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978-1-107-01237-0 - Music and the Exotic from the Renaissance to Mozart
Ralph P. Locke
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Music and the Exotic from the Renaissance to Mozart

During the years 1500–1800, European performing arts reveled in a kaleidoscope of Otherness: Middle Eastern harem women, fortune-telling Spanish "Gypsies," Incan priests, Barbary pirates, *moresca* dancers, and more. In this prequel to his 2009 book *Musical Exoticism,* Ralph P. Locke explores how exotic locales and their inhabitants were characterized in musical genres ranging from instrumental pieces and popular songs to oratorios, ballets, and operas. Locke's study offers new insights into much-loved masterworks by composers such as Cavalli, Lully, Purcell, Rameau, Handel, Vivaldi, Gluck, and Mozart. In these works, evocations of ethnic and cultural Otherness often mingle attraction with envy or fear, and some pieces were understood at the time as commenting on conditions in Europe itself. Locke's accessible study, which includes numerous music examples and rare illustrations, will be of interest to anyone who is intrigued by the relationship between music and cultural history and by the challenges of cross-cultural (mis)understanding.

RALPH P. LOCKE is Professor of Musicology at the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music. His previous books include *Music, Musicians, and the Saint-Simonians* (1986), *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge, 2009), and the co-edited *Cultivating Music in America: Women Patrons since 1860* (1997). He has published numerous articles and book chapters and contributed to major reference works, including *Grove Dictionary of Music* and *American National Biography*. His study of conceptions of the exotic Other in Verdi's opera *Aida* (*Cambridge Opera Journal*) won the H. Colin Slim Award from the American Musicological Society.

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To Lona, with thanks and love

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Writing a book that ranges widely entails risks. At many points, I am dealing with repertoires, historical situations, and source materials that specialized scholars know better than I do. At other points, I confront broad issues – such as imperialism and intercultural encounter – that have been studied and interpreted from many different angles. My gratitude therefore goes out to numerous individuals for encouraging me and sharing their expertise. Some mentioned a piece of music that I should look at. Some pointed me to an important book by a literary or cultural historian. Some kindly commented on one or more chapters. Some made timely suggestions in conversation or by email, or helpfully critiqued previous writings of mine. Some also shared work of theirs that was not yet published. (I have, when possible, cited the eventual published version.) Several helped with Polish or other languages.

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Scott Perkins prepared the musical examples with his customary visual and musical sensitivity.

Very little in this book has appeared in print before.[1] About a third of the material was originally written for inclusion at the beginning of Part II (the historical and case-study portion) of my 2009 book *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections*. But I removed it when that manuscript began to grow impractically long. As a result, the 2009 book offers no systematic discussion of developments from the years 1700–1800 and does not so much as mention the centuries before 1700. For the present book I have expanded and subdivided the unpublished chapters from that manuscript and have written additional chapters from scratch. (I also have written several related articles that did not find a place in the present book, largely for reasons of space, which are being published separately; the first of these are listed in the bibliography.) I have tried to make *Music and the Exotic from the Renaissance to Mozart* fully understandable to anyone reading it on its own. Still, I occasionally refer to passages in *Musical Exoticism* – which is now available in a lightly corrected paperback edition – for the benefit of those who may be interested in pursuing certain basic issues further, or in seeing how trends portrayed here continued and changed after 1800.

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Many of the illustrations are little-known. I am immensely grateful to the museums and libraries – including ones in Atlanta, Barcelona, and Warsaw – for providing high-resolution scans, and to the Eastman School of Music for subventions to cover some of the resulting fees. A few of the illustrations are, I believe, in the public domain; I would be happy to receive more accurate information in this regard and to make appropriate corrections in a second printing of the book.

I dedicate this book to Lona, whose eye and ear were a sure guide and who made sure I finished.

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Notes to the reader

The time frame examined in this book, *c.* 1500–1800, is roughly equivalent to what many historians nowadays – and, increasingly, music historians as well – call the "Early Modern period."[1] I occasionally use the phrase here, and trust that readers will not confuse it with music history's "early modern era" (i.e., the preliminary phases of musical modernism, as manifested in, say, Richard Strauss, Debussy, and Diaghilev-era Stravinsky).

Regarding my use of the resonant, problematic word "exotic" and cognates such as "exoticism," see Chapter 2 and the Afterword.

I sometimes refer to a people or ethnic group by a label that was used at the time rather than by one that is standard today. Several potentially confusing cases (e.g., Tartar rather than Tatar; Gypsy/Égyptien/Bohémien rather than Rom) are explained when they become relevant. On "Middle East," see below. In respect to certain words whose meanings have shifted greatly over time (e.g., "empire" and "race"), I follow normative scholarly practice in fields such as history and political theory.[2]

I italicize the names of all non-English dance-types. Some such names – e.g., *sarabande* – have become standard in English and thus are not normally italicized in books and articles, whereas others – e.g., *morisque* – are much less familiar and thus normally are italicized. My eye found it confusing to italicize some dance-types but not others, especially in close juxtaposition. Furthermore, the dance-types discussed here sometimes bore ethnic/exotic associations during the centuries under study; italicizing helps a name stand out from the surrounding prose and be felt as somehow special. (Just how non-normative a given dance-type was felt to be at the time will be discussed.) I also italicize certain genre-terms, such as *tragédie lyrique* and *opera buffa*. But I do not italicize genre-terms that have become so fully absorbed into English that there is no other way for us to name the thing (e.g., cantata and oratorio).

In this book, "courtly ballet" – or often simply "ballet" – refers to rehearsed and staged events that derived from highly regulated traditions of courtly dancing. On many occasions, the dancers were members of the nobility. This was the case in regard to some exotic roles (e.g., when the French king François I danced as a distinguished Turk).[3] More often,

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though, exotic roles – especially comical or low-class ones – were taken by professional dancers and clowns. In any case, it is important to remember that the types of dancing that nowadays are associated with the word "ballet" – such as dancing *en pointe* in tulle skirts – did not come into use until the nineteenth century and thus are not relevant here. Textbooks often use the phrase "court ballet" (without the "-ly") to refer to any courtly ballet. I follow certain specialist scholars in using it only in regard to a ballet performed "at court" (e.g., in a royal palace) but not for the genre as a whole, since some ballets were performed at a courtier's residence, a university, the city hall, and so on.[4] As for the *intermedi* that got inserted into Italian operatic performances (usually at the end of an act), I follow scholarly practice and call them *balli*: "ballet" would be particularly misleading since some of them consisted entirely of mime, comic antics, or tumbling (though usually with some kind of music, even if this consisted of little more than annunciatory drumrolls or trumpet calls).

A five-act serious French opera I call, in accordance with longstanding scholarly usage, a *tragédie lyrique*. The historically attested phrase *tragédie en musique*, specifically appropriate to the efforts of Lully (with libretti by Quinault), might be misleading if applied to certain serious eighteenth-century French operas by Rameau, Gluck, or Salieri.[5] Certain other genre titles, similarly, are adopted from current scholarly practice (e.g., *opéra-ballet*), in order to emphasize the common features in a large group of works.

I often refer to a rather broad area stretching from North Africa to Turkey, Arabia, and Persia as "the Middle East."[6] In doing so I follow the practice of numerous scholars in musicology and also in European cultural history.[7] This modern-day expression can carry strong and complex associations, some of which are not relevant to the years under study. But there is no obvious brief alternative. Indeed, people in the years 1500–1800 referred to the same broad area by a range of terms that were no less vague and carried equally problematic associations: e.g., the Holy Lands, the Levant, the Orient, or the lands of the Moors and Saracens.[8]

Distinctions, as needed, will be made between such recognizably distinct groups as Arabs, Mamluks (multi-ethnic to some extent), Turks (and their multi-ethnic Janissary troops), Persians, and North African pirates and Berbers.[9] Except when I am summarizing a historical source, I have largely avoided using phrases – still common among some historians – such as "the Muslim invaders."[10] For one thing, I was concerned not to imply, however inadvertently, that religion was necessarily the single most important feature or motivation of, say, the Arabs who conquered the

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Iberian Peninsula or of the Ottomans during their expansionist campaigns in Eastern Europe. For another, Jews and Christians often lived in comfort and safety in both Golden Age Spain and the Ottoman Empire, and their presence is obscured by casual descriptions of the lands as "Muslim." Finally, by the year 1500 Islam had already spread well beyond the Mediterranean and Western Asia – e.g., to Indonesia and the southern Philippines – making generalized references to "the Muslims" yet more problematic. Still, I occasionally speak of, for example, the "Middle Eastern Muslim world" because to avoid mention of religion entirely would be as misleading as to systematically avoid mention of Europe as being predominantly Christian and, to at least as great an extent, Christian-ruled.

All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated. I sometimes use the best-known version of a name rather than the version that is used in the work I am discussing (e.g., the biblical Hagar rather than the Italian equivalent, Agar; Alexander the Great rather than Alessandro Magno).

In general, I use the phrase "Italian opera" to mean any opera that was written to an Italian libretto, whether for a city or court in the Italian-speaking region (i.e., the peninsula and Sicily) or beyond (e.g., Madrid, Dresden, and London). The phrase "French comic operas," similarly, can refer to French-language works composed elsewhere (e.g., in Vienna). A similar risk of confusion scarcely arises with regard to operas using texts in English, German, and Spanish, as these did not travel nearly so well, if at all.

In cases where I quote an early manuscript or early printed document, I sometimes lightly modernize punctuation and spelling (e.g., French accents) in accord with standard scholarly practice.

Basic facts about many musical works – and details of opera plots – have been checked against reliable sources, mainly the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (second edition, 2001) and the *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, both of which I consulted primarily in the online versions at OxfordMusicOnline.com (which I refer to as *Grove Music Online*). To reduce the endnotes somewhat, I do not normally mention these sources.

I quote phrases of a libretto from a reliable printed source (such as the original published libretto, a reliable manuscript of the score, or a recent critical edition) rather than from the booklet of a particular recording. I often was able to consult the physical document, a scanned online version (e.g., at gallica.fr), or a published facsimile. For libretti set by Handel and Mozart, in particular, I have consulted facsimiles of the first printings (edited, respectively, by Ellen Harris and Ernest Warburton – see the Bibliography). The libretti for Gluck's operas are reprinted in a volume of the critical edition of his works.[11] Libretti by Metastasio are available

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at the *Progetto Metastasio* site (see "Online sites and databases" in the Bibliography). As with *GroveMusicOnline*, I normally omit endnote references to all these sources, simply saying something like: "the list of characters in the libretto for *Giulio Cesare*."

In general, I have consulted one or more editions of a musical work being discussed but, for reasons of space, have not cited them except when referring to a particular statement by a volume's editor.[12] Musical examples are likewise based on reliable editions. In order to make an example easier to sing to oneself or play at the keyboard, I have sometimes given only the melody line or melody-plus-bass. In any case, an actual performance at the time would have been more elaborate, and variable, than a literal reading of the composer's score might suggest – most basically, by "realizing" the *basso continuo* line. (See the last section of Chapter 1.)

For reasons of page layout, certain Figures and Music Examples will be found one or more pages later than their first mention. (See especially the nine period images of the New World, Figs. 4.1 – 4.9.)

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