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Chiara Pelliccia

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## ***“Between Leisure and Virtues”: The Roman Cantata and the Villeggiatura***

Chiara Pelliccia (Rome)

The main objective of this essay is to focus on the dualism between the city and the countryside by looking at the Roman *villeggiatura* (the traditional retreat to the countryside during spring and/or autumn) during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries from a poetic and musical point of view. In evaluating this period of residency outside the urban space, emphasis will be placed on how musical practice and musical genres such as the chamber cantata function as a mirror of the social and cultural meanings contained in this kind of temporary retreat from urban life, thus helping to highlight the complexity of the city/country dialectic.<sup>1</sup>

Two approaches inform my perspective. The first derives from David Coffin’s seminal study on the Renaissance villa in Rome and concerns studies dedicated to the villa and its multiple uses and meanings through the centuries. The second regards social practices and the patronage of the arts, music, and theatre related to the *villeggiatura*.<sup>2</sup>

### **The villeggiatura tradition in early modern Rome**

The early modern idea of the *villeggiatura* derives from a long process of elaboration of several heterogeneous cultural models, ranging from the philosophic tradition of Aristotle, to the literary models of Cicero, Sallust, Virgil, and Seneca, as well as the Christian view of life. In attempting to balance the preference for rural life (viewed as a peaceful retreat) with urban life (viewed as labour or political engagement) and vice-versa, the dialectics of city versus

1 This article is the result of research conducted for the *PerformArt* project ([www.performart-roma.eu](http://www.performart-roma.eu); PI: Anne-Madeleine Goulet). This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s *Horizon 2020* research and innovation program (grant agreement no. 681415).

2 The bibliography on both aspects is extensive. Previous contributions include David R. Coffin, *The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); idem, *Gardens and Gardening in Papal Rome* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Franco Moro and Andrea Camilleri, eds., *I piaceri della vita in campagna nell’arte dal XVI al XVIII secolo* (Milano: De Agostini, 2000); Almamaria Mignosi Tantillo, ed., *Villa e Paese. Dimore nobili del Tuscolo e di Marino* (Roma: De Luca, 1980). See also the cross-disciplinary volumes *Letteratura di villa e di villeggiatura. Atti del Convegno* (Parma, 29 Settembre – 1 Ottobre 2003). Pubblicazioni del Centro Pio Rajna., Sez. 1 – Studi e saggi 13 (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 2004) and *Vivere tra città e campagna. I piaceri della villa dal secolo XVIII al XXI*, ed. Paolo Quintili. Testi e studi 240 (Milano: Unicopli, 2011). Musicological explorations of the topic include Paola Besutti, “Musica in villa fra Rinascimento ed Età Moderna,” in *Letteratura di villa e di villeggiatura*, 319–53; Claudio Annibaldi, “Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini in Villa: What Aesthetic Can Teach Us about Musical Patronage in the Early Modern Period,” in *Fiori Musicali. Liber amicorum Alexander Silbiger*, ed. Claire Anne Fontijn (Sterling Heights: Harmonie Park Press, 2010), 5–24; Anne-Madeleine Goulet, “Cultural life at Villa Lante di Bagnaia (1683–1685): Family, gardens, and sociability,” in *The Grand Theater of the World. Music, Space, and the Performance of Identity in Early Modern Rome*, eds. Valeria De Lucca and Christine Jeanneret (London; New York: Routledge, 2020), 161–72.

countryside and *otium* versus *negotium* were crucial aspects, related as they were to moral concepts like civic engagement, and the contrast between vice and virtue.<sup>3</sup>

Places and environments were modelled according to different preferred ways of living: either inside or outside the city boundaries. In Rome, even in antiquity, the law recognized that the city had to be defined not just as the area encircled by the city walls, but also had to include the surrounding suburban areas just outside the walls, with their gardens, *vigne* (vineyards) and *ville* (villas).<sup>4</sup> From at least the Middle Ages on, the citizens of Rome had started to re-establish their *vigne*, which were farms and vineyards, generally with small residential buildings called *casini*. These were the predecessors of the Renaissance *ville*: the suburban and country residences at the heart of the early modern notion of the *villeggiatura*. As Coffin has underlined, the change in terminology from *vigna* to *villa* was the first critical reflection of the gradual “change in function of the country residence from a productive farm to a center of pleasurable relaxation.”<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, Coffin highlighted the existence of a double system of *villeggiatura* in Rome, the first related to the papal court and the second to the city’s aristocratic families. Furthermore, the spatial distribution of country residences mirrors a particular feature of that Roman system: it consisted of a primary suburban level, just beyond the city walls and directly descended from the *vigna* tradition, as well as a second extra-urban dimension that involved nearly all the feudal residences in Latium, particularly those around lake Albano in the vicinity of the papal residences (Albano, Castel Gandolfo, Frascati, Marino, Ariccia, Rocca di Papa, etc.).<sup>6</sup> Celebratory medals, engravings and topographic drawings, as well as several travelers’ memoirs all testify to the renewed settling of that area from the late sixteenth century onward.<sup>7</sup>

3 For an overview see Luigi Malnati, “Dalla *Tryphe* degli Etruschi all’*Otium* dei Latini” and Carlo Bertelli, “Dall’*Otium* liberale alla preghiera” both in *Otium. L’arte di vivere nelle domus romane di età imperiale* (exhibition catalogue), eds. Carlo Bertelli, Luigi Malnati and Giovanna Montevicchi (Milano: Skira, 2008), 17–20 and 21–26.

4 An unambiguous definition of the legal status of urban Rome, the Roman countryside (*Campagna Romana*) and the Roman *agro* (*Agro romano*) remained an important issue until the last decades of the nineteenth century. See Antonio Ciaralli, “Panorama delle fonti relative agli assetti della proprietà fondiaria nell’Agro Romano,” in *I territori di Roma: storie, popolazioni, geografie*, eds. Roberta Morelli, Eugenio Sonnino and Carlo M. Travaglini (Roma: Sapienza Università di Roma, 2003), 33–39.

5 Coffin, *The Villa*, vii, *passim*.

6 Maria Barbara Guerrieri Borsoi, “Le trasformazioni urbanistiche di Frascati nel Seicento. La ‘piccola Roma’ tra interventi papali e Istanze della municipalità,” *Quaderni PAU* 27, nos. 33–34 (2007): 55–76.

7 See for example Matthäus Greuter, *È fatta celebre la città di Frascati dalla vaghezza delle sue ville suburbane* (Roma: s.n., 1620); Dominique Barrière, *Vero e novo disegno di Frascati con tutte le ville convicine* (Roma: De Rossi, 1650); Carlo Bartolomeo Piazza, *La gerarchia cardinalizia* (Roma: Bernabò, 1703), 255–56; Thomas Salmon, “La Città di Frascati, situata nella Provincia della Campagna di Roma,” in Thomas Salomon, *Lo stato presente di tutti i paesi e popoli [...], XXII, [...] descrizione degli altri stati del dominio ecclesiastico, cioè della campagna di Roma [...]* (Venezia: Giambattista Albrizzi, 1759), 292. Regarding travelers’ memoirs, see an overview in Novella Bellucci, “Il viaggiatore in villa. I castelli romani nei libri di viaggio fra XVII e XIX secolo,” in *Letteratura di villa e di villeggiatura*, 431–49.

These annual periods of leisure for the aristocracy, usually involving the withdrawal of families to their feudal country residences and villas, were often planned to take place during spring and autumn. This was done for productive as well as social reasons, namely those associated with the pastime of hunting and with the harvest, which took place during those seasons. Conversely, the papal *villeggiatura*, as well as that of church dignitaries, was “not regulated by the rhythm of agriculture, but by a combination of weather and religious calendar,” although it usually started after the Feast of St. Peter’s, on June 29, and concluded by the Feast of All Saints on November 1.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the seventeenth century the representative function of villas and country residences increased, reflecting the social and cultural transformations that were taking place. In some respects, the villa became the pastoral counterpart of the city palace, adding some of the functions of the urban way of life – such as representative hospitality and musical *conversazioni* (social get-togethers of the upper classes) – to the classical idea of the delights of rural *otium*. The new concept of the *villeggiatura* is clearly expressed in the architecture and lavish interior design, gardens and waterworks, in the arts and particularly in music: in short, in all sorts of practices of *loisir*.<sup>9</sup>

### **Musical practices and people outside the city walls**

The day before yesterday, because of the beautiful weather, the cardinal [Ottavio] Paravicino and [cardinal Ottavio] Acquaviva went to the villa of the cardinal del Monte, who showed them the whole *casino*, which they enjoyed greatly. And by chance, signora Vittoria [Archilei], without knowing that any cardinals were there, came with Antonio [Archilei, her husband] to see the said villa. Paravicino, being very eager to hear her sing, as was Acquaviva, had someone request her to do them this favour, and asked them to bring their musical instruments. And because signora Vittoria was well-trained, and also because she sang in a vaulted room, I certainly never heard her with a better voice.<sup>10</sup>

8 Coffin, *The Villa*, 24.

9 See Almamaria Mignosi Tantillo, “Villa e paese. Dimore nobili del territorio tuscolano e marinese,” in *Villa e Paese*, 11–33; Tracy L. Ehrlich, “Pastoral Landscape and Social Politics in Baroque Rome,” in *Baroque Garden Cultures: Emulation, Sublimation, Subversion*, ed. Michael Conan (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2005), 131–82.

10 “L’altr’ieri il cardinale [Ottavio] Paravicino et [il cardinale Ottavio] Acquaviva per tempo bellissimo furno alla vigna del card.le dal Monte, dove Monte le mostrò tutto il casino con estremo lor gusto. Et per fortuna la s.ra Vittoria [Archilei], senza sapere che vi fossero cardinali, venne con Antonio [Archilei, suo marito] per veder detta vigna. Paravicino desiderosissimo di sentirla cantare, et ancho Acquaviva, la ferno pregare a volerli favorire. Et si mandò per li loro istrumenti. Et per stare la signora Vittoria imbarbarescata, et ancho per cantare in una stanza in volta, io certo non la ho mai sentita con più bella voce.” Letter from Emilio de’ Cavalieri (Rome) to Marcello Accolti (Florence), 1 February 1602, printed in Warren Kirkendale, *Emilio de’ Cavalieri ‘gentiluomo romano’* (Firenze: Olschki, 2001), 384, doc. 452 (here and below all English translations are my own).

This letter by Emilio de' Cavalieri (c.1550–1602), sent from Rome in 1602, may be considered among the most famous descriptions of musical practice in a Roman *vigna*, and it is a useful example to start our observations. His account refers to the suburban *vigna* owned by Cardinal Francesco Maria Del Monte (1549–1626) – the well-known patron of artists such as Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio and musicians and composers such as De' Cavalieri himself.<sup>11</sup> The *vigna* was located just outside the Porta Pinciana – on the site of the ancient gardens of Lucullus – and later became known as the *vigna* Ludovisi (see fig. 1). The essential function of the *vigna* and its *casino* was that they were intended for a few selected guests, who were offered a relaxed atmosphere. That included ordering musicians who ‘arrived by chance’ to bring musical instruments with them (“si mandò per li loro istrumenti”) in order to perform music.<sup>12</sup>

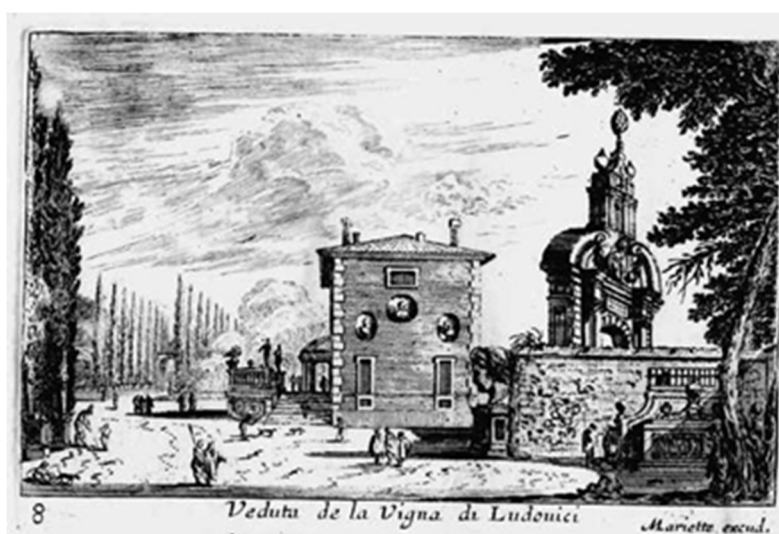


Fig. 1: Pierre Mariette “Veduta della vigna di Ludovici,” in *Alcune vedute di giardini e fontane di Roma, e Tivoli* (Paris: Sylvestre, 1646) © Collection of the author

Sometimes documents enable us to observe the movements of musicians and singers as they went to serve patrons in their *ville*. In this respect, the *Diari Sistini* are a valuable source because they notice the presence and absence of papal singers from the Sistine Chapel, including when they left in order to serve either the pope in Castel Gandolfo or, with papal permission, the cardinals in their respective villas. For example, in May 1633 the soprano castratos Loreto

11 On Cardinal Del Monte’s patronage see Franca Trinchieri Camiz, “Music and Painting in Cardinal del Monte’s Household,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 26 (1991): 213–26; Zygmunt Ważbiński, *Il cardinale Francesco Maria del Monte. Mecenate di artisti, consigliere di politici e di sovrani* (Firenze: Olschki, 1994); Stefania Macioce and Enrico de Pascale, eds., *La musica al tempo di Caravaggio* (Roma: Gangemi, 2012).

12 Arnaldo Morelli focuses on the final section of the letter in his discussion of space and music during the early modern era. See Arnaldo Morelli, “Spaces for musical performances in seventeenth-century Rome,” in *The Music Room in Early Modern France and Italy: Sound, Space, and Object*, eds. Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 309–20 (312), translated in Arnaldo Morelli, *Teatro della vista e dell’udito. La musica e i suoi luoghi nell’età moderna* (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2017), 40–41.

Vittori (1600–1670) and Marcantonio Pasqualini (1614–1691) went to the villa at Bagnaia to serve the cardinal-nephew Antonio Barberini (1607–1671). The same Vittori was among the few singers that Pope Urban VIII (1568–1644) took with him during his spring or autumn *villeggiatura*.<sup>13</sup>

At least until the eighteenth century, numerous examples underline hundreds of similar instances of musical practice outside Rome's city boundaries. For instance, in the late seventeenth century, there is the case of Filippo II Colonna (1663–1714), Prince of Paliano and Gran Contestabile of the Kingdom of Naples, and his autumn *villeggiatura* in Marino, which he passed at his *casino*, or in his villa at the hamlet of Frattocchie, called the Villa della Sirena.<sup>14</sup> Often Colonna hosted ambassadors and his noble peers in Marino, organising musical and theatrical entertainment for them. Expense lists for the *villeggiatura* register the transportation of musical instruments from Rome to the various residences in Marino – such as in Genazzano – and the costs for the maintenance and tuning of harpsichords.<sup>15</sup>

The presence of harpsichords suggests that these instruments were used to rehearse and perform music such as cantatas or arias. It also implies that a keyboard player, or perhaps the composer himself, followed Colonna to his country residence during the *villeggiatura*. Even if the Colonna documents rarely note the names of composers or harpsichordists at the *villa* (at least between 1690 and 1714), they do mention tuning and maintenance work done by the *cembalaro* (harpsichord builder) Marco Guidi (fl. c.1690–c.1713), which demonstrates the frequent use of these instruments. Furthermore, the expenses for Guidi's travels from and back to Rome confirm that his presence was required during the *villeggiatura*.<sup>16</sup>

As has emerged so far, being outside of the city walls and one's official urban residence permitted both high-ranking ecclesiastical dignitaries and nobles to somewhat relax the rules of conventional etiquette, allowing them to live in a more leisurely and informal way and enjoy

13 See "Libro de Punti [...] 1633," in V-CVbav, *Cappella Sistina*, Diario 53, May, 16 and 21. Further reference in Bianca Maria Antolini, "La carriera di cantante e compositore di Loreto Vittori," *Studi musicali* 7 (1978): 141–88.

14 Still in existence today, the villa Colonna alle Frattocchie (called villa della Sirena) was built for the Colonna family by the well-known architect Antonio Del Grande at their estate near Marino called 'Frattocchie'. See Luca Maggi, *Antonio del Grande. Per un 'altro' Seicento Romano* (Firenze: Alinea Editrice, 2006), 94–106. Positioned between the current via Appia Nuova and the via di Sassone towards Marino, the *villa* was close to Castel Gandolfo and therefore connected to the former routes of communication between the Papal States and the Kingdom of Naples. Because of its strategic position, it often took on a representative function, receiving popes, ambassadors and viceroys. In 1697, for example, Filippo Colonna hosted Innocent XII at the Frattocchie during the latter's journey from Rome to Anzio at the occasion of the construction of a new building at the port there, see eds. June Di Schino and Furio Luccichenti, (eds.), *Viaggio di Papa Innocentio XII da Roma a Nettuno l'anno 1697* (Roma: Viviani, 2001).

15 See for example "Bilancio di Francesco Fortunio maestro di casa," I-Suss, AC, IA83, November, 1691. Further references in Chiara Pelliccia, "L'età di Filippo II Colonna (1689–1714). Mecenatismo e collezionismo musicale," Ph.D diss. (Roma: Università degli studi di Roma "Tor Vergata," 2015).

16 See Chiara Pelliccia, "Mastro Marco Guidi cembalaro. Nuovi documenti dall'Archivio Colonna di Subiaco," *Fonti Musicali Italiane* 18 (2013): 17–24 (21–23).



various activities. Music was clearly among these, as is testified by the transportation of musical instruments and the movement of people. But what type of music and what musical genres? Some were preferred over others in this informal context: arias and chamber cantatas in particular.

### **The Roman cantata during the *villeggiatura***

The chamber cantata is a genre of vocal music of relatively short length. Consisting of a succession of recitatives and arias, it usually involves small-scale instrumental accompaniment, sometimes consisting of no more than two violins in addition to the basso continuo ensemble. Along with its succinctness of form, this feature made the chamber cantata particularly suitable for expressing meanings ranging from the sacred to the secular. In its ability to communicate several messages, including those related to the current affairs or political situation at the time, which often overlapped with others in one and the same composition, the cantata provided patrons a means to satisfy both representative duties and entertainment needs. It is well known that Rome was one of the most important centres for the production and diffusion of chamber cantatas from the early seventeenth century onward, because the city provided the ideal conditions for the cultivation of vocal chamber music as a part of various types of occasions, such as the weekly *conversazioni*. Since each event, including the *villeggiatura*, required new compositions, cantatas and arias were usually copied by hand and only rarely put into print, particularly for when it came to works produced in and around Rome.<sup>17</sup>

The current state of research has already brought to light several bills for the copying of music that highlight the circulation of arias and cantatas among various patrons.<sup>18</sup> Although rarer, letters, archival documents and music manuscripts also attest to the exchange of scores between the city and the countryside in both directions. The unpublished correspondence of Cardinal Girolamo Colonna (1604–1666) contains at least one example. At the end of April 1634, the cardinal sent an aria from Rome to the already mentioned papal singer Loreto Vittori.

17 For a general overview see Colin Timms, Nigel Fortune, Malcolm Boyd, Friedhelm Krummacher, David Tunley, James R. Goodall and Juan José Carreras, “Cantata,” in *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.04748>. See also Friedhelm Krummacher, Reinmar Emans, Clytus Gottwald and David Tunley, “Kantate” (1996/2016), *MGG Online*, ed. Laurenz Lütteken, Kassel, Stuttgart, New York 2016 ff., <https://www.mgg-online.com/mgg/stable/11879>. Notwithstanding the wide scope of studies dedicated to the cantata, only a few contributions have focused precisely on the *villeggiatura*, among them Teresa Maria Gialdroni, “Turcherie ai castelli romani,” in *Musica come pensiero e come azione. Studi in onore di Guido Salvetti*, eds. Marina Vaccarini, Maria Grazia Sità and Andrea Estero (Lucca; Roma: Libreria Musicale Italiana – Società Editrice di Musicologia, 2014), 83–96.

18 Among the best known examples see Hans Joachim Marx, “Die Musik am Hofe Pietro Kardinal Ottobonis unter Arcangelo Corelli,” *Analecta musicologica* 5 (1968): 104–77; Hans Joachim Marx, “Die ‘Giustificazioni della Casa Pamphilj’ als musikgeschichtliche Quelle,” *Studi musicali* 12 (1983): 121–87.

The singer answered from the papal residence in Castel Gandolfo, thanking the cardinal for the composition and assuring him that he would sing it for the pope as soon as possible.<sup>19</sup>

With regard to scores, the volume *Osborn Shelves Music Ms. 2* at the Beinecke Rare Book Library at Yale University is a well-known example. It contains several cantatas, some of which are autographs, composed by Alessandro Scarlatti during the *villeggiatura* in Albano and Ardea between 26 October and 8 November 1704, probably while serving cardinals Annibale (1682–1751) and Alessandro Albani (1692–1779), relatives of Pope Clement XI (1649–1721), during their retreat there. Afterwards, in Rome, the cantatas were gathered into one volume by Andrea Adami (1663–1742), the castrato singer of the Papal chapel.<sup>20</sup>

There are only few studies on the circulation of music from the perspective of the *villeggiatura*, and, despite the extensive production of cantatas in Rome, it is challenging to identify the circulation between the city and the countryside without ‘paratextual’ references, such as the date and place at which a piece of music was composed or a specific copy was made. In fact, for the chamber cantata – and the same may well be true also for other chamber music genres – there are generally no differences in the formal musical structure between compositions intended for the city palace and those for the country residence. The widespread use of pastoral and Arcadian subject matter and characters in the Roman literary and musical tradition well before the institution of the Accademia dell’Arcadia (1690) – going back to classical authors such as Catullus, Horace, Virgil, etc. – represents a further difficulty for the evaluation of this kind of circulation. Nevertheless, some poetical subjects and textual contents, which are elements that characterize some of the cantatas perhaps more than their musical setting, allow us to recognize them as expressly composed for – or at least probably performed during – a *villeggiatura*.<sup>21</sup>

In the following pages, I propose an overview of cantatas, chosen primarily for their significant subject matter, as examples of the type of content related to the *villeggiatura* and how it functioned along with several other social and cultural implications and purposes, not least their celebratory function. Considering these aspects and issues, and in order to develop a critical perspective on the city/countryside dialectic in the Roman cantata, such a thematic discourse seems more useful than a chronological one.

19 I-SUss, AC, *Carteggi, Card. Girolamo Colonna*, n. 112, from Loreto Vittori, Castel Gandolfo, 1 May 1634.

20 See Reinhard Strohm, “Scarlattiana at Yale,” in *Händel e gli Scarlatti a Roma. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Roma, 12–14 giugno 1985*, eds. Nino Pirrotta and Agostino Ziino (Firenze: Olschki 1987), 113–52 (132–39).

21 See for instance Giulia Anna Romana Veneziano, “The ‘teatro delle acque’: Music and spectacle at Villa Aldobrandini during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,” in *The Grand Theater of the World*, 173–88.



## Otium and negotium: from the Ancients to the Moderns

One of the main themes related to the city/countryside dialectic is the classical duality of *otium* and *negotium*. For the ancient Romans, the respectable notion of *negotium* concerned the involvement in politics, which was naturally centered at the Forum and in their urban residences. As opposed to this, the villa was a Roman's residence as a private citizen, free from cliental and political negotiations and, therefore, devoted to a life of *otium*, of literary and horticultural leisure. From the early Renaissance on, Italian scholars and artists renewed this idea of life. Among others, the humanist, architect and musician Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472) wrote about the beatitude of the rest and relaxation, far from the city and urban cares: “[...] what is more, in the villa you can escape this noise, busy confusion, and this tempest of the earth, of the square, of the palace [...]. How blessed will it be to stay in a villa: unheard-of happiness.”<sup>22</sup>

We can find the same subject in cantatas from the seventeenth century, joined with the idea of the country residence as a pleasant and safe place; for instance in *Invito delle Ninfe del Castel Gandolfo alla Santità di N.S. Alessandro VII*, which has lyrics by Sebastiano Baldini (1615–1685) and music by Marco Marazzoli (1602?–1662). This cantata consists of an invitation by the nymphs to Pope Alexander VII (Chigi, 1599–1667) to come to Castel Gandolfo, so as to enjoy the delights of the *villeggiatura*. Unfortunately, only the lyrics of this cantata have survived in the manuscript Chig.L.V.153A held in the Vatican Library. Nevertheless, this volume is reminiscent of the circles involved with the Roman aristocratic Accademia degli Sfaccendati, which was linked to the *villeggiatura* in Ariccia (where the Sfaccendati promoted impressive operatic performances in the theater of the Chigi palace during the 1670s).<sup>23</sup>

Opening directly with the invitation, the cantata describes the amenities of the place, the tranquility of the lake's waters and, more generally, the restorative calm in which it is possible to live there. The first aria ends with the hemistich: “Qui si prendono i riposi | qui si traggono di felici” (“Here one takes rest, from here one derives happy days”). The repeated invitation to the pope to take repose from his cares (“a ristorar gl'affanni”) is followed by another description

22 “[...] quello che più giova, puoi alla villa fuggire questi strepiti, questi tumulti, questa tempesta della terra, della piazza, del palagio [...]. Quanto sarà beatissimo lo starsi in villa: felicità non conosciuta.” Leon Battista Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, in Leon Battista Alberti, *Opere volgari*, ed. Cecil Grayson (Bari: Laterza, 1960), I, 200–1.

23 V-CVbav, Chig. L.V.153A, cc. 79v–82v. See also Christine Jeanneret, “L’objet-musique, paysage de la mémoire. Le mécénat et la collection musicale Chigi à Rome au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle,” *Revue de musicologie* 103, no. 1 (2017): 3–52. On the Accademia degli Sfaccendati and operatic productions in Ariccia see e.g. Renato Lefevre, “Il ‘Tirinto’ di Bernardo Pasquini all’Ariccia (1672),” in *Musica e musicisti nel Lazio. Lunario Romano 1986*, eds. Renato Lefevre and Arnaldo Morelli (Roma: Palombi, 1985), 237–68; Colleen Reardon, “From the villa to the public theater: The Chigi and ‘Roman’ opera in Siena,” in *The Grand Theater of the World*, 203–13.

of nature in its wonderful autumnal guise and of Bacchus' gifts. The repose from the *negotia*, from worldly troubles and life's worries is a central idea. Next, in the second part of the cantata, more explicitly moral content is added, which is summed up in the concluding motto: "Chi beneficia il Mondo | apprenda a ristorarsi almen dal sole: | [...] gira il Ciel tutto il giorno e poi riposa." ("May he who benefits the world learn to take rest at least from the sun: [...] It turns around the sky all day, and then rests.")<sup>24</sup>

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the *villeggiatura* had become a retreat for the enjoyment of a peaceful, private life away from political duties and the affairs of the city. This is indeed what the cantatas reflect. Furthermore, in some cantatas for the Chigi pope's *villeggiatura* the references to the joyful and tranquil life in the countryside are charged with political meanings, expressed with the help of allegorical characters. This is the case, for example, in the cantata *Il Riposo (Rest)*, produced by the same pair: the poet Sebastiano Baldini and the composer Marco Marazzoli. The cantata has two protagonists: *Lago* (Lake [of Albano]) and *Riposo* (Rest), the peaceful rest that it is possible to enjoy at the shores of the lake itself. Scored for six voices and instruments, it opens with the *incipit* "Oh blessed land" ("Oh suolo beato") (see music example 1), which immediately features the location and setting of the narrative. *Riposo* arrives at the lakeshore in search of peace, describing the lake itself as the sole place without the sound of weapons and trumpets of war ("In rive sì belle | non s'odono i carmi | di trombe rubelle | che gridano all'armi") (see music example 2). More explicitly, peace reigns on the lake thanks to the presence of Pope Alexander VII, who is indirectly depicted as a peacemaker.<sup>25</sup>

24 V-CVbav, Chig. L.V.153A, c. 82v.

25 The musical score by Marazzoli is at V-CVbav, Chig.Q.VIII.181, cc.12v–36: "Il riposo. A 6 con gl'istromenti. Poesia del signor Baldini." The poetry by Sebastiano Baldini also appears in the volumes: V-CVbav, Chig.L.IV.94, cc. 1–8, and with a different title in V-CVbav, Ott.Lat.2478.II, cc. 247–51. See also Sebastiano Baldini, *Le poesie per musica nei codici della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, ed. Giorgio Morelli (Roma: IBIMUS, 2000), 95–96.

Suoi seguaci O suo-lo [...]

Riposo O suo-lo be - a - to o stan - ca for - tu - na il cie - lo pla - ca - to pur gio - ie n'a - du - na

Violino

Violino

Liuto

*Music example 1*

The cantata dates from circa 1660, just after the signing of the Treaty of the Pyrenees, and it reflects the newly accomplished pacification of Europe. It is noteworthy, then, that the peace is represented at the papal villa, a type of location that was considered a place of peace par excellence within the Roman context. If the retreat to the countryside represents a moment of peaceful respite from urban (political) life, then it is above all remarkable that these political implications were hidden behind the idea of relaxation and quiet.<sup>26</sup>

26 See Teresa Maria Gialdroni, “Una raccolta di cantate per la pace. Il manoscritto Chigi Q.VIII.181,” *Fonti Musicali Italiane* 22 (2017): 33–54 (36–37).

Suoi seguaci

Riposo

In ri - ve si bel-le non s'o - do-no i car - mi di trom-be ru - bel-le che gri - - - da - no all' ar - mi

Violino

Violino

Liuto

### Music example 2

## People and Nature: Social Habits and Cultural Mirrors

The relationship between man and nature is significant both in social practices and in their artistic representations. Cantatas for the *villeggiatura* often show connections to both aspects. Consider, for instance, hunting habits. The frequency of hunting scenes in operas or cantatas reflects the importance of hunting as a social practice all over Europe, something to which the Papal State was no exception: the participation of rulers, courtiers and even clergymen and women also made hunting a ‘moment’ of aristocratic distinction.<sup>27</sup>

Among the mythological figures, the goddess Diana was probably the most representative symbol of this culture of hunting in the visual arts, theatre and music.<sup>28</sup> Diana can be found in several cantatas, and not only those connected to the Roman context: composers such as Giovanni Legrenzi (1629–1690), Attilio Ariosti (1666–1729), George Frideric Handel (1685–1759), Giovanni Bononcini (1670–1747), Carl Heinrich Graun (c.1703–1759) and poets such as Pietro Metastasio composed cantatas revolving around this character. Even Johann

27 On the delights of hunting see Francesco Colinas, ed., *Cacce principesche: L'arte venatoria nella prima età moderna* (exhibition catalogue) (Roma: De Luca, 2013). On the importance of hunting as an expression of social and aristocratic distinction, see Claude d'Anthenaïse and Monique Chatenet, eds., *Chasse princière dans l'Europe de la Renaissance* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2007) and Andrea Merlotti, ed., *Le cacce reali nell'Europa dei principi* (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 2017). Regarding the Papal State, see in particular Paolo Cozzo, “La Chiesa e la caccia,” in *Le cacce reali nell'Europa dei principi*, 45–58.

28 See Giovanni Barberi Squarotti, Annarita Colturato and Clara Gorla (eds.), *Il mito di Diana nella cultura delle corti: arte, letteratura, musica* (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 2018).

Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) wrote a German hunting cantata, *Was mir behagt ist nur die muntre Jagd* BWV 208 (“The lively hunt is all my heart’s desire”), to mark the birthday of Prince Christian of Saxony-Weißenfels (1682–1736).<sup>29</sup> It is unavoidable, therefore, to address the goddess and patroness of the hunt here.

Among the Roman examples, Handel’s *Diana cacciatrice* (HWV 79) is probably one of the better-known cantatas, thanks to several studies devoted to the composer and his Italian cantatas.<sup>30</sup> Considering the brevity of Handel’s sojourn in Rome (late 1706–1708) and the specificity of the aristocratic social context with which he was in contact, *Diana cacciatrice* gives us a sort of instant picture of Roman customs related to a *villeggiatura* centred on hunting at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Composed in February 1707, *Diana cacciatrice* celebrated the Ruspoli family’s stag hunting season in the surroundings of Cerveteri. As Ursula Kirkendale has demonstrated, the Ruspoli accounts from that February contain many bills for ammunition, saddles, food for people and horses, etc., and, even more relevant, payments made to the harpsichord builder Mattia di Gand for bringing a harpsichord to Cerveteri and back, clearly in order to perform music there.<sup>31</sup>

Beyond referencing the myth of Diana, the cantata is also remarkable for highlighting some hunting customs. As happened with an actual hunt, before sunrise Diana summons her nymphs to prepare hounds and horses to pursue “wild boars and all kinds of beasts” (“Cignali alla preda ed ogni belva”). Handel’s music for *Diana cacciatrice* is noteworthy for some of the sound effects it employs. In fact, the cantata opens with an instrumental introduction in which the strings, the harpsichord and a trumpet imitate a ‘hunting ensemble’, suggesting the sound of the hunting horn (*corno da caccia*), which in actual fact was rarely used either in music or hunting practices in central Italy at that time (see music example 3).<sup>32</sup>

Furthermore, the echo effects used in both the voices and the instruments, first announced in the aria “Foriera la tromba” (“Let the trumpet herald”) and further developed in the ensuing chorus “Alla caccia!” (“To the hunt!”), add a sound quality that suggests a performance in a solitary outdoor location (see music example 4).

29 As appears from a rapid overview of data from the online RISM-OPAC.

30 See in particular: Ursula Kirkendale, “Handel with Ruspoli: New documents from the Archivio Segreto Vaticano. December 1706 to December 1708,” in Ursula Kirkendale and Warren Kirkendale, *Music and Meaning: Studies in Music History and Neighbouring Disciplines* (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 2007): 361–415; Ellen T. Harris, *Handel as Orpheus: Voice and Desire in the Chamber Cantatas* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001): 52–53.

31 For more details see Kirkendale, “Handel with Ruspoli: New documents,” 370.

32 See “Corno da caccia” (2001), *Grove Music Online*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.06527>.

# Alla caccia

La Marche

Tromba

Violino I

Violino II

Bassi

Music example 3



Coro

Musical score for the first system of 'Coro'. It features five staves: Tromba in eco, Violino I, II, Soprano del coro, and Bassi. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics for the Soprano del coro and Soprano in eco parts are: "Al - la cac - cia mie fi - de com - pa - gne," and "Al - la cac - cia com - pa - gne".

Musical score for the second system of 'Coro'. It features five staves: Soprano del coro, Violino I, II, Soprano in eco, and Bassi. The lyrics for the Soprano del coro and Soprano in eco parts are: "e solo un mo - men - to ogn' u - na dal co - re" and "mo - men - to dal co - re".

The cantata was performed at the Ruspoli castle in Cerveteri, probably with the composer himself at the harpsichord. The *piano nobile* of the Ruspoli castle includes three decorated rooms, one of which has frescoes entirely dedicated to Diana. The appearance of Diana in different arts underlines her remarkable importance as a divinity inhabiting the borderland between civilization and nature. Although the wall decoration dates back to the sixteenth century, when the castle was owned by the Orsini family, the idea that *Diana cacciatrice* was performed in precisely that room is a fascinating possibility.<sup>33</sup>

An earlier example of a hunting subject can be found in the canzone *La villa Versaglia*. Praising all the marvels of this villa of the Chigi family near Formello, described as an earthly paradise, the poet Sebastiano Baldini – the same who wrote the words for *Il Riposo* – also included two stanzas (nos. 18 and 19) about hunting. They mention nets for catching birds and the locations for hunting boars:

<p>Viva pur, viva Versaglia,          ch'è terrestre paradiso,          e non v'è per vostro avviso          luogo alcun, che a lei prevaglia          Viva pur, viva Versaglia.          [...]</p>	<p>May she live, yes long live Versaglia,          which is an earthly paradise,          and know that there is not          a single place that prevails over her.          May she live, yes long live Versaglia.          [...]</p>
<p>18          Se vorrete andar a caccia          vi son reti d'ogni sorte          Ch'agli uccelli dan la morte,          senza tanto andarli in traccia          siasi starna, o sia beccaccia,          Scampo al fin non truova mai,          E colà tu piglierai          e la lodola e la quaglia          Viva pur &amp;c.</p>	<p>18          If you would like to go hunting          there are nettings of all kinds          that bring death to the birds,          without really having to track them down,          be it the partridge or the woodcock:          in the end they never escape,          and you can capture there          also the lark and the quail          May she live etc.</p>

33 Patrizia Tosini, “In cerca di Diana. Il mito della dea nelle residenze del Lazio nel Cinquecento,” in *Il mito di Diana nella cultura delle corti: arte, letteratura, musica*, eds., Giovanni Barberi Squarotti, Annarita Colturato and Clara Gorla (Firenze: Olschki, 2018), 103–22 (104).

19	19
Per cignali vi son monti, vi son piani e collicelli, da pigliar altro ch'ucelli, Mentre s'hanno i cani pronti. Cavalier, Principi, e conti Per le macchie furo un giorno e fer tutti in quel contorno Più che Cesare in Tessaglia. Viva pur &c. [...]	For boars there are the mountains, there are plains and hills, to catch much more than birds, as long as the dogs are ready. Gentlemen, princes, and counts were in the forest one day and in those surroundings they all achieved more than Cesare did in Thessaly. May she live etc. [...]

However, this is a particular kind of celebratory composition in which the magnificent owner of the *villa* is honoured by celebrating the marvels and delights – including hunting – that the *villa* offers. The poet uses a specific humorous register, addressing the patron in a tone that sits halfway between praising and teasing. This poetic license, possible in the relaxed, informal context of the *villeggiatura*, particularly among members of different social classes, also makes it possible to underline the friendly rapport between poet and patron. It is significant that Baldini was referring to a past stay in the villa Versaglia – presumably with a group of artists and musicians from the same entourage of cardinal Chigi's – and actually wrote the *canzone* back in Rome “as a token of his poetic gratitude” (“in segno della sua poetica gratitudine”) for the honour of having been invited to participate.<sup>34</sup> As the source informs us, the cantata was sent to the cardinal during the conclave following the death of his uncle Pope Alexander VII, “in order that it may serve him as a bit of entertainment” (“affinché gli servisse di qualche divertimento”). This latter reference functions as an interpretative key for the whole composition: viewing the *villeggiatura* from the city, the memory of a pleasant stay in the *villa* lightens the labours of life in the city. Even during the conclave, the positive ‘boost’ derived from the pleasant imagery of the countryside stands in remarkable contrast to the idea of urban toil.

### **People and nature: The power of culture**

Outside the city walls, as mentioned above, the relationship between people and nature is a recurring theme. It was expressed, both in music and in art, through descriptions of the cycle of the seasons, the pastoral world, and of related activities of both men and women. The figures of Flora, Pomona, Zephyr and other rustic and allegorical characters populate the cantatas, symbolizing the renewed flourishing of nature, the forthcoming harvest and more generally

34 Sebastiano Baldini, *La villa Versaglia*, in V-CVbav, Chig. L.V.153A, cc. 23r–32v (29v–30r).

evoking the annual season of the *villeggiatura*. However, although pastoral themes and imagery were widespread in the wider Roman context and in the cantata repertoire even before the Arcadian turn of the 1690s, honing in on the connection between pastoral features and the concept of the *villeggiatura* brings to light yet further revealing implications.<sup>35</sup>

Let us, for example, consider the cantata *S'invita bella donna a cangiare la città con la campagna* (*A beautiful lady is invited to leave the city for the countryside*) by the Roman poet Antonio Abati (1603–1667), posthumously published in 1676.<sup>36</sup> The lady, under the pastoral name of Fillide (Phyllis), is invited to exchange the city for the countryside (“cangia il suol cittadin con rozza piaggia”). What is remarkable is that the cantata describes the countryside as a remote and rough land (“rozza piaggia”). The arrival of the lady, like the movement of the sun (“per vago sol traslato”), produces an interesting moral turn: the city becomes wild and the countryside civilized (“civile il bosco, e la città selvaggia”). In other words, the cantata depicts the influence of man itself, here expressed through the beauty of Phyllis, as a civilizing power: the power of culture. However, beauty is short-lived and the second part of the cantata takes on the role of a musical *vanitas* that functions both as an invitation to enjoy the *villeggiatura* and remember the brevity of life. The increasing number of collections of female portraits in Roman villas during the seventeenth century – known as *serie delle belle* (collections of beautiful ladies) – may be considered another cultural expression of those same concepts.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, the abundance of collections of portraits, as well as works of art and libraries, represents further relevant evidence of the meaning awarded to the country residence as an extension of the city palace, with the former, too, becoming a place used to frame important celebrations and political events, thus mirroring in the countryside the magnificence of the city. Also in this respect, and in spite of the small number of scores preserved today, the complexity of the city/countryside dynamic emerges from the texts of the cantatas themselves. Indeed, sometimes the journey from the city into the countryside and back can be interpreted as a round trip of the virtues of splendour and magnificence themselves, as is implied in the cantata *Bentornate le stelle al ciel romano* (“Welcoming back the stars on the Roman sky”). Only the text of this cantata, by the poet Giovanni Pietro Monesio (? –1684), survives. It celebrates the return to Rome of Gaspare Paluzzi (1650–1720) and his wife Laura Caterina

35 Ehrlich, “Pastoral Landscape”; on the Arcadian turn see Maria Grazia Accorsi, *Pastori e teatro. Poesia e critica in Arcadia* (Bologna: Mucchi, 1999); Beatrice Alfonzetti, ed., *Settecento Romano. Reti del classicismo arcadico* (Roma: Viella, 2017).

36 [Antonio Abati], *Poesie postume di Antonio Abati. Dedicate all'Eminentissimo e Reverendissimo principe il signore Cardinal Flavio Chigi* (Bologna: Recaldini, 1670), 347.

37 Tommaso di Carpegna Falconieri, “Collezione Dame. Tre prospettive di ricerca”. In Carla Benocci, Tommaso di Carpegna Falconieri, ed., *Le belle. Ritratti di dame del Seicento e del Settecento nelle residenze feudali di Lazio* (Rome: Pieraldo editore, 2004), 11-18; Carla Benocci, “Dalle donne illustri alle ‘belle dame’”. In *ivi*, 19-32.

Altieri (1656–1720) after their *villeggiatura* in Castel Gandolfo.<sup>38</sup> Altieri was the niece of Pope Clement X (1590–1676, pope between 1670 and 1676) and, incidentally, a portrait of her by the famous painter Jacob Ferdinand Voet was in the collection of *belle* in the Chigi palace in Ariccia.<sup>39</sup>

The cantata starts by describing the suffering of Rome caused by the absence of the princess (“Se di lei priva | Già semiviva | Roma penò” / “Deprived of her, Rome, already only half alive, suffered”), followed by the rejoicing over her return to the city (“Tornò la bella | Che rese ancella | Ogni alma a sé” / “The beauty who made every soul her servant has returned”), and it concludes by greeting her return by “welcoming back the stars on the Roman sky.”<sup>40</sup>

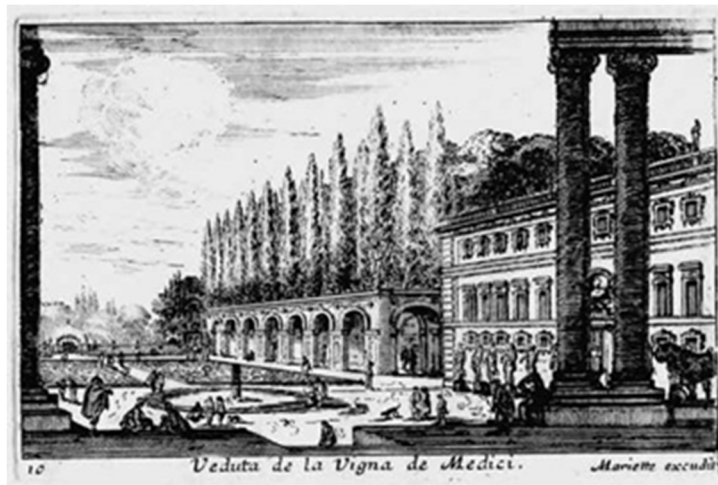


Fig. 2: Pierre Mariette “Veduta de la Vigna de Medici,” in *Alcune vedute di giardini e fontane di Roma, e Tivoli* (Paris: Sylvestre, 1646) © Collection of the author.

### Between virtues and leisure

From the first half of the seventeenth century on, the juxtaposition of vices and virtues, including the entailing moral and religious implications, became common in pictorial cycles and decoration programmes in villas (as well as becoming a favourite literary *topos*), a tendency that also reflected the pervading moralistic mind-set of the Counter-Reformation. Biblical and other moral themes frequently appeared in the frescoes and decorative cycles of the villas at Frascati, often in connection to the celebratory programmes of their owners.<sup>41</sup> Personifications of the virtues of these owners – such as temperance, liberality, prudence, wisdom – populated

38 Giovanni Pietro Monesio, “Nel ritorno in Roma degli Eccellentissimi Signori Principi Don Gasparo e Donna Laura Caterina Altieri dalla villeggiatura autunnale di Castel Gandolfo,” in Giovanni Pietro Monesio, *La musa seria parte prima [-seconda] delle poesie per musica di Giampietro Monesio* (Roma: Giuseppe Corvo e Bartolomeo Lupardi, 1674), 84–86.

39 Franca Petrucci, Catalogo ‘serie delle belle’ del palazzo Chigi di Ariccia, in *Le belle*, 69–130 (108).

40 For a transcription of the text of the complete cantata see [http://cantataitaliana.it/query\\_bid.php?id=6614](http://cantataitaliana.it/query_bid.php?id=6614).

41 Mignosi Tantillo, “Villa e paese,” 22–23.

the painted vaults of galleries in their country residence, sometimes alongside portraits of beautiful ladies and painted musical scenes.<sup>42</sup>

From the turn of the eighteenth century, the dialectic relation between virtues and leisure becomes a more prominent theme behind the city/countryside dualism, something also reflected in poetry and music. The cantata *Virtù, Gloria, Ozio e Merito* is a typical example. It is part of the poetry collection *Serto di vari fiori poetici raccolti in Pindo* by the Carmelite Gregorio Orfei (?–1747), who signed the dedication to Princess Olimpia Pamphilj Colonna (1672–1731) in his function as the theologian of Emperor Joseph I (1668–1711). The unpublished collection is preserved, without a date, in a manuscript volume in the Vatican Library. The dedication allows the conjecture that the anthology was assembled at the end of a *villeggiatura*, soon after the departure of the Colonna family from Marino.<sup>43</sup>

Among all the poetry in this collection, only *Virtù, Gloria, Ozio e Merito* was written in order to be set to music. Probably, the music was never composed or it has not survived. This cantata carries a specific dedication to Cardinal Carlo Colonna (1665–1739), a brother-in-law of Princess Olimpia Pamphilj Colonna and the younger brother of the aforementioned Filippo Colonna. Four personifications appear in the cantata: *Virtù* (virtue), *Gloria* (glory), *Ozio* (leisure) and *Merito* (merit). *Virtù, Gloria* and *Merito* engage in a struggle against *Ozio*, who is described as idleness, a “tyrant of the souls” (“tiranno dell’alme”), a wicked monster, cruel enemy, and a horrible Fury from the underworld (*Erebo*). As a consequence of his presence, the town of Marino – one of the preferred places of rest and *villeggiatura* of the Colonna family – is depicted as a desolate land without the light of virtues and infested by idleness (“suolo infestato dall’Ozio”). As in an academic dispute, *Ozio*’s self-defense gives us an interesting opposing perspective, in which the importance of a positive concept of leisure is underlined. Having risen up from the swamps of the Styx, *Ozio* arrived unexpectedly to free a weary mankind from other tyrants and to bring them peace and rest from their daily labours (“Dalle Stigie paludi | [...] | A voi stanchi mortali | Inaspettato venni | per togliervi al rigor d’altrui tiranni, | e portar lieta pace ai vostri affanni”).

As described in the dedication, when the poet wrote the cantata, the Colonna family had just left the *villeggiatura*. Thus the virtues, symbolizing civic engagement, are reunited with the people (‘heroes’) returning to the city. In the cantata, just before the triumphant conclusion by

42 See for instance the frescoes in the Pamphilj residences in Valmontone and Nettuno. See Carla Benocci, “Una moda anticipata e non conclusa: la fortuna dei ritratti di dame di casa Pamphilj tra Seicento e Settecento,” in *Le belle*, 33–58 (39).

43 [Gregorio Orfei], “Alle glorie dell’Em[inentissi]mo, e Rev[erendissi]mo Signore Cardinale Carlo Colonna. Virtù, Gloria, Ozio, e Merito,” in [Gregorio Orfei], *Serto di vari fiori poetici offerti in Pindo*, manuscript collection in V-CVbav, Vat.Lat. 13088. cc. 90r–93v. The likely *terminus ante quem* for the compilation of the collection as a whole is 1711. In the dedication Orfei presents himself as theologian of Emperor Joseph I, who died in 1711.



*Virtù, Gloria and Merito, Ozio* laments his defeat: the wicked Typhons cannot rise to the heavens to disturb Jupiter, and *Ozio* has to yield wherever Virtue reigns (“Misero alfin cadei | Non ponno alzarsi al cielo | I Giovi a disturbar gl’empi Tifei | Già l’armata mia schiera | Il campo cede, ove Virtude impera”). Knowing the occasion for the composition of those verses – the departure of the Colonna family from the *villeggiatura* in Marino and their return to the city – the symbolic struggle of virtues against leisure/idleness was a renewed eighteenth-century take on the ancient struggle between *otium* and *negotium*, further highlighting the importance and the complexity of the dialectic relationship between city and countryside.

### **Returning from the *villeggiatura***

Returning from the *villeggiatura* to our point of departure, we can formulate some final reflections. Taking the Roman *villeggiatura* as a point of view seems to be a fascinating vantage point to study the circulation of objects like musical instruments or scores. As I underlined, even if precise documentation is rare, archival documents and surviving volumes of music do attest to a flow of arias and cantatas between the city and the countryside. The movement of people and the practices related to musical performances during the *villeggiatura* were shown to be equally crucial. Within this framework, some of the cultural significance and functions of the chamber cantata can be brought to the fore. As I mentioned, despite the extensive production of cantatas in Rome, it remains challenging to identify the circulation between the city and the countryside without para-textual references, also because of the widespread use of pastoral and Arcadian subject matter in urban as well as rural contexts. Furthermore, as I noted, there are generally no differences in the formal musical structure of compositions intended for the urban palace as opposed to those for the country residence.

Among the cantata texts I have cited, only a few were set to music. Some others are known to have actually been performed, but musical scores survive only rarely. Nevertheless, we have seen how cantatas, through musical as well as poetical features, could be adapted to the specific contexts and events for which they were conceived, and how, as a genre, the cantata was able to migrate between the city palace and the country residence. Probably, the very widespread use of pastoral elements itself can be read as one of the aspects that most aided this kind of circulation. At the same time, some of the poetical topics and textual contents that characterize a number of those cantatas allow us – probably more effectively than their strictly musical content could anyway – to recognize their main function as celebratory, behind all the references to the *villeggiatura*. This celebratory purpose, which as we saw was a function not exclusively associated with the city, might be another, equally indicative element of the possibilities of circulation between different contexts.

Observing the city/countryside dialectic through the lens of the chamber cantata genre, one of the things that emerges is the importance of a perspective always poised between civilization and nature. In searching for a balance between *otium* and *negotium*, rest and leisure, both idleness and the virtues of active life are alternately welcomed and rejected. The distance between the city and the countryside thus reflects a moral dimension more than a spatial one. In this respect, the *villeggiatura* seems to be the moment of balance among all these different cultural currents, and the villa became a liminal place, in which urban and rural life, and civilization and nature all meet.

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## Illustrations

Ill. 1: Mariette, Pierre. "Veduta della vigna di Ludovici." In *Alcune vedute di giardini e fontane di Roma, e Tivoli*. Paris: Sylvestre, 1646. © Collection of the author.

Ill. 2: Mariette, Pierre. "Veduta de la Vigna de Medici." In *Alcune vedute di giardini e fontane di Roma, e Tivoli*. Paris: Sylvestre, 1646. © Collection of the author.

### **Music Examples**

ex. 1: [Marazzoli, Marco.] "*Il Riposo a 6 con gl'istromenti.*" in *Cantate diverse libro quarto, v-Cvbav*, Chig.Q.viii.181, cc.12v–36: 12v–13r.

ex. 2: [Marazzoli, Marco.] "*Il Riposo a 6 con gl'istromenti.*" in *Cantate diverse libro quarto, v-Cvbav*, Chig.Q.viii.181, cc.12v–36: 16r–v.

ex. 3: Handel, Georg friedrich. "*Diana cacciatrice. (Alla caccia)*. HWv 79." in idem, Hallische Händel-ausgabe, serie v – *Kleinere Gesangswerke*, vol. 3, edited by Hans Joachim Marx, 27–34, bb. 1–8. kassel; Basel [u. a.]: Bärenreiter, 1994.

ex 4: Handel, Georg friedrich. "*Diana cacciatrice. (Alla caccia)*. HWv 79." in idem, Hallische Händel-ausgabe, serie v – *Kleinere Gesangswerke*, vol. 3, edited by Hans Joachim Marx, 27–34, bb. 1–16. kassel; Basel [u. a.]: Bärenreiter, 1994.