</sup> Although apparently a prolific composer, Francesca Caccini published only two works: *Il primo libro delle musiche a una e due voci* (Florence: Pignoni, 1618), and *La liberazione di Ruggiero da l'isola d'Alcina* (Florence: Cecconcelli, 1625). See Panella, "Caccini."

<sup>57</sup> *Il primo de' madrigali*, dedication to Vittoria della Rovere: "... devo ... la prima opera, che come donna, troppo arditamente mando in luce, riverentemente consacrarla all' Augustissimo Nome di Vostra Altezza, acciò sotto una Quercia d'oro resti sicura da i fulmini dell'apparechiata maledicenza. ..."

<sup>58</sup> Op. 2, dedication to Ferdinand III of Austria and Eleanora Gonzaga: "Non può la vile miniera del povero ingegno d'una Donna produrre metallo da fabricar richissime corone d'oro al merito de gli Augusti. ... " The complete preface to Op. 2, along with the table of contents, is given in Lorenzo Bianconi, "Weitere Ergänzungen zu Emil Vogels 'Bibliothek der gedruckten weltlichen Vokalmusik italiens aus den Jahren 1500-1700' aus italienischen Bibliotheken," *Analecta musicologica*, VII, 9 (1970), pp. 185 f.

<sup>59</sup> Op. 5, *Sacri musicali affetti*, dedication to Anna of Innsbruck: "... e già che tanto non m'arrestan le debolezze di Donna che più non m'inoltri il compartimento del Sesso, sopra lievissimi fogli volo devota ad'inchinarmi."

<sup>60</sup> Interestingly, the dedications of Francesca Caccini's two published works contain no references at all to her femininity. But she, unlike Strozzi, was publicly recognized and rewarded as a composer early in her career. For an English translation of Caccini's preface to her *Primo Libro*, see Carolyn Raney, "Francesca Caccini's 'Primo libro,'" *Music and Letters*, XLVIII (1967), pp. 353 f.

“diversi eccellentissimi autori moderni” whose motets are printed in his *Sacra corona*, and she is one of the “soggetti eminenti nella musica” represented in Francesco Tonalli’s collection of *Arie*. In fact, her two contributions open the latter volume.<sup>61</sup>

Barbara Strozzi’s public stature as a composer distinguishes her career from those of other female singers who also, but rather incidentally, composed. And this seems to have been the professional goal Giulio Strozzi had envisioned for his daughter. From the beginning he saw to it that she received proper training in composition, for it was undoubtedly he who arranged for her to study with the leading composer in Venice, Cavalli.<sup>62</sup> Giulio’s active encouragement of Barbara’s creative efforts can be gauged by her Opus 1, of 1644, for which he himself provided the texts.<sup>63</sup> In addition, it is possible that, through his numerous contacts in Florence, he negotiated the dedication of the same volume to the Grand Duchess of Tuscany, Vittoria della Rovere.<sup>64</sup>

Although Giulio clearly stood behind Barbara’s Opus 1, by the time of her second publication, five years later, his influence had receded considerably.

<sup>61</sup> Full bibliographical information on these two volumes is found below in n. 73.

<sup>62</sup> The preface to her Op. 2 provides this information: “. . . Francesco Cavalli. . . [era] già dalla mia fanciullezza mio cortese precettore. . . .” Although Cavalli undoubtedly taught many students, Strozzi is the only composer thus far known to have publicly acknowledged him as her teacher. Cavalli must have been a member of Giulio’s circle. The two men collaborated on at least one important opera, *La Veremonda*, first performed in Naples in 1652; see Bianconi and Walker, “Dalla ‘Finta pazza,’” p. 449, for the attribution of *Veremonda* to Giulio Strozzi, and p. 394, n. 71, for the convincing redating of the opera’s first Venetian performance to 1653 rather than 1652. Strozzi may also have collaborated with Cavalli on an earlier opera, *Romolo e Remo* of 1645, although the traditional ascription to Cavalli of the lost score has recently been called into question (see Thomas Walker, “Gli errori di ‘Minerva al tavolino,’” *Venezia e il melodramma nel seicento*, ed. Maria Teresa Muraro (Florence, 1976), p. 15).

<sup>63</sup> His authorship is attested in Barbara’s dedication of the volume—“[Li] versi lirici. . . [sono] tutti scherzi di colui, che, sin dà fanciulletta, mi hà dato il cognome, e’l buon essere. . .”—and is confirmed in the bibliography of Giulio’s works that follows his biography in the *Glorie degli Incogniti*, p. 282.

<sup>64</sup> Vittoria, in turn, may have presented Barbara to her sister-in-law, Anna of Innsbruck, to whom the composer dedicated her Op. 5 11 years later. On Giulio’s Florentine connections see Bianconi and Walker, “Dalla ‘Finta pazza,’” pp. 411 ff. Barbara herself, however, in the dedication to Op. 1, implies the intervention of someone other than Giulio. Just before the passage asserting Giulio’s authorship of the texts quoted above, in n. 63, Barbara writes: “Ho ricevuto in ogni tempo tanti affettuosi aiuti della bontà d’uno studioso vasallo dell’Altezza vostra in condurmi all’impiego di questi, e d’altri molti armonici componimenti, che devo di ragione la prima opera. . . consacrarla all’augustissimo Nome di Vostra Altezza. . . .” I have been unable to determine the identity of any member of Barbara’s circle who would fit this description. One possibility, however, is Monsignor Francesco Zati, Venetian agent of Vittoria’s husband, Grand Duke Ferdinand; Zati probably arranged the dedication of another work, also by a woman—Archangela Tarabotti’s controversial *Antisatira*—to the same Duchess in the same year. (*The political problems surrounding the dedication of Tarabotti’s book are discussed in Zanette, Suor Archangela*, pp. 256f.) Indeed, Vittoria della Rovere seems to have been particularly well disposed toward the creative efforts of women. For her apparent sympathy for women in general and nuns in particular, see Enrica Viviani Della Robbia, *Nei monasteri fiorentini* (Florence, 1946), pp. 61 and 67 f.

Of its twenty-six texts only two are definitely by him, and these were not written specifically for her but were taken from opera librettos performed several years earlier.<sup>65</sup> When he died early the following year, in March of 1652, Giulio left Barbara as his chief heir;<sup>66</sup> according to his will, however, he died a rather poor man. The list of possessions bequeathed to Barbara is paltry indeed: a few books, a bed with a canopy, the clothing in an old box, some pieces of silver “which would not even weigh one hundred ounces,” a few paintings and other “gentilezze” of little value, and, finally, his compositions and writings. Nor did he even leave enough money to cover the cost of his burial or to satisfy his own charitable wishes. In fact, he indicates that Barbara herself has some money of her own and requests that she use it on his behalf, “remembering how much I have done for her by raising her and setting her on the path of virtue.”<sup>67</sup>

Thus, despite her designation as his main heir, Barbara clearly gained nothing financially from the death of Giulio Strozzi; if anything, she incurred extra personal expenses if she actually carried out his wishes to the letter.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Op. 2, no. 4: “Godere, e lasciare, costumano gl’amanti; Costume de grandi, parole già poste in musica per l’occasione della Finta pazza dello Strozzi”; and Op. 2, no. 9: “La vendetta e un dolce affetto; La vendetta. Parole poste in musica per il Romolo, e Remo dello Strozzi.” The second of these texts does indeed occur in the libretto of *Romolo e Remo* (Venice: Surian, 1645), p. 91, at the beginning of Act III, scene 11. The other piece, however, presents more of a problem. Since *Finta pazza* was one of the most widely performed operas of the period, the libretto exists in many different versions, not all of them reflecting Strozzi’s original text (see Bianconi and Walker, “Dalla ‘Finta pazza,’” p. 400, n. 97, and p. 424, n. 185). I have not located a libretto that actually contains the text used by Barbara Strozzi, and by Carlo Cossoni, in his Op. 7, *Libro primo delle canzonette amorose a voce sola* (Bologna, 1669), mentioned in Sartori, “Un fantomatico compositore,” p. 797. Sartori suggests that the text might have been sung—perhaps even by the famous creator of the opera’s leading role, Anna Renzi—as a kind of occasional addition to one of the many performances of the opera. But whether or not the text was ever performed as part of the opera itself, there is no evidence to suggest that Barbara’s setting was ever used at such a performance.

<sup>66</sup> Strozzi died suddenly (“all’improvviso”) on 31 March 1652 at the age of 69 (archives of the parish church of Santi Apostoli, *Libro de morti* 1644–57).

<sup>67</sup> See above, n. 5. “Lascio a lei la cura, come mia herede e commissaria di far qualche limosina agli ospedali di questa città, che certo se nè resentira la sua borsa, perche il mio, mercè della mala fortuna provata ogn’hora, non val tanto, che possa estendermi in opere dovute alla Christiana pietà. Ma sò ch’ella lo farà volentieri ricordandosi di quanto ho fatto per lei in allevarla, e metterla sul cammino della Virtù.”

In stipulating that Barbara’s own heirs should serve as his in the event that she die before him, Strozzi mentions the possibility of her having children, though without indicating whether in fact she has any at the moment (“allora sostituisce mia herede l’herede che ella farà della sua robba, o figliuoli, o altri”).

<sup>68</sup> There is some evidence to suggest that, in fact, she failed—in the direction of excess, however—to comply fully with his wishes, at least with regard to his tomb. According to the will, Strozzi wished to be buried wherever Barbara thought best, but preferably in Santi Giovanni e Paolo, “dove quei padri già mi fecero gratia . . . con questa inscrizione. Julij Strozzi ossa. vixit—obijt—senz’altre lode, o cirimonie.” But the inscription actually found on Strozzi’s tomb in Santi Giovanni e Paolo, affixed to a wall in the chapel of the Madonna della

The source of Barbara's financial support, if it was not Giulio Strozzi, is uncertain. The next phase of her career shows clear signs of her efforts to secure a living as a professional composer. The dedication of her Opus 2 to Ferdinand III of Austria and Eleanora of Mantua on the occasion of their marriage may in fact have been an attempt—apparently fruitless—to secure employment or some more permanent patronage. The Austrian court was, after all, renowned as one of the chief importers of Italian music and musicians.<sup>69</sup>

Her publication of several more volumes in rapid succession—five in as many years—dedicated to a variety of important, well-connected personalities, suggests that she was still in search of support.<sup>70</sup> And although the dedication of Opus 7, the last of this series of volumes, to Nicolò Sagredo in 1659 implies that she had been receiving financial help from him, her language suggests that she was far from prospering.<sup>71</sup> Five years separate her final two publications and nothing at all is known of her activities after the appearance of her Opus 8 in 1664.

From the evidence presently available, Barbara's career seems to have survived Giulio Strozzi by scarcely more than a decade. It might well be argued that, were it not for Giulio, Barbara would never have enjoyed a career at all. His own precarious financial situation may have prevented him from providing her with the dowry required for marriage. (And the monastic alternative, even if he possessed the requisite funds, seems highly unlikely for the daughter of a man with Giulio's libertine proclivities.) Yet he seems to have been actively committed to another kind of life for her. Indeed, he appears to have been a champion of feminine achievement in general; for among the unpublished prose writings listed in his bibliography in the *Glorie*

Pace, was slightly less modest: "Haec Iulius Strozzius poeta orator ec. huius B.V. praecipus cultor pro sua devotione scripsit et in manus nostras pervenerunt." The inscription is transcribed in the manuscript notes for the continuation for Cicogna, *Iscrizioni veneziane*, I Vmc, Codice Cicogna 2011, busta 502, no. 639, p. 41.

<sup>69</sup> The employment of increasing numbers of Italian musicians by the Austrian court during the 17th century has been amply documented. See, *inter alia*, Ludwig Köchel, *Die kaiserliche Hof-Musikkapelle in Wien von 1543 bis 1867* (Vienna, 1869); Franz Hadamowsky, "Die Barocktheater am wiener Kaiserhof," *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für wiener Theaterforschung 1951-52* (Vienna, 1955); and Herwig Knaus, *Die Musiker im Archivbestand des kaiserlichen Obersthofmeisteramtes 1637-1705*, 3 vols. (Vienna, 1967).

<sup>70</sup> Strozzi's dedicatees included Anna of Austria, Archduchess of Innsbruck (Op. 5, 1655); Francesco Carafa, Prince of Belvedere and Marquis of Anzi (Op. 6, 1657); Nicolò Sagredo, Cavalier and Procurator of San Marco, Ambassador Extraordinary to Pope Alexander VII, and future Doge of Venice (Op. 7, 1659). Her final volume, Op. 8 (1664), is dedicated to Sophia, Duchess of Braunschweig and Lüneburg.

<sup>71</sup> Referring to Sagredo as her guardian deity ("mio Dio Tutelare"), she cites as evidence of his generous contribution to music his continuing support of her own modest life, "which has been favored and protected with the profuse grace of his excellency" ("I miei poveri Lari favoriti e protetti con profuse gratie dall' E. V. . .").

*degli Incogniti* is a work entitled *Elogii delle donne virtuose del nostro secolo; lib. 2*.<sup>72</sup> His legacy was clearly more than financial. He provided Barbara Strozzi with opportunities that only a man of his interests and connections could have provided for a daughter, the possibility of aspiring to a career, of becoming a professional composer.

## II

With the exception of one volume of sacred songs, Barbara Strozzi's oeuvre, as already noted, consists entirely of secular vocal music.<sup>73</sup> Although the title pages of her publications offer madrigals, ariettas, arias, and cantatas, these titles were evidently not binding on the actual contents of the volumes, which include pieces called "lamento," as well as a "serenata." Distinctions between these various terms are not particularly clarified by the published music, nor are they always confirmed by the titles affixed to individual pieces.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>72</sup> The work was probably never printed in its entirety. The only part of the *Elogii* known to us is Strozzi's eulogy of the singer Anna Renzi, "Elogia di Giulio Strozzi, tratto dal libro secondo de'suoi Elogii delle donne virtuose del nostro secolo," published in *Glorie della Signora Anna Renzi Romana*, pp. 5-12.

<sup>73</sup> Strozzi's works include the following prints:

[Op. 1]: *Il primo de' madrigali. . . a due, tre, quattro e cinque voci* (Venice: Vincenti, 1644) [I Bc; I Fn]

Op. 2: *Cantate, ariette e duetti* (Venice: Gardano, 1651) [GB Lbm; I Fn]

Op. 3: *Cantate ariete a una, due e tre voci* (Venice: Gardano, 1654) [GB Lbm]

Op. 5: *Sacri musicali affetti* (Venice: Gardano, 1655) [PL Wul]

Op. 6: *Ariette a voce sola* (Venice: Magni, 1657) [I Bc]

Op. 7: *Diporti di Euterpe overo cantate & ariette a voce sola* (Venice: Magni, 1659) [GB Gu; I Bc; US Wlc]

Op. 8: *Arie* (Venice: Magni [detto Gardano], 1664) [I Baf] It will be noted that no Op. 4 is listed. Although François-Joseph Fétis (*Biographie universelle des musiciens*, VII (Paris, 1870), p. 161) listed an Op. 4, *Cantate a voce sola*, no such volume has been mentioned since then. The scarcity of surviving copies of the other seven volumes makes it plausible to regard Op. 4 as lost; yet the appearance of Op. 3 and Op. 5 in consecutive years suggests that Op. 5 may possibly have been Op. 4 misnumbered by Gardano, and that Fétis may have been mistaken.

Works by Strozzi are also found in several anthologies. A motet, "Quis dabit mihi" (alto, tenor, bass), appears in Bartolomeo Marcesso, ed., *Sacra corona, motetti a due, e tre voci di diversi eccellentissimi autori moderni* (Venice: Magni, 1656 [1656<sup>3</sup>; US Wlc], reprinted in Antwerp: heirs of P. Phalèse, 1659 [1659<sup>2</sup>, B Br (S<sub>1</sub>), and GB Och (no B)]. Two arias, "Rissolvetevi pensieri" and "Chi brama in amore" (both from Op. 6), are found in Francesco Tonalli, ed., *Arie a voce sola di diversi autori* (Venice: Vincenti, 1656) [GB Lbm].

Manuscript works ascribed to Strozzi include: "Aure giacchè non posso" (soprano) I MOe, MS P (from Op. 8); "Presso un ruscello argente" (soprano) I Vc, Coll. Correr II, no. 48; "Rissolvetevi pensieri" (soprano) GB Lbm, MS 59 (1681), fol. 31<sup>v</sup> (from Op. 6); "Havete torto" (soprano) and "Un amante doglioso" (bass) D Kl, MS Collection of cantatas, fol. 34 (from Robert Eitner, *Biographische-bibliographisches Quellen-Lexikon*, IX [Leipzig, 1903], p. 315). A manuscript collection attributed to her, *Diporti d'Euterpe overo madrigali a due voci col basso* (1660) (I Vnm Classe IV, codice 726 (10364)), although it bears the title, the approximate date, and the name of the same dedicatee as her Op. 7, is not her work. Its contents are inconsistent with her style and probably date from a considerably later period.

<sup>74</sup> For example, according to their title pages, Opp. 2, 3, and 7 should contain "cantate" as

While the composer's distinction between "aria" and "arietta" is unclear, since no piece bears the specific heading "arietta,"<sup>76</sup> Strozzi does seem to distinguish clearly between "cantata" and "aria." Nearly all those pieces marked "cantata" are lengthy, varied works containing several sections and a mixture of vocal styles, whereas those marked "aria" are usually briefer pieces, often strophic or else enclosed by a refrain at beginning and end. Since Strozzi's own distinctions suggest that at least these two terms had specific meaning for her, we may apply them to those of her pieces—the majority—without labels. Of her eighty-two printed pieces, in addition to the twenty-five madrigals of Opus 1 and the fourteen *Affetti sacri* of Opus 5, fifty-seven might be termed arias; twenty-five (including the laments and the serenata) are large and complex enough to be called cantatas.<sup>76</sup> Within these two general categories, however, the variety of form strongly resists generalization.<sup>77</sup>

As a composer of cantatas Strozzi participates in one of the most characteristic genres of seicento music, one that acquired both its name and early physiognomy during her lifetime. Without rehearsing the entire history of the cantata—the origin of the term during the 1620s in works by composers such as Berti and Grandi, the increasing articulation between recitative and aria leading towards polarization of the two styles, which paralleled but also influenced similar trends in the field of opera and oratorio—we can safely assert that nearly every prominent composer of seventeenth-century Italy wrote at least some cantatas.

With her more than eighty cantatas and arias, Strozzi's output is comparable to that of the most prolific contributors to secular chamber music of the seicento—such significant figures as Carissimi, Rossi, and Cesti. But several important features distinguish her contribution from that of her contemporaries. Perhaps most immediately striking is the fact that nearly all of her known cantatas were published, in monographic prints which she herself apparently planned and saw through the press. In contrast, although

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well as "ariette," while Op. 6 should contain only "ariette," and Op. 8 only "arie." Yet, in fact, Op. 2 and 3 both include, as well, a "lamento," Op. 7 two "lamenti," Op. 6 a "cantata," and Op. 8 three "cantate" as well as a "serenata."

<sup>76</sup> "Arietta" might seem to refer to a small aria, perhaps a simple strophic form, but a number of pieces in the "arietta" volume, Op. 6, are exceedingly long and complex.

<sup>76</sup> The fourteen *Sacri musicali affetti* of Op. 5 should probably be added to the cantata list since they share all of the most important features of the secular cantatas. Without exception lengthy and sectional, some of them contain passages marked "aria," and most are structured by the recurrence of a refrain.

<sup>77</sup> Formal variety of a similar kind complicates categorization of the vocal chamber works of most mid-century composers; see the remarks by Eleanor Caluori in her introduction to "Luigi Rossi," *The Wellesley Edition Cantata Index Series*, Fasc. 3a (Wellesley, 1965), n. 1, and the solution offered by Gloria Rose in "The Cantatas of Giacomo Carissimi," *The Musical Quarterly*, XLVIII (1962), pp. 207 ff. Rose calls all of Carissimi's chamber works cantatas and then divides them into four sub-categories; composite, aria, strophic variation, and arioso. Similar categories might also be adopted for Strozzi's works in a more specifically analytical treatment of them than the present study.

Carissimi and Rossi both wrote more cantatas than she, very few of them ever appeared in print.<sup>78</sup> To be sure, differing traditions of patronage in Rome and Venice are in part responsible for this disparity. While in Rome vocal chamber music, like virtually all secular music, was commissioned by private patrons for specific occasions, the vigorous activity of Venetian printing presses encouraged the publication of aria and cantata collections, successors to the monody books of the earlier part of the century, for general use. Indeed, the development of the cantata and its diffusion throughout seventeenth-century Italy owes a great debt to Venetian publishers like Vincenti and Gardano. Yet even within an environment that supported publication, Strozzi stands out: she published more cantatas than any of her contemporaries, Venetian or Roman.

Strozzi stands out in a more fundamental way, however. For most mid-seventeenth-century composers vocal chamber music represents just one aspect of their production, which usually also included music for the theater, the church, or both. In this context, the dimensions of Strozzi's activity—her exclusive concentration on arias and cantatas—appear particularly limited. Furthermore, her work is not only restricted virtually to a single genre, but even within that genre it is confined primarily to the expression of a single affect: the suffering—sometimes treated highly ironically, even humorously, more often with great seriousness and intensity—caused by unrequited love. In this respect, of course, Strozzi's cantatas do not differ appreciably from those of her contemporaries; however, because she wrote little other music, the restricted affective content of her cantatas assumes particular significance within her oeuvre, as a defining characteristic of her style.

Strozzi's texts are, for the most part, limited to the Marinistic love poetry that flowed with such apparent ease from mid-seicento pens. These poems are characterized by a basic similarity of form, language, and subject matter: marked by preciousness and built on elaborate conceits, they frequently concern the pastoral world of Lilla and her several suitors, and carry such topical headings as "Moralità amorosa," or "L'Amante bugiardo." Under these circumstances, it is difficult to make significant stylistic distinctions among Strozzi's texts or to recognize individual poetic personalities.

Fortunately, the composer herself identifies a number of her poets; in addition to Giulio Strozzi, who wrote the texts of Opus 1, she names the authors of several pieces from Opus 2, half of the pieces from Opus 8, and all

<sup>78</sup> Only five of Carissimi's approximately 135 cantatas, for example, were published while he was alive, and these appeared, three of them anonymously, in anthologies (see Rose, "Carissimi," p. 205). An even smaller percentage of Rossi's cantatas, six of his approximately 291 (see Caluori, "Rossi," p. XI, n. 53), and none of Cesti's approximately 55 (see David Burrows, ed., "Antonio Cesti," *The Wellesley Edition Cantata Index Series*, fasc. 1 (Wellesley, 1964), preface, p. 5) seem to have been printed during their composers' lifetimes.

of those from Opus 7.<sup>79</sup> Among the sixteen poets she mentions, six, including Giulio Strozzi, were well-known librettists of the time,<sup>80</sup> and at least two others happened also to be involved with opera, but primarily in the capacity of patrons or theater owners.<sup>81</sup> Moreover, several of them were also members of the *Accademia degli Incogniti*.<sup>82</sup>

It seems quite natural that Marinism should have characterized the style of Strozzi's poets. Marino himself represented something of a cult figure to the *Incogniti*, which was one of the most consistent and vocal supporters of Marino's reputation in the mid-seventeenth century. Loredano himself was actually one of the earliest biographers of the poet.<sup>83</sup>

While most of the poems set by Strozzi are rather undistinguished examples of Marinism, some are more interesting. Several of the longer, more

<sup>79</sup> Although no specific works in Op. 6 bear poets' names, Barbara's dedication of the volume to Francesco Carafa implies that he himself wrote some of the texts: "Non è vulgare la gloria, ch'io mi prometto da questi miei musici componimenti per la superba livrea, che portano d'humilissimo ossequio al Nome glorioso di V. Ec. di che ella medesima si compiacque investirli quando benignamente ascoltandoli gli degnò del suo magnanimo gradimento, e non isdegnò per renderla più vistosa, vinta la materia dal lavoro, con pretioso vantaggio fregarla d'alcuni suoi poetici contratagli, e ricami. . . ."

<sup>80</sup> Giuseppe Artale, Aurelio Aureli, Nicolò Beregan, Pietro Paolo Bissari, and Giacinto Andrea Cicognini wrote librettos for Venice during the 1640s, '50s, or '60s.

<sup>81</sup> Marc-Antonio Corrarò and Pietro Dolfino both held part-ownerships in several 17th-century Venetian theaters; Corrarò was the dedicatee of a number of operas and seems to have been especially responsible for the production of *Annibale in Capua* in 1661 (see the libretto printed in Venice: Batti, 1661, note to the reader, p. 7), which, like Strozzi's Op. 8, was dedicated to Sophia of Braunschweig.

<sup>82</sup> Although only two of the poets Strozzi identifies, Giulio Strozzi and Bissari, appear among the *Incogniti* listed in the *Glorie degli Incogniti*, several others must also have been members. A number of them were certainly in Loredano's circle; Gaudenzio Brunacci, for example, was his earliest biographer (see his *Vita di Francesco Loredano* (Venice: Valvasense, 1662)). It should be mentioned, moreover, that the *Glorie* list is demonstrably incomplete. Several known *Incogniti*, including Busenello and Giacomo Badoaro, do not appear in the volume, perhaps (as the note to the reader, written by the academy's secretary, would have us believe) because they failed to turn in their autobiographies on time. Loredano himself certainly wrote texts for Strozzi, although she never mentions his name. He confirms this in the already cited letter to Domenico Andreis, to whom he had recently sent some of his madrigals (see above, n. 48). Since the letter is undated we cannot be sure how much before 1661, the year of Loredano's death, it was written. Could Loredano's madrigals possibly be identified with the anonymous texts of Strozzi's Opus 3? Such an attribution is certainly strengthened by the special nature of the volume and its contents (see above, n. 30, and below, p. 265 and nn. 88, 89).

<sup>83</sup> G. F. Loredano, *Vita del Cavalier Marino* (Venice: Sarzina, 1633). Following the introductory essay on Marino, Loredano reveals (pp. 34 f.) that he relied for some of his information upon reports by two *Incogniti*, "Signor Giulio Strozzi, gloria della Poesia," and "Sig. D. Francesco Belli, ornamento delle belle lettere," who knew Marino in Rome and Padua, respectively. The volume concludes (pp. 43 ff.) with an ode to Marino by yet another *Incognito*, Pietro Michiele. Of all the *Incogniti*, however, the most vociferous Marinist was probably Busenello (see Arthur Livingston, "G. F. Busenello e la polemica Stigliani-Marino," *Ateneo veneto*, XXIII (1910), pp. 123 ff.).

complex texts indicate a specifically occasional origin. The lengthy opening cantata of Opus 2, for example, "Donna di maestà," has a text written expressly for the marriage of Ferdinand III of Austria and Eleanora II of Mantua, which took place on 30 April 1651, and which Strozzi's volume was intended to commemorate. Somewhat surprisingly, the same volume also contains a setting of a text, "Gite o giorni dolenti," celebrating Ferdinand's previous marriage, to Maria Leopoldina of Austria. This brief union had lasted only short time, from 1648 until the bride's premature death in August 1649. The presence of such a text in a volume honoring a subsequent marriage might seem rather inappropriate, but the rubric following its title, "per richiesta del Sig. D. Bartolomeo Franzoni," may indicate that it was included for some special, perhaps sentimental reason.<sup>84</sup>

In addition to their occasional references, both of these pieces are distinguished from the rest of the volume by the specific dedication "Al Sig. Adamo Franchi." Adamo Franchi was probably the Adam Franck listed by Köchel as a soprano employed by the Austrian court from 1 July 1657 to 1 October 1671 at the salary of 110 florins, the maximum paid to any member of the royal chapel at this time.<sup>85</sup> According to her preface to the volume, Strozzi intended its entire contents to be sung by "la divina voce del Sig. Adamo Franchi," but she must have taken special pains to exhibit the full extent of his abilities in the two occasional cantatas, for they are especially demanding, considerably more elaborate, florid, and difficult vocally than the other music in the volume. The second piece even ascends to a high C, the only such note in all of the composer's works.

An occasional text of similar complexity opens another of Strozzi's volumes, her Opus 8. The text, "Cieli, stelle, Deità," by "Sig. Cavalier Artale," is an elaborate poem in praise of Sophia of Braunschweig, the dedicatee of the volume.<sup>86</sup> Strozzi's setting of this text, too, is somewhat more elaborate than her normal style. Indeed, all three of these occasional cantatas are highly

<sup>84</sup> It also offers the possibility that the whole volume might have been originally conceived as an offering for the earlier occasion and adapted to the later one by the addition of a new opening cantata. Indeed, the proximity of the date of dedication affixed to the volume, 1 June 1651, to the date of the later wedding would seem to suggest that the majority of the contents of the volume had been prepared well in advance of the occasion.

Dön Bartolomeo Franzoni was maestro di cappella—from at least 1648—of the private chapel of the first Eleanora Gonzaga, mother of Ferdinand III: see Herwig Knaus, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Hofmusikkapelle des Erzherzogs Leopold Wilhelm," *Anzeiger der philosophische-historische Klasse der Oesterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Graz, 1966), pp. 148 and 152. For a general idea of the various musical establishments in Vienna during this period, see Hadamowsky, "Die Barocktheater," *passim*.

<sup>85</sup> Köchel, *Die kaiserliche Hof-Musikkapelle*, p. 63, no. 573.

<sup>86</sup> "Sig. Cavalier Artale" was the Neapolitan poet Giuseppe Artale (1628–79) who, for a time, served as Captain of the Guard to Ernest of Braunschweig and Lüneburg, Sophia's husband: cf. Franco Croce, "Giuseppe Artale," *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, IV (Rome, 1962), pp. 345 ff.

embellished bravura pieces. Extended roulades and repeated ornaments create a brilliant display appropriate to the celebratory function of these volumes. Strozzi may have conceived the two earlier works to exploit the particular abilities of the castrato Adamo Franchi, but no potential singer for the later work is specified. Perhaps the unusual brilliance of these pieces ought to be read as embodying Barbara's own musical dedication of the volumes.

More significant and impressive among Strozzi's occasional texts—indeed, unique in her oeuvre—is the cantata entitled “Il Lamento,” published first in Opus 2, and, again, three years later, in Opus 3. The text is a dramatic account of an actual, recent historical event: the execution in 1642, in Lyons, of the courtier Henri de Cinq-Mars, condemned by Louis XIII for his participation in a plot against Richelieu.<sup>87</sup> It is probable that the subject held special political significance in mid-seventeenth-century Venice, since Franco-Venetian relations at that time were marked by considerable stress. The text of Strozzi's cantata, which emphasizes the injustice done to a loyal son of France and implicitly condemns Richelieu, would appear to reflect anti-French, or, perhaps more accurately, anti-absolutist sentiment on the part of its anonymous author. Although I have been unable to identify this author, the tone and content of the text suggest that he may well have been an Incogniti.<sup>88</sup> For, in addition to suffering the evils of absolute power, a favorite issue of the academy, the hero of the text was of even more specific interest to that group: Cinq-Mars was, in fact, a celebrated libertine, a member of the Parisian circle of Jacques Vallée des Barreaux; thus, his execution must have been viewed as a martyrdom, a *cause célèbre* for the Incogniti.<sup>89</sup> We should also bear in mind, as possible confirmation of this hypothesis, the republication of Strozzi's setting in her Opus 3, that volume presumably dedicated to the Incogniti.<sup>90</sup>

By virtue of its subject matter and dramatic intent, the piece is unique among Strozzi's cantatas, but it nevertheless falls into the same special

<sup>87</sup> Cinq-Mars' execution and the events leading up to it are fully discussed in Pierre de Vaissière, *La Conjuration de Cinq-Mars* (Paris, 1928). Perhaps the best known treatment of this theme, which evidently appealed strongly to the Romantic imagination, is the novel *Cinq-Mars* by Alfred de Vigny (Paris, 1826). This in turn provided the basis for the libretto of Gounod's opera of 1877 on the same subject (see Alfred Lowenberg, *Annals of Opera*, 2nd ed. (Geneva, 1953), I, col. 1063).

<sup>88</sup> See above, n. 82. The effects of the French issue on the intellectual circles of mid-century Venice are discussed by Zanette, *Archangela Tarabotti*, pp. 312 ff. The specific involvement of several Incogniti in French affairs is illustrated by a publication in honor of the birth of Louis XIV: *Venetia festiva per gli pomposi spettacoli fatti rappresentare dall' Illustriss. & Excellentiss. Sig. d' Hussè, Ambasciatore di S. M. Christianissima, per la nascita del real Delfino di Francia* (Venice: Baba, 1638), which concludes with sonnets by three Incogniti, Giulio Strozzi, Francesco Belli, and [Paolo] Speranza.

<sup>89</sup> A full treatment of French libertinism is found in the series of fifteen volumes by Frédéric Lachèvre, *Le libertinage au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1909–28). For Loredano's authorship of a text suggestively parallel to this one, another political lament, see n. 91 below.

<sup>90</sup> See above, n. 30.

category as a number of works by her contemporaries: the political lament. Indeed, toward the middle of the century political events assumed a new importance as subjects for laments, adding a high-baroque dimension of actuality to the repertoire of traditional themes of pathos derived from the pastoral and from Ariostesque romance. Both Carissimi and Rossi made impressive contributions to this genre, and several other anonymous historical laments are of comparative quality. The immediate relevance and inherent drama of the issues evidently evoked particularly affective responses from musicians as well as poets.<sup>91</sup>

Excepting, then, her few patently occasional pieces—only four cantatas—Strozzi's texts are virtually all love poems in a Marinist vein. Yet, despite the limitation of her work in both genre and affect, she emerges as a composer of considerable skill and highly individual eloquence. The terms aria and cantata are inadequate to describe the formal variety of her works. Indeed, from the outset of her career she displays a strong interest in formal exploration. Utilizing a number of different formal patterns for arias, she creates an unusually wide variety of designs. These include simple, strophic arias, strophic variations, full and partial da-capos, and various refrain and rondo forms, as well as continuous, cumulative, or through-composed structures.

Predictably, the simplest strophicism is especially characteristic of her

<sup>91</sup> Although not intended as a complete list, the following examples are offered to provide some context for viewing Strozzi's "Cinq-Mars" lament. One of the earliest political laments is Luigi Rossi's "Lamento della Regina di Svetia, Un ferito cavalier di polve, di sudor," which dates from some time between 1632, when the King of Sweden was killed, and 1641, when Ottaviano Castelli sent a copy of the cantata from Rome to Mazarin in Paris (see Alberto Ghislanzoni, *Luigi Rossi* (Milan, 1954), no. 258, and Caluori, ed., "Luigi Rossi," no. 196, who proposes a date of 1639 and suggests as possible author of the text Fabio della Corogna). The same event inspired poetic laments from a number of writers, including Loredano; see his *Lettera di ragguaglio alla battaglia seguita tra'l Rè di Svetia e'l General Volestain, con la morte del medesimo Rè* (Venice: Sarzina, 1633), which concludes with two sonnets of lament). Other political laments include Loreto Vittori's setting, published in 1649 (*Arie a voce sola*, Venice: Vincenti), of a lament of the King of Tunisia for the conversion of his son to Catholicism, and an anonymous setting (found in I Bc, MS Q 47, c. 87<sup>v</sup> ff.) of a text by Francesco Melosio (*Poesie e prose*, 9th impression (Venice: Prodocimo, 1678), *parte seconda*, pp. 408 ff.): Marinetta's lament on the death, in 1647, of her husband Masaniello, leader of the Neapolitan revolution against Spain (see Bianconi and Walker, "Della 'Finta pazza'," p. 394, and n. 70). A lament on the death of Charles I (d. 1649) appears in a setting by Carlo Cossoni (*Cantate a una, due, e tre voci*, Op. 13). (The only known copy of the print, I Bc, lacks a title page, which would provide place and date of publication. Since the volume is listed as Cossoni's Op. 13, however, one can assume that it dates between Opp. 12 and 14, or between 1675 and 1679. The text appears, anonymously, in Cristoforo Ivanovich, *Minerva al tavolino*. . . (Venice: Pezzana, 1681), pp. 337 ff.) Although the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots (d. 1587) was no longer a current event, it had important political resonance during the 17th century, when Mary was celebrated as a martyr to the Catholic cause. Carissimi's eloquent cantata on the subject, "A morire," surely figures as one of the most impressive laments of the period. (The music is preserved in, among other places, GB Lbm, Harley 1265; see Claude Palisca, *Baroque Music* (Englewood Cliffs, 1968), pp. 109 ff.)

early style. Most of the poems in *Opus 2* are strophic, containing from two to four stanzas of text, which occasionally share a common final line, a refrain. Her settings, are, for the most part, straightforward strophic arias; each stanza, set to the same music, is usually divided into two or more short sections. More than half of the twenty-six pieces in *Opus 2* are, in fact, bipartite (AB) strophic arias.<sup>92</sup> Yet, despite her preponderant use of strophic poems in this volume, Strozzi occasionally varies her treatment so that textual strophicism is obscured. One piece, for example, "La mia donna," contains four strophes of text, but Strozzi employs two different tunes, one for strophes 1 and 2, another for strophes 3 and 4, creating a more interesting, longer-breathed aria than the text would seem to suggest. In another instance, "Udite amanti la cagione," Strozzi treats an essentially strophic text with refrain as a through-composed aria, musically respecting the refrain but not the strophic structure.

Strophic variation, too, is a mode of text setting favored by Strozzi in her early volumes. But here again, formal exploration often distinguishes her approach. While in most of her variations the strophes differ only slightly from one another, in details of melodic motion or small-dimension rhythmic patterning, others display so many major differences among the strophes that they resemble through-composed arias. In the opening piece of *Opus 3*, for example, Strozzi varies her setting of the three strophes so completely, treating each stanza so individually and appropriately, that the aria creates the impression of being tripartite rather than strophic, its three sections linked to one another merely by similar sequences of tonal areas, and overall melodic shape.<sup>93</sup>

Although Strozzi continues to make use of strophic texts in her later volumes, especially in *Opus 6*, they are usually longer and more complicated than those of *Opus 2*; many of them contain one or more lengthy refrains. The composer's treatment of these more complex texts is correspondingly

<sup>92</sup> Rose, "Carissimi," p. 208, calls this the aria-cantata form.

<sup>93</sup> A number of Strozzi's later arias as well illustrate her undermining of strophicism. See, for example, in *Op. 7*, the aria "Dio di delo," from the cantata "Appena il sol," and from *Op. 8*, the "Serenata." Because so few of Strozzi's works are available in modern edition, references such as these are of little use to most readers. This situation will be remedied, in part, by my forthcoming edition of Strozzi's music. Among her few works that have appeared in modern edition, the most accessible are the following: "Chiamata a nuovi amori" (*Op. 2*), in Vittorio Ricci, ed., *Antiche gemme italiane* (Milan, n.d.); "Non c'è più fede" (*Op. 2*), in Francesco Vatielli, ed., *Antiche cantate d'amore* (Bologna, n.d.); "Soccorrete, luci avare," and "Spesso per entro al petto," (*Op. 2*), in Knud Jeppeson, ed., *La Flora* (Copenhagen, 1949), II; "Lagrimie mie," (*Op. 7*), in Carol MacClintock, ed., *The Solo Song* (New York, 1973); "Con le belle non ci vuol fretta," and "Consiglio amoroso," (*Op. 1*), in Carolyn Raney, ed., *Nine Centuries of Music by Women* (New York, 1977). A facsimile of *Op. 8* was published by the Antiquae Musicae Italicae in the series *Monumenta veneta* (Bologna, 1970), but is not readily available.

freer and more varied. The aria "Filli mia" of Opus 6, for instance, contains two essentially bipartite strophes, but each of the two parts is considerably extended through text repetition and subdivided into several sections of contrasting meter, tempo, and tonality. Another aria in the same collection, "Non pavento io di te," contains two eleven-line strophes of text linked by a four-line refrain. Here, through modulation and numerous contrasts of meter and tempo Strozzi elaborates a highly complex form of nine sections: ABCD ABCDA', which, although strophic, creates the impression of a full-fledged rondo owing to the length of the refrain.<sup>94</sup>

These pieces, as well as most of the arias in her last two volumes, Opuses 7 and 8, might best be termed strophic rondos or strophic refrain arias. Yet a number of them ("Luci belle" from Opus 8, for example) contain so many long sections of such extreme contrast that they approach—and even surpass—some "cantatas" in both length and musical variety. Indeed, the only real clue to their identity as arias lies in the strophic structure of their texts.

Formally, then, although strophic texts predominate among the arias, Strozzi's treatment of them is anything but standard. She does, however, show a decided preference for the rondo idea in its various ramifications, both as a means of expanding the dimensions of short, sectional arias and of creating coherence, in larger works, of a rather loose, flexible kind.

Among Strozzi's larger, more ambitious works, including those actually labelled "cantata" or "lamento," her formal solutions are naturally even more varied than in the arias. In part because of their texts, few of these works display the regular alternation between declamatory recitative and lyrical aria soon to become standard procedure in the Italian cantata. Dramatic texts with story lines, which would most naturally call for clear-cut narrative and lyrical portions, are indeed unusual in Strozzi's oeuvre: only three of her published cantatas fall into this category.<sup>95</sup> These cantatas, however, surely rank among her most inspired compositions. They create miniature dramas in which the progress of a protagonist—partially described by a narrator—toward a resolution of his predicament unfolds in a carefully calculated series of musico-dramatic events: recitative, arioso, half-aria, aria. In the two most memorable instances the drama ends abruptly with a real *coup de théâtre*: the bereaved lover of "Appena il sol" (Opus 7) slips on the muddy river bank and drowns, while the heroic victim Cinq-Mars of Opuses 2 and 3 is decapitated and the Seine reverberates in sympathetic shock (Examples 1 and 2).

<sup>94</sup> Another highly complex strophic aria in Op. 6 is "Dessistete," the fourth piece in the volume.

<sup>95</sup> These are the "Cinq-Mars" lament of Opp. 2 and 3, and two works from Op. 7: "Appresso à i molli argenti" and "Appena il sol." In addition, the manuscript cantata "Presso un ruscello argente" is of the narrative dramatic type as are two of the *Sacri musicali affetti* of Op. 5, both of which are drawn from episodes in the life of Saint Peter (pp. 19 ff., 99 ff.).

## Example 1

Barbara Strozzi, "Appena il sol", Op. 7, p. 152ff

In que-sta gui-sa ap-pun-to, sù la ri-va del fiu-me pas-seg-gian - -

- - - - do, gri-da - va, gri - da - va Eu-ri - lo

quan-do per so-ver-chio do-lo-re ha-vend' il pie-de al

pa-ri del pen-sie-ro vac-cil-lan - - - - te,

e non es-sen-do as-ciu-to dal-la rug-gia da an-cor l'hu-mi-do suo-lo,

sdrucio-lan - - - do nell' ac-que s'af-fo-

gò co-si, co - si, co - si d'a - mo-re, co - si d'a -

mo-re le fiam-me, le fiam - - -

- - me, le fiam - - - - - me, le

fiam - - - - - me a-mor - zò.

## Example 2

Il Lamento, Op. 3, p. 22

Men-tre il Re col suo pian - to del - le sue fret - te il

pen-ti-men-to ac-cen-na, tre-mò Pa-ri-gi, tre-mò Pa-

ri - gi, e tor-bi-dos-si, tor-bi-dos-si sen - na.

The musical score consists of three systems. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are in Italian. The first system shows the vocal line with lyrics 'Men-tre il Re col suo pian - to del - le sue fret - te il' and the bass line with notes and accidentals. The second system shows the vocal line with lyrics 'pen-ti-men-to ac-cen-na, tre-mò Pa-ri-gi, tre-mò Pa-' and the bass line with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The third system shows the vocal line with lyrics 'ri - gi, e tor-bi-dos-si, tor-bi-dos-si sen - na.' and the bass line with a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

In addition to these few dramatic cantatas, several others exploit the conventions of contrast between narrative and expressive styles, distinguishing musically between portions of text that are explicitly, even self-consciously, either reflective or outer-directed. “L’Astratto,” from Opus 8, is a cantata on the subject of singing and the power of song to dispel the pain of unrequited love. It is a *tour de force* for the singer-lover, who opens the work by declaring in recitative to the audience his intention to find a mode, a song to suit his mood.<sup>96</sup> Several arias, each in a different style, are then tried, initiated but soon interrupted, as the emotional impulse, the need for unself-conscious expression of feeling, overcomes the lover. Only toward the end does he summon up the requisite control to sing a whole formal aria, objectifying his own situation enough to generalize aphoristically about love.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup> On the use of the term “modo” or “manner” as a synonym for “aria” during the Renaissance see Andrea della Corte and G. M. Gatti, eds., *Dizionario di musica*, rev. ed. (Torino, 1959), “aria,” pp. 20 f., and Gaetano Cesari, “aria,” *Enciclopedia italiana*, I (Rome, 1929), p. 291.

<sup>97</sup> Self-conscious statements such as this, concerning the nature and function of music, although rare, are not unknown among seicento cantatas. For a discussion of a similar cantata

But Strozzi's preferred mode of expression, indicated—although it is perhaps also dictated—by her choice of texts, appears more lyrical than dramatic; she seems especially concerned with direct communication to an audience without the aesthetic distance imposed by a narrator.<sup>98</sup> Accordingly, *secco recitativo* is virtually absent from most of her cantatas. They consist rather of alternation between free, affective lyrical passages (i.e., *arioso*), and more highly structured, usually less affective, formal arias. Some cantatas even lack formal arias altogether, containing instead a series of open-ended *arioso* passages, usually held together by a refrain.

The use of sectional contrast observed in Strozzi's setting of the shorter aria texts is compounded and expanded in the longer cantatas. Both of the occasional cantatas of Opus 2 provide striking, and different, evidence of this procedure: "Gite o giorni dolenti" (Maria Leopoldina) contains twelve contrasting sections including two *arioso* refrains but no formal arias, while "Donna di maestà" (Eleanora) contains eight, four of them full arias (two strictly strophic, one a strophic variation, and one through-composed), which are linked by an elaborate *arioso* refrain.

Strozzi's most complex cantata, the "serenata" of Opus 8, is one of her few compositions to utilize strings—two violins—and she exploits their presence to develop a highly varied and contrasting, yet particularly satisfying large-scale composition. An opening *sinfonia* announces the thematic material of the first aria, and several different *ritornellos* within the work introduce or echo vocal sections, often functioning as strophic variations of arias. Instrumental and vocal sections alternate until the final climactic aria, a lament based on the descending tetrachord *ostinato*, which is accompanied by strings.<sup>99</sup>

In cantatas as well as arias, then, Strozzi's primary formal procedure is contrast, usually combined with some kind of refrain idea. It is always some change in the text that provokes a change in the musical style. In the arias a particular word might suggest special treatment, initiating a new section, or else a rhymed couplet or refrain line might imply musical separation from the

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set by Cesti, see David Burrows, "Antonio Cesti on Music," *The Musical Quarterly*, LI (1965), pp. 518 ff. Lorenzo Bianconi informs me, however, that the author of the text of Cesti's cantata is Sebastiano Baldini rather than the composer himself.

<sup>98</sup> Her choice of texts, of course, may reflect practical considerations as much as, or even more than, aesthetic ones; see below, p. 278, for a discussion of the possible function of her music.

<sup>99</sup> Strozzi wrote several laments based on the descending tetrachord *ostinato*, a favorite aria type of her teacher, Cavalli. Her use of string accompaniment here as well as in a similar *ostinato* lament in the "Cinq-Mars" cantata reflects the practice, firmly established in Cavalli's operas, of heightening the effect of laments with enriched accompaniment. Parts for strings are exceptional in Strozzi's works. In fact, only two other compositions, those setting texts from the operas *Finta pazza* and *Romolo e Remo*, in Op. 2, utilized strings.

rest of the text. In the cantatas, more emphatic distinctions, of meter or rhyme scheme, or else, of course, meaning, between sections of text invite distinct changes in musical style.

In general Strozzi's music reflects the influence of her training in the *seconda prattica* tradition. The style of her esteemed teacher Cavalli is recalled in her easy shifts between unmeasured and measured passages and between duple and triple meter, and in her occasional use of the *stile concitato* (see Example 2)—all in response to her faithful adherence to her texts. Indeed, her musical language is especially fluent and expressive in those less formal passages where she can follow the text flow most closely and freely.

The arias, on the other hand, less natural and spontaneous, frequently leave the impression of having been more problematical to the composer. They seem to record a conscious attempt to explore the options for continuation available within the vocabulary of middle-baroque style. Here, where the text does not easily suggest a succession of fleeting images, Strozzi relies almost exclusively on the idea of repetition of units of different sizes: brief melodic-rhythmic patterns repeated sequentially—occasionally extended beyond the limits of interest—and reiteration of longer phrases on different scale degrees: the opening phrases of some arias are immediately repeated and extended, in motto style, and, almost without exception, final phrases, in arias as well as arioso passages, are repetitions of penultimate phrases, transposed to end on the tonic.

Strozzi's music evokes the spirit of Cavalli, but her style is more lyrical than his, more dependent on sheer vocal sound. To be sure, this kind of distinction reflects fundamental differences between the genres in which master and pupil worked. The uninterrupted narrative flow, the momentum so crucial to Cavalli's dramatic realism has only limited relevance in the context of chamber music. Strozzi's expressive goals were clearly very different from Cavalli's.

If, like him, she displays special sensitivity to nuances of text expression—indeed, indulging wherever possible in word painting—she treats her texts more freely, repeating and extending individual words and phrases much more frequently and to greater lengths than his more austere and functionally narrative style allowed. Where Cavalli, the musical dramatist, heir to Monteverdi, reserved text repetition purely for affective words or else as a means of rounding out or closing a recitative passage or aria, Strozzi, the singer, the miniaturist, frequently repeats neutral words over and over again, sometimes creating a lengthy and complex, even bipartite aria out of only four or five short lines of text.<sup>100</sup>

The disproportion resulting from the combination of a short text with a

<sup>100</sup> For example, Op. 6, "Rissolvetevi pensieri," and Op. 3, "S'io mi giuro mia vita."

lengthy musical setting presages later operatic developments, although on an infinitely smaller scale. But frequent, even routine repetition of neutral words and phrases is not the only suggestion of incipient musical domination of text in Strozzi's works. More significant is the dissociation of word and music that permits her to accompany repeated lines of text with entirely new music or, vice versa, to repeat a musical section to a new text.

The most striking evidence of this dissociation, and most indicative as far as Strozzi's personal language is concerned, is offered by her melismatic passages, which, although generally set into motion by the meaning of a specific word, are so frequent and lengthy that an unusually large proportion of her music remains virtually without any text at all. These passages in particular epitomize the languid, almost self-indulgent lyricism of her style, of which the impression is created in part by the smooth coordination of rhythmic ebb and flow with carefully balanced melodic motion in phrases often unpredictably extended to draw upon extreme resources of the singer's breath. The frequently lengthy melismas are an especially important ingredient of Strozzi's affective style precisely because they are textless. Freed from the intermediary of words, yet text inspired and often filled with the standard techniques associated with affective text interpretation—pungent chromaticism, awkwardly large leaps, persistent syncopation, sudden interruptions—these passages allow the voice to speak for itself; Strozzi exploits the superior eloquence of the naked human instrument (Example 3).

On a more specific level, Strozzi's concern for the nuances of expression manifests itself in the numerous performance indications distributed throughout her scores—particularly the last four opuses—almost all of them closely

### Example 3

"Appena il sol", Op. 7, p. 158.

Che v'hò fat - to ò \_\_\_\_ lu - ci \_\_\_\_ di - te, \_\_\_\_ di - te, ò

lu - - ci di - - - te, che v'ho fat - to ò



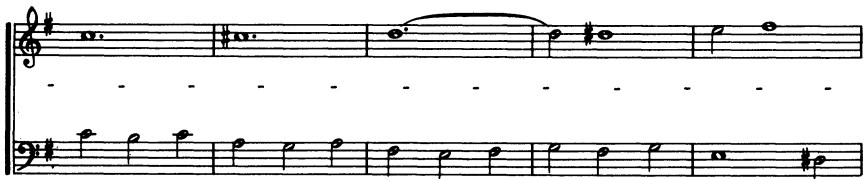
lu - ci, di - te, di - te, ò \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_ lu - ci di - te, di - te,



di - - te. Ch'ad' og - nor mi tor - men - ta - -



- - - - -



- - - - - te, mi \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_ tor - men - - - - ta - te.

linked to text interpretation. Tempo markings are especially frequent, both at the opening of a piece and within it, where they often confirm some structural articulation such as a metric change or refrain recurrence.<sup>101</sup> On some occasions, however, her tempo markings have no structural function, but are purely expressive. Appearing within continuous passages, sometimes several in a single phrase, they represent the composer's insistence on freedom of movement, even within measured music, her attempt to guarantee notationally the flexibility that should occur instinctively in performance.<sup>102</sup>

Dynamic indications, exclusively *forte* or *piano*, are less frequent and are essentially reserved for small-dimension repetitions, to create echo effects.<sup>103</sup> Few as they are, however, these indications suggest that other exact repetitions of similarly short patterns or phrases, though unmarked, might be performed in the same way. As far as ornaments are concerned, the arias and cantatas are exceedingly rich, at least in *trilli* and *tremoli* or *groppi*, which Strozzi most frequently abbreviates as *t.*, but also occasionally writes out. She evidently considers these ornaments as expressive devices, for she regularly calls for them—often several in succession—within affective passages. The subtlety and care with which she provides performance indications (despite some occasional ambiguities), and their close connection with specific aspects of text interpretation suggest that for Strozzi the mode of performance was intimately linked with the meaning of each piece.

Like the monodies published by so many singer-composers earlier in the century, as well as most mid-century cantatas, Strozzi's music is emphatically singer's music conceived for the voice of the composer. Strozzi's own voice, to judge from those works explicitly written for her by Nicolò Fontei, must have been a soprano with a preferred tessitura of *f'* to *f''*, possessed of sufficient flexibility for rapid passage work yet possibly more comfortable in sustaining long legato lines.<sup>104</sup> And her own compositions call for similar vocal qualities. Nearly three-quarters of her printed works are scored for solo soprano and continuo, and, indeed, she published only four solo works for voices other than soprano.<sup>105</sup> Her remaining compositions are ensembles: nineteen duets, eight

<sup>101</sup> Strozzi prefers the indications *adagio* and *presto*, although she occasionally makes use of *grave* and *allegro* as well. In several instances in Op. 8, she even uses double *adagio* and double *presto* markings, presumably for even greater extremes of tempo than those indicated by the single terms; for examples, see pp. 20, 81, 93.

<sup>102</sup> Although contrasts of tempo are generously indicated in a number of Strozzi's works, their interpretation occasionally can be ambiguous. It is sometimes difficult to know how long to maintain a given tempo, especially if the same tempo indication appears twice in succession, or if a new, contrasting section of music occurs without a new tempo marking.

<sup>103</sup> For examples, see Op. 7, pp. 20 and 60.

<sup>104</sup> For the bibliographical details concerning the Fontei publications, see above, notes 7 and 13.

<sup>105</sup> Op. 2 contains one aria for bass, an appropriate scoring for its text, "Da gl'abissi del mio core," and another for alto, "Dimmi, ah dove sei," and Op. 5 contains two alto pieces: "In

trios, five quintets, and four quartets, most of which involve at least one soprano.<sup>106</sup>

These ensemble works are concentrated in her first three volumes, particularly in Opus 1, which contains no solo compositions at all. For this, her first publication, variety of scoring may have been intentional as a demonstration of her compositional versatility: Giulio Strozzi's texts even seem specifically designed to suggest varied vocal combinations, for several of Barbara Strozzi's scorings respond directly to the *dramatis personae* of individual poems. The madrigal of the Three Graces, for example, "Bella madre d'Amore," is sung by three sopranos, while the "Contrasto de' cinque sensi," which begins "Chi di noi vaglia più," is sung by five voices: two sopranos, alto, tenor, and bass. Barbara could have performed almost any of these pieces in the company of other singers, on occasions such as those described in the *Veglie de' Signori Unisoni*, which, as already noted, mention ensemble performances as well as solo songs by Barbara.<sup>107</sup>

In contrast to her first publications, Strozzi's last three volumes contain only one piece out of forty-five that she could not have sung alone. Indeed, her close personal identification with their performance must in part have inspired the sharply increased number of performance indications noted in those same publications. Like most singers of the time she undoubtedly accompanied herself, perhaps on a lute or theorbo rather than a keyboard instrument, since the bass parts of her works display many awkward leaps and register changes, which are better suited to a plucked instrument than to the keyboard.<sup>108</sup>

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medio maris (Per S. Pietro)" and "E rumpebat undique (A. S. Benedeto)." Although it is true that most 17th-century cantatas were scored for soprano and continuo, the proportion of non-soprano cantatas in Strozzi's oeuvre is unusually small. For an amusing contemporary explanation of the predominance of soprano cantatas during the mid-17th century, cf. the text of Cesti's "Aspettate," discussed in Burrows, "Cesti on Music," p. 527.

<sup>106</sup> The ensembles are distributed as follows: Duets: Op. 1, 10; Op. 2, 5; Op. 3, 3; Op. 6, 1. Trios: Op. 1, 6; Op. 3, 2. All of the quartets and quintets are found in Op. 1.

<sup>107</sup> See above, n. 16. Fontei's two volumes written for Strozzi also include several ensembles; see the tables of contents provided in Emil Vogel, *Bibliothek der gedruckten weltlichen Vokalmusik italiens aus den Jahren 1500-1700* (Berlin, 1892), I, pp. 244 f.

<sup>108</sup> The advantages of the theorbo as an accompanying instrument for cantatas were recognized by various 17th-century theorists: see Burrows, "Cesti on Music," p. 520. It may have been quite normal for skilled singers to be able to accompany themselves on a number of instruments, but Monteverdi was certainly impressed by the variety of Francesca Caccini's abilities when he remarked, in a letter of 1610, that he had heard her "molto ben cantare et sonare di leutto chitaronato et clavicen bano" (de' Paoli, ed., *Lettere*, p. 52). Adriana Basile, too, accompanied herself on a variety of instruments, as a description of one of her performances in Milan indicates: "Cantò primieramente sonando un Arpa. . . Lasciò finalmente l'Arpa. . . e come bella cosí pietosa del morir nostro preso un'istromento men grave, una ghitarra spagnuola, passò à gli scherzi. . ." (Milan, August, 1611; quoted in Ademollo, *Adriana*, pp. 175 ff.). Her daughter Leonora accompanied herself both on the theorbo and viol, according to Maugars (*Response*, quoted in Ademollo, *Primi fasti*, pp. 8 f.).

Many of the texts of her works—particularly in these last three volumes—indicate that they were written specifically for her: the *Barbara-barbaro* conceit occurs prominently in five different pieces, one or the other of the terms receiving special emphasis through repetition.<sup>109</sup> In even more of her works the chief subject is singing and the protagonist is specifically a singer.<sup>110</sup> Although a woman is clearly the speaker in only a few of her works, in several other cases the gender is not explicit, encouraging us to believe that the voice is feminine. One cantata in particular, which bears an unusually specific dedication to one Giovanni Antonio Forni, is so clearly a direct address—the text begins with the refrain “I am not afraid of you” (“Non pavento io di te”)—that it is difficult not to hear the voice of Barbara Strozzi herself, the woman, the persona of the composer merging with that of the singer.<sup>111</sup>

To whom, indeed, did Barbara Strozzi sing her songs? What function did they serve? One assumes that, like the cantatas of her contemporaries, hers were performed in intimate surroundings, in drawing rooms, as entertainment in academies. Unfortunately we have no specific record of Strozzi’s own performances after those that took place at Unisoni meetings shortly before 1640. It is probable, however, that she continued to perform in similar circumstances.

In the unlikely event that her singing career began to wane with her increasing activity as a composer, her identity as a performer remains nevertheless central to her works. Indeed, I would like to suggest the possibility—even the necessity—of viewing Strozzi’s compositions within a very specific personal context, as the efforts of a singer to reconcile those two terms that had provided the Accademia degli Unisoni with such an appropriate subject for debate in 1638: the *paragone* of tears and song.<sup>112</sup> In that controversy—of which, we must remember, Barbara was the mouthpiece—a relationship between the two means of amorous persuasion was articulated, a relationship that ultimately lies at the heart of her own compositions.

The debate opened with a defense of tears, which were praised for being

<sup>109</sup> The *Barbara-barbaro* conceit occurs in two pieces in Op. 6, three in Op. 7, and one in Op. 8. In one instance Barbara is capitalized even though it is used as an adjective.

<sup>110</sup> In addition to the cantata “L’Astratto,” mentioned above, her oeuvre includes at least ten works about singing (Op. 2, nos. 24, 25, 26; Op. 3, no. 5; Op. 6, Nos. 9, 10, 12, 16; Op. 8, nos. 1 and 5). In addition, several of the *Affetti sacri* of Op. 5 exploit musical imagery. See especially the concluding piece of the volume, “Jubilemus, exultemus” (in praise of Sant’ Antonio).

<sup>111</sup> See Op. 6, pp. 11 ff. This is the only piece by Strozzi that bears a specific address, aside from those of Op. 2 addressed to the singer Adamo Franchi. It is conceivable, then, that Forni, too, may have been merely a singer who had performed the aria in question, perhaps in the presence of the dedicatee of the volume, Francesco Carafa. For an illuminating discussion of possible ways of viewing the relationship between a composer and his composition, see Edward Cone, *The Composer’s Voice* (Berkeley, 1974), especially chaps. 1 and 2.

<sup>112</sup> See above, p. 245 and n. 17.

natural, whereas song is artificial. In considering song, the argument goes, “you will find no *tremolo* that is not artificial, not a single sigh that is not a fiction. Song expresses the affections falsely, now sad, now happy; it simulates the passions, feigns suffering.”<sup>113</sup> Moreover, in order to move the passions songs must borrow the attributes of tears. “Musicians themselves confess that in order to give power to their songs they must use sighs, syncopes, and languidness. These qualities are none other than parts of suffering and of tears, stolen by them perhaps because they find music lifeless, lacking the energies of a real sighing affection.”<sup>114</sup>

The response to this argument declares the superiority of art to nature and, citing sources from Plato to Ficino, celebrates the affective powers of music. “Art, building upon nature’s lessons, brought music to such perfection that there is no power than it cannot harness, no difficulty it cannot overcome. Who can doubt the power of music, in which, almost in competition, art and nature both have combined all their strength? . . . Tears flow uncontrolled from saddened eyes without order, and with no particular value. But song, with studied harmony, learned observations, and superior voice, is moved and regulated by the divinity of the soul. . . . It is the true master of flights, of pauses, of sighs, of languor, and of those musical intricacies . . . which give rise to love.”<sup>115</sup>

The discourse concludes with “la Signora Barbara” speaking for herself: “I do not question your decision, gentlemen, in favor of song; for well I know that I would not have received the honor of your presence at our last session had I invited you to see me cry and not to hear me sing.”<sup>116</sup>

And yet, despite her final, tactful judgment in this debate, the superior affective force of music—and especially her own music—does depend after all, at least in part, upon its ability to imitate or to borrow the power of tears. Strozzi’s exploration of the affect of suffering, the concentration of so much of

<sup>113</sup> “. . . Se fissarete gl’occhi nel canto, non ritroverete trillo, che non sia un’artificio: non ritroverete languidezza, che non sia una finzione. Esprime falsamente hor tristi, hor lieti gli affetti: Simula le passioni: Finge i dolori” (*La contesa del pianto e delle lagrime*, p. 10).

<sup>114</sup> “Confessano I Musici stessi, che per dar vigore al loro canto, sono necessitati a valersi de i sospiri, delle sincope, e delle languidezze: queste, che altro sono propriamente, se non parti del dolore, e del pianto? rubbate forse da loro, perche vedono esanime quella Musica, in cui mancano le robustezze d’un sospirante affetto” (p. 10).

<sup>115</sup> “L’arte poi fabricando sopra gl’insegnamenti della Natura, hà ridotta la Musica ad un perfectione, che non v’è potere, che non soggioghi, nè impossibilita, che non superi. E chi vorrà circoscrivere quel valore, dove quasi a gara la Natura, e l’arte hanno impiegato ogni forza?” (p. 17). “Le lagrime scorrono da gl’occhi offesi, ò addolorati senza regola, e senza pregio alcuno. Ma il canto con studiosa harmonia, con dotte osservazioni, è con maestra voce, mosso, e regolato dalla divinità dell’anima. . . . Et è il vero maestro delle fughe, delle pause, de i sospiri, de i languori, e di quei musici intrecciamenti. . . che partoriscono Amore” (p. 20).

<sup>116</sup> “Io non posso dubitare della vostra sentenza, Signori Academici, mentre havete decisa la questione a favore del Canto. Sò ben’io, che non haverei ricevuto l’honore delle vostre presenze, s’io la sessione passata le havessi invitate a vedermi piangere, non ad udirmi cantare” (p. 24).

her art on the expressive, the plaintive, the tearful, on the lamenting singer-lover, seems to offer a deliberate demonstration of those opposed yet related powers. If her music can be seen in some sense as a reconciliation, a fusion of the power of tears and song, surely as the end product of such a synthesis it would be superior in power to either of its constituents, more powerful, that is, to incite love. When she sang her songs at academic meetings, at least at the Unisoni, for the pleasure of the gentlemen present, she may indeed have intended them to inspire love—in the venerable tradition of the Venetian courtesan.<sup>117</sup>

Whatever her own intentions may have been, her music certainly shares fully the aesthetic aims of that of her contemporaries, and of the baroque in general: to move the passions. But Strozzi's life and works distinguish her from these contemporaries. Whereas other composers sought (and found) a public forum for their affective expression—in theater or in church—her world remained rather more private. Although she demonstrated her potential abilities as a dramatic composer—particularly in her single political cantata—the narrative mode, with its distancing of pathos, was evidently not the one she preferred. Her voice remains smaller, addressing itself to a more intimate audience, expressing less the feelings of fictive characters than her own; “these harmonic notes,” she herself confesses, “are the language of the soul, and instruments of the heart.”<sup>118</sup>

Such an interpretation is encouraged, if not actually documented, by the apparent paradoxes of her life. She was a singer in Venice, surrounded by librettists and impresarios at a time when opera was the main cultural interest of a large segment of Venetian society, yet she apparently never sang in opera. She was a gifted composer who studied with the foremost opera composer of the day, yet she never wrote an opera. Despite the fact that those around her were deeply involved in public activity, her sphere seems strangely enclosed, insular, and self-contained. Her academic performances and eight published volumes are essentially all we know of her career.

The date of her death is unknown. Barbara Strozzi disappears from history with the last of her publications in 1664; she leaves no other testament or monument but that impressive body of works. As an inscription for her

<sup>117</sup> It would be misleading to create the impression that all of Strozzi's music is sad, for her oeuvre contains a large number of equally successful and appropriate settings of ironic and humorous texts. She reveals the same sensitivity in these pieces as she does in her more serious settings: an acute appreciation of mood and expressive potential. In fact, the coquettish, even seductive quality of many of her works may further clarify the intentions of her artistry.

<sup>118</sup> “. . . Queste armoniche note. . . son lingue dell'Anima, ed istromenti del Core” (Op. 7, dedication). The dedication of Op. 7 along with its table of contents are given complete in Iain Fenlon, “A Supplement to Emil Vogel's ‘Bibliothek der gedruckten weltlichen Vokalmusik italiens aus den Jahren 1500–1700,’ II,” *Analecta musicologica*, XI, 17 (1976), p. 328.

unknown tomb we might borrow the epitaph written by Giovanni Francesco Loredano and Pietro Michiele, Incogniti, for an unnamed musician:

Although I always bore bitter misfortune  
 And was unhappy until death,  
 In this one thing was fate kind to me:  
 Others cry of their sufferings,  
 I sang of mine.<sup>119</sup>

### Rutgers University

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<sup>119</sup> Se ben sostenni amari guai,  
 Et infelice io fui fino alla morte:  
 In questo pure amica hebbi la sorte,  
 Gli altri piangon gl'affanni, io gli cantai.

Loredano and Michiele, *Il Cimiterio, epitafi giocosi* (Venice: Guerigli, 1654), *centuria seconda*, epitaph 34.