

student of the *Exercises*, navigated the various power players who could often obstruct his work, and yet never felt that he did enough. Sisyphean, indeed.

Sisyphean as well is the impeccable research across ten archives in Padua, Rome, and Venice. McNamara possesses a keen eye for both the anecdote—many of which are downright hilarious and scintillating—and the larger picture. The individual stories of drunken, illiterate priests with live-in girlfriends and parishioners just trying to save their souls (but not too hard) are well placed into the larger context of Catholic reform to remind us that Barbarigo's problems plagued many a bishop throughout rural Catholic Europe. The archival bounty McNamara has uncovered has given us a particularly rich insight into the typical bishop's burdens: a large diocese, never enough supplies or time, and Hydra-like political and religious forces that always seem to get in the way just as one problem ebbed. Barbarigo's ultimate lesson for us is that Trent gave bishops like him little guidance for how to tend to the flock; and in this sense Trent was a failure. But this also meant there was plenty of room for creativity and adaptation, allowing bishops like Barbarigo to borrow methods from the Venetian state, reformers like Carlo Borromeo, and orders like the Society of Jesus. Catholic Reform, McNamara tells us, was whatever it needed to be. In this sense, *The Bishop's Burden* sagaciously elucidates that if there is anything to learn from Tridentine Catholicism—if we should dare to use such a phrase—it is that such a concept means very little about the eponymous council's decrees and has everything to do with how bishops grappled with their silences.

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Andrew A. Cashner

Hearing Faith: Music as Theology in the Spanish Empire. Leiden: Brill, 2020. Studies in the History of Christian Traditions, 194. Pp. xvi + 244. Hb, €107.00 / \$128.00.

If there are good reasons for supposing that the Spanish empire might provide fertile ground for an investigation into music as theology, there are also good reasons for venturing into it with caution. After all, the “Spanish empire” encompassed a huge geography with an astonishing array of cultures, languages, faith communities, and theologies. And the musical practices of these

populations remain, despite the efforts of recent generations of scholars, largely unexplored.

It is a relief, then, that Cashner eschews the great repertory of Latin liturgical works composed by a constellation of Golden Age priest-composers—many of whom were trained and, in some cases, published theologians—in favor of a handful of case studies drawn from the villancico genre. While the villancico began life as an elite form of courtly entertainment it had, by the second half of the seventeenth century, evolved into a relatively large-scale form for multiple choirs and instruments. Villancicos were sung in church on major feasts, often as substitutes for the responsories at Matins. The fact that their texts were so often printed, shorn of their music, encouraged the development of interpretative communities and gave them a life beyond a single annual performance.

As a genre, the villancico is especially well placed to inform us about early modern sacred music practices since it differs from the better known and more thoroughly studied Latin liturgical genres. The villancico provided a moment of less formal drama within the much more tightly prescribed theater of the liturgy. Cast in the vernacular and set to the most recent musical styles in a way that often assigned quasi-theatrical roles to individual singers, the villancico injected a moment of seasonally inspired spontaneity into the otherwise rigidly controlled solemnity and predictability of the Roman rite.

Musicology has largely ignored the villancico, a few notable exceptions notwithstanding, and much work remains to be done by *villancicofilos*. The genre's sources are widely dispersed and poorly catalogued, and critical editions, performances, and recordings are relatively scarce. The interpretative rewards however, as skillfully demonstrated in Cashner's intense and polished study, are rich. And while the grand promise of its hyperbolic title inevitably remains unfulfilled, the interpretations and insights offered in this study make it uniquely valuable.

In 2018, Cashner edited and published (<http://www.sscm-wlscm.org/>) a corpus of “villancicos about music” by six composers: Joan Cererols (1618–80), Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla (c.1590–1664), Miguel de Irizar (1635–84), Jerónimo de Carrión (1660–1721), José de Cáseda (fl.1691–1716), and Antonio de Salazar (c.1650–1715). Since Cashner's book is substantially based on these otherwise inaccessible works, the online edition serves as an invaluable companion to Cashner's monograph. *Hearing Faith* expands the online corpus and subjects their texts and musical settings to intense scrutiny, always relating the works and their performance to the broader theological climate from which they emerged and to which they may have contributed.

Even in the titles of the two parts into which Cashner's book is divided—“Listening for Faith” and “Listening for Unhearable Music”—we are being prepared

for an interpretative discourse that will see the author unpacking such commonplace notions as hearing and listening. The two chapters comprising part one introduce the author's framework and method: the "exploration of central questions about music's role in the relationship between faith and hearing, based on a global sampling of the repertoire." (I would argue, however, that the "global sampling"—fewer than a dozen pieces—is too small and too carefully cherry-picked to sustain confident generalizations about theology in the entire Spanish empire.) The three chapters comprising part two are preoccupied with case studies of individual villancicos and sets of closely related villancicos. The chapter sections draw out from the author's analysis such suggestive themes as "Music about music in the villancico genre," "Theological listening in the Neoplatonic tradition," and "Devotion to Christ as singer and song."

In defining theology, the author explains, somewhat elusively, "By theology I do not mean the tired repetition of settled church doctrines such as articles of the Creed or dogmas of the Council of Trent. Instead I understand theology as a creative activity of imaginatively, even playfully, seeking out ever-new ways of connecting revealed truth to observed experience."

Drawing on Christian Neoplatonists, Fray Luis de Granada and, in particular, the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher—to whom creation was a musical improvisation on God's cosmic organ—Cashner examines a musical theology in which the very structures of God's ordered universe are seen as "musical." This is not music as metaphor or symbol; rather, it is a theological system in which music provides a unique "voice through which creation can make audible its message-of-being." Kircher finds the precise mechanisms by which the affective experience of music transforms listeners in the principle of sympathy (*Musurgia universalis*, bk. 7), most clearly observed when a string plucked on a lute will cause another string tuned to the same pitch to vibrate in sympathy.

Since the investigation is grounded in a close and systematic analysis of a number of musical works, the various ideas and concepts drawn from literature and theology are invoked as they arise in the process of musical and textual analysis. While there is a risk that theologians will find this methodology frustrating, it certainly has the advantage of enhancing our understanding of these poorly understood musical works within a much wider context than is customary among music scholars of this period. If the grandiose title is somewhat misleading, the reader will be quick to forgive because the actual topic—a close contextual analysis of a handful of villancicos from Mexico, Catalonia, and Aragon—is perceptive and fascinating in itself. Cashner exposes the precise mechanisms employed by poets and composers in the creation of their works. It is as if he takes us into their studios and allows us to observe their creative decisions. The villancicos emerge as surprisingly complex works that depend

on the twin discourses of theology and music as complementary ways of knowing. A generous sprinkling of maps, diagrams, figures, tables, poem examples, and music examples richly support Cashner's stimulating discussion.

Cashner combines forensic musical and textual analysis to reveal the villancico as an unexpected site for theological discourse and in doing so opens the way for the much more comprehensive study of music as theology in the vast Spanish empire that his title invites. One is left wondering if a similar methodology applied to the unstudied repertoires of music composed in and for Jesuit colleges and missions might reveal further insights into the multiple relationships between music and theology.

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Barbara Fuchs and Mercedes García-Arenal, eds.

The Quest for Certainty in Early Modern Europe: From Inquisition to Inquiry, 1550–1700. Toronto/ Los Angeles: University of Toronto Press/ UCLA, 2020. Pp. 294. Hb, CA\$ 56.25.

Pandemics typically produce uncertainty and generate fake news: as we men and women of the twenty-first century know only too well in the difficult times we are going through. But what was the situation in Spain when the plague of 1596 arrived? Ruth Mackay gives us the answer in one essay in this volume (105–31), allowing us to feel at first hand the panic that overwhelmed the authorities and the doctors, who often lied about the real number of victims and the cause of their deaths, in order to safeguard the economies of cities like Burgos and Bilbao, while having to grapple with faked safe-conducts and unreliable tax returns. Theologians like the Jesuit Pedro Ribadeneyra would talk of a “useful lie” (*mendacium officiosum*), when justifying the choices made by authorities in circumstances where true and false were easily confused, notwithstanding the claims to veracity of numerous documents signed in the presence of the ubiquitous notaries. As García-Arenal explains in her introduction to this collection that originated in a seminar held in Los Angeles in 2016, you can study the history of scepticism by examining the arguments of the philosophers, as Richard Popkin has done elsewhere (*The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes*, 1st ed. [Assen: Van Gorcum,