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## *The Lauda and the Cult of Savonarola\**

by PATRICK MACEY

Travelers in Florence around the year 1500 who happened on Piazza San Marco toward evening might well, if they listened carefully, have caught the muffled strains of a lauda sung by the Dominican friars beyond the walls of the convent of San Marco. And if any of the words had been audible, chances are good they would have been “*Ecce quam bonum et quam jocundum habitare fratres in unum*” (“Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity,” Ps. 132:1). Only a few years before, the streets of Florence had echoed with the singing of laude such as *Ecce quam bonum* as thousands of children—the Savonarolan *fanciulli*—

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These Library *Sigla* are used throughout:

FlorBN	Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale
FlorL	Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana
FlorMa	Florence, Biblioteca Marucelliana
FlorR	Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana
LuccaBS	Lucca, Biblioteca Statale
Vat	Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica

processed through the city on their way to the duomo. But now, in the aftermath of Savonarola's execution in 1498, his revolutionary movement had gone underground, and his adherents had retreated from the streets to the relative safety of cloisters such as San Marco. As our travelers of 1500 continued on their way, on a neighboring street they might have heard the same lauda, *Ecce quam bonum*, sung in an earthier locale that gave a new twist to the word "habitare": a contemporary account tells how, after Savonarola's fall, the song resounded from the windows of the reopened and thriving brothels!<sup>1</sup> The above scenario suggests something of the opposition between the movement of the Savonarolans for spiritual and political reform on the one hand, and the mocking rejection of the movement and suppression of its adherents on the other. It provides a context for the role of Savonarola and his followers in the promotion of lauda singing in the sixteenth century. In fact, the performance of laude helped to sustain the spirit of Savonarolan reformers well into the 1590s, and it rallied the embattled *Piagnoni*, or weepers, as Savonarola's followers were called. *Piagnoni* music functioned as a powerful symbol of both political and religious reform and as a force to subvert the established order.

Two relatively neglected aspects of the lauda's history in the sixteenth century will be addressed in this study. The first concerns the sources of Savonarolan laude—both for texts written by the friar himself as well as by his followers—consisting of various manuscript collections of lauda texts, and the important printed anthology of musical settings edited by Fra Serafino Razzi in his *Libro primo delle laudi spirituali* (Venice, 1563).<sup>2</sup> Included in this category of sources is a manuscript biography of Savonarola written by Razzi late in the sixteenth century; several copies of this work contain lauda texts, and some include newly uncovered music for laude in honor of Savonarola. Through study of such sources many of the musical settings for Savonarolan laude can be reconstructed.

<sup>1</sup>The chronicler Simone Filipepi, brother of Sandro Botticelli, reported the singing as follows: "Cantavasi ancora in Fiorenza, in dispregio di f. Girolamo: *Ecce quam bonum* ecc., perché egli usava molto spesso insieme a' suoi frati; et cantavansi insino al postribolo delle meretrici: né mai ci si fece provizione per chi reggeva." See Villari, 1898, 496.

<sup>2</sup>A facsimile of Razzi's print was issued in Bologna in 1969. See Mancuso for a complete transcription of the music. The literature on the lauda is extensive; see the following studies: Alaleona; Becherini, 1954; Cattin, 1958, 1960, 1968, 1971, 1973, 1977, 1978; Coppola; Dent; Diederichs; Ghisi; Glixon; Levi; Luisi; and Wilson.

Secondly, convents of Dominican friars and nuns in Tuscany produced a thriving and little-studied culture that included music, and examination of the biographies of some of these Piagnoni reveals the important role that the composing and singing of laude played in their lives—in the lives of Dominican nuns especially.<sup>3</sup>

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The lauda is a devotional song that traces its roots back to the thirteenth century. It often has a refrain and several stanzas, and the tune is generally clear and easy to remember; the texts are mostly Italian, though some are also Latin. The earliest laudesi company in Florence was founded in 1244 at Santa Maria Novella, and several others soon followed.<sup>4</sup> Laude were sung by the regular members of these confraternities who met on feast days and Saturdays at altars in the churches designated for their devotions. A few manuscripts containing monophonic melodies survive from the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and in the early fifteenth century we begin to find polyphonic laude for two and three voices.<sup>5</sup> Already in the early fourteenth century payment records indicate that the major confraternities of Florence had begun to hire small numbers of paid singers, and their numbers steadily increased from two in the earliest accounts to as many as a dozen singers and instrumentalists at Orsanmichele in 1365.<sup>6</sup> The lauda in Florence continued to flourish into the late fifteenth century, as evidenced by three important early prints of lauda texts from 1480, 1486, and ca. 1489. The last of these prints opened with several texts written by Lorenzo de' Medici himself, indicating sponsorship of the tradition

<sup>3</sup>For an important study on the role played by Savonarolan ideals of reform in the funding of new convents for nuns in Florence, Prato, and Lucca, see Agresti, 1980. Agresti focuses his study on four convents: San Vincenzo and San Clemente in Prato, and San Domenico and San Giorgio in Lucca. Other important Savonarolan convents in Florence included Santa Lucia and Santa Caterina da Siena, the former located just north of San Marco in the Via San Gallo; it came under the jurisdiction of San Marco in 1495 when Savonarola established it as a reformed convent; see Schnitzer, 1931, 2: 483–85. The latter convent formerly stood on the west side of Piazza San Marco, and was founded in 1500 by the Piagnone patrician Camilla Rucellai, whose husband Ridolfo had joined San Marco as a friar. *Ibid.*, 391.

<sup>4</sup>D'Accone, 1975, 88.

<sup>5</sup>The fifteenth-century manuscripts are Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria 2216, and Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana 7554 (olim IX.145); see Cattin, 1960.

<sup>6</sup>D'Accone, 1975, 102.

in the 1480s by the ruling echelons of Florentine society.<sup>7</sup> This sponsorship occurred side by side with the Carnival celebrations of the 1480s, for which Lorenzo also wrote several songs. A marked reaction against Carnival and a consequent surge of popular piety occurred in Florence in the 1490s, after the Medici had been expelled and Savonarola's influence was at its height. The lay populace took up the singing of laude with renewed vigor, and brought the songs out of the churches and into the streets, where the Piagnoni sang them as they marched in mass processions at Carnival and on Palm Sunday.

On the other hand, a different tradition had also flourished in Florence prior to Savonarola's ascendancy. Elaborate Franco-Flemish polyphony had been imported to Italy during the middle decades of the fifteenth century, and chapels of northern singers flourished in Rome, Milan, Ferrara, and other courts. In Florence the choir of the baptistry was distinguished by the arrival in 1484 of the composer Heinrich Isaac. This intricate Latin polyphony was targeted by Savonarola, who made a point of denouncing the elaborate music that was performed on feast days at both the Mass and Office by the baptistry choir. In a sermon of 23 March 1495, just a few months after the Medici had been expelled from Florence, he charged that this music merely appealed to the senses and thus distracted the congregation from interior contemplation:

Christian worship is interior and exterior, but the exterior is ordered by the interior, just as the body is ordered by the soul and matter is ordered by form; and thus exterior worship is made to serve the interior, and to help make it more perfect. But in prayers, which are exterior worship, one ought to employ them only insofar as they assist interior worship, and no further than that, according to what Saint Thomas says. And if you should sense that these exterior prayers might take away from or impede interior worship, they ought to be removed and abandoned, and you should stand firm in the elevation of the mind and in interior worship. And thus one says that polyphonic music is sooner injurious in church than useful, because there one must contemplate and pray to God with the mind and with the intellect, and figural music does nothing but charm the ear and the senses.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup>The four early Florentine lauda prints from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries (c. 1480, 1486, 1489, and ca. 1510) are edited in Galletti.

<sup>8</sup>Savonarola, 1957, 1: 393: "Il culto del cristiano è interiore e esteriore, ma lo esteriore è ordinato all'interiore, sì come il corpo è ordinato all'anima e la materia alla forma; e così il culto esteriore è fatto per servizio dell'interiore, e per aiutarlo e farlo

One year later, Savonarola returned to this theme in a sermon of 6 March 1496: "God says: Take away all your beautiful polyphonic music; these gentlemen have chapels of singers which seem like a rabble . . . because there stands a singer with a large voice like a calf's, and the others howl around him like dogs, and no one understands what they are saying."<sup>9</sup> Savonarola was not the first to criticize the tendency of elaborate polyphony to distract the listener; however, he was successful in having such music banned, while others were limited to fulminations against it. One earlier opponent of polyphonic music in Florence, Fra Giovanni Caroli, who was a Dominican from Santa Maria Novella, wrote in 1479: "Nor indeed are they able to understand the words well enough in that multiplicity of voices and sounds. [Through the text] the spirit is greatly kindled in God, but in that gaiety and swiftness [of polyphony] the longer weight of the notes [of chant] can not be preserved, and the soul either flows out or at least drops into slumber. Thus the singing together of these new and unheard of—if we want to say it openly—presumptuous ones (discanters as they are called), being without any harmony, is not at all acceptable."<sup>10</sup> The choir of the baptistry had in fact been disbanded by 1493, apparently at the instigation of Savonarola, and Isaac eventually left the city to enter the service of Emperor Maximilian.<sup>11</sup> The choirs of *laudesi*, on the other had, continued to perform,<sup>12</sup> since *lauda* singing—even

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più perfetto. E però nelle orazioni, che sono culto esteriore, tanto debba l'uomo procedere, quanto le sono aiutorio al culto interiore, e non più in là, secondo che dice san Tommaso. E quando tu sentissi che queste orazioni esteriori ti togliessino o impedissino lo interiore, si debbano fèsecare e lasciarle, e stare saldo nella elevazione della mente e nel culto interiore. E però si dice che li canti figurati sono più presto nocivi nella chiesa, che utili, perchè quivi si debbe orare e contemplare Dio colla mente e coll'intelletto, e e'canti figurati non fanno altro che dilettere il senso e l'orecchio." Partially quoted by D'Accone, 1961, 367.

<sup>9</sup>Savonarola, 1971, 2: 23: "Dice Dio: lieva via quelli tuoi belli canti figurati. Egli hanno questi signori le cappelle de' cantori che bene pare proprio uno tumulto . . . perchè vi sta là un cantore con una voce grossa che pare un vitello e li altri gli cridono attorno come cani e non s'intende cosa che dichino." Quoted by D'Accone, 1961, 348.

<sup>10</sup>Camporeale, 262: "Neque enim in illa multiplicitate vocum aut sonorum satis percipi verba possunt, quibus magnopere in Deum animus inflammetur, nec in illa festivitate aut celeritate notarum potest diutius gravitas ipsa servari, sed vel effluit animus vel certe sompno dissolvitur. Itaque concentus illi novique et inauditi, et si vere profiteri volemus, presumptuosi et ut vocant biscantus omni armonia carentes, haud magnopere placent."

<sup>11</sup>D'Accone, 1961, 346.

<sup>12</sup>Idem, 1975, 112–13.

when polyphonic—placed emphasis on the text, and served as an important means of forging the new spiritual and social order whose coming the friar prophesied.

Contemporary Florentine chroniclers report the central role of singing in the Savonarolan movement, both in public ceremonies and in the privacy of the convent. First, there were the famous processions of 1496, 1497, and 1498 which supplanted the freewheeling Carnival celebrations of Medicean times. All of the eyewitness accounts specifically mention the singing of laude by the several thousand fanciulli (boys aged approximately five to seventeen; the 1498 procession included adult men and women as well as girls and boys).<sup>13</sup> They sang laude as they marched through the streets of Florence, dressed in white robes and carrying olive branches. Each morning in Lent, the fanciulli were seated on risers in the packed duomo; here they sang more laude during the hushed silence while the congregation waited for Savonarola to enter the pulpit and begin his sermon.<sup>14</sup> These children had previously been given over at Carnival to the game of *sassi*, or stone throwing, causing injuries and often even deaths. But now their astonished parents witnessed the channeling of this unruly energy to more pious ends.<sup>15</sup> Savonarola remarked on the transformation in his sermon on Palm Sunday 1496: “Tell me, who governs the fanciulli in this work if not Christ? . . . Yesterday, Florence, your fanciulli were gathered to make garlands of olive branches in order to have them today for

<sup>13</sup>The Carnival processions took place on 16 February 1496, 7 February 1497, and 27 February 1498; bonfires of vanities occurred on only the latter two dates. Other Pignoni processions noted by the chroniclers include Palm Sunday, 27 March 1496, and Corpus Christi, 25 May 1497. See Landucci, 124–26, 128, 150–51, 163. For Piero Parenti’s account, see Schnitzer, 1910, 4:93–94, 159–60, 230–32. For the dispatches of the Milanese ambassador, Paolo Somenzi, see Villari, 1887, 1: cxi–cxii, and 2: li–liii. Girolamo Benivieni provides further details on the processions and bonfires; see Benivieni, cxi–cxviii. See also Trexler, 247ff., on the ritual significance of Savonarola’s organization of the fanciulli.

<sup>14</sup>Landucci, 125–26.

<sup>15</sup>The contemporary diarist Luca Landucci had this observation: “E a dì 16 febbraio 1495 [n.s. 1496], fu el Carnasciale. E avendo predicato fra’ Girolamo, più giorni inanzi, ch’è fanciugli dovessino in luogo di pazzie, del gittare e sassi e fare cappanucci, dovessino accattare e fare limosine a’ poveri vergogniosi; e come piauque alla divina grazia, fu fatta tale comutazione, che in luogo di pazzie, accattarono molti di inanzi; e in luogo di stili, trovavi su per tutti canti Crocifissi nelle mani della purità santa” (Landucci, 124). Remarking on the singing of the fanciulli in the duomo on 15 August 1496, he exclaims: “Veramente era piena la chiesa d’angioli” (*ibid.*, 137).

the feast, and they were lined up chorus by chorus, and made garlands and sang laude, so that it looked like a paradise.”<sup>16</sup>

Turning to the more private world of the cloister, an early biographer of Savonarola notes that behind the convent walls the friars of San Marco sang laude informally after dinner, as well as in more formal processions around the cloister.<sup>17</sup> And often they would walk out into the country on days when the weather was fine, and here they would listen to Savonarola discourse on scripture; afterwards as recreation they would sing laude while they danced a *ballo a tondo*, or circle dance.<sup>18</sup> At the end of the sixteenth century, some one hundred years after Savonarola’s execution, Serafino Razzi, a Piagnone friar from San Marco, recounted how the friar himself had composed laude and delighted in hearing them and singing them, and he noted that some of Savonarola’s own laude were still being sung.<sup>19</sup>

One lauda in particular stands out in the contemporary accounts. “*Ecce quam bonum et quam iocundum habitare fratres in unum*” comprises the opening verse of Psalm 132, and one of the friar’s early biographers recounts the divine origin of the melody: it was reportedly sung by an angel who appeared to Savonarola in a vision.<sup>20</sup> The tune was taken up by the friars of San Marco, who sang it several times each week as they marched in processions around the cloister.<sup>21</sup> The first documented mention of the singing of the Psalm occurs in Savonarola’s cycle of sermons on Haggai for Advent of 1494, just after the French army led by Charles VIII had passed through Florence, fortunately leaving the city unscathed.<sup>22</sup> And during Lent of 1495 the friar preached that *Ecce quam bonum*

<sup>16</sup>Savonarola, 1972, 3: 152: “Dimmi: chi governa li fanciulli in questa opera se non Cristo? . . . ieri, Firenze, che li tuoi fanciulli erano insieme a far grillande d’ulivo per averle oggi alla festa ed erano distesi a coro per coro e facevano grillande e cantavano laude, che pareva un paradiso.”

<sup>17</sup>Conti, 45–46.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>19</sup>Fra Serafino Razzi, “Vita di Savonarola,” LuccaBS 2580, f. 166: “si leggono e si cantano fino al dì d’oggi alcune laudi spirituali, piene di divozione, e di spirito dal prefato santo padre composte. . . .” The biography was completed in 1590. Razzi also notes that “molto si [Savonarolo] diletta . . . di udire e cantare laudi spirituali, e ne compose egli alcune tutte piene di spirito” (Razzi, 1609, 103).

<sup>20</sup>Conti, 102.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 116, 159.

<sup>22</sup>Savonarola, 1965, 215, 221. Sermon of 14 December 1494.

should be sung by the faithful while awaiting the tribulations of Italy.<sup>23</sup> In the next series of Lenten sermons in 1496, during the climactic final sermon, Savonarola related an apocalyptic vision in which Saint Francis, Saint Augustine, Saint Dominic, and the other heads of religion hurled all evildoers into the inferno; the few righteous souls who remained then clasped hands and danced, singing *Ecce quam bonum*.<sup>24</sup> The Lenten sermons of 1497 brought forth a similar vision, in which the church had already been renovated and everyone embraced and sang the Psalm.<sup>25</sup> Clearly this was the song of the saved.

During the above three-year period from 1494 to 1497, Savonarola had quoted the opening verse of Psalm 132 in seven of his sermons, but during his sermons on Exodus in Lent of 1498, the friar—by now excommunicated yet continuing to preach in spite of the papal ban—quoted the verse sixteen times in no fewer than eleven sermons over the space of little more than a month.<sup>26</sup> Fra Girolamo seems to have turned more and more to this verse as a means of rousing the spirits of the Piagnoni, and he painted a vision of them dancing *un bello ballo* in heaven while they sang *Ecce quam bonum*.<sup>27</sup> The Milanese ambassador Paolo Somenzi reported that during the last Savonarolan procession in 1498 the Piagnoni retreated from the hostile, rock-throwing crowd in the Piazza della Signoria and regrouped in Piazza San Marco, where they joined hands and danced a *ballo a tondo*, singing *Ecce quam bonum*.<sup>28</sup> The singing and dancing seem to have given the Piagnoni a preview of the millennium, when the church would supposedly be renovated, fraternal love would prevail, and Christ would reign on earth. Finally, near the end of the Savonarolan drama when the convent of San Marco was attacked by a Florentine mob, one of the defenders, a member of the Panciatichi family, died as a martyr singing *Ecce quam bonum*.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>23</sup>Idem, 1957, 396. Sermon of 23 March 1495; see also sermon of 7 March 1495 (ibid., 85).

<sup>24</sup>Idem, 1972, 3: 355, 390–91. Sermons of 6 and 10 April 1496. See also idem, 1962, 409; sermon of 24 June 1496.

<sup>25</sup>Idem, 1955, 186–87; sermon of 11 March 1497.

<sup>26</sup>Idem, 1955, 1: 7, 11, 35, 52, 55, 81, 167, 224, 230, 235, 316; 2: 23, 75, 213, 267, 310. The sermons were given during the period from 11 February to 18 March 1498.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 2: 75.

<sup>28</sup>Somenzi's dispatch is given in Villari, 1888, 2: li–lii.

<sup>29</sup>Conti, 159.



The friars of San Marco continued to sing the lauda after Savonarola's execution, even when their Dominican superiors forbade it in a decree of 1499. Two new injunctions had to be issued in 1502.<sup>30</sup> Several of the laude written in Savonarola's honor after his execution quote the verse, and one lauda by Fra Luca Bettini clearly expresses, as we shall see, a millenarian vision of Christian brotherhood, a vision that would nourish the Piagnoni throughout the sixteenth century.<sup>31</sup>

Savonarola had experienced a spectacular but brief career in Florence, owing mainly to his effectiveness as a prophet who foretold the coming castigation of Italy and the subsequent renewal of the church.<sup>32</sup> His rise to power was associated with the expulsion of the Medici in 1494, and the establishment of a republican form of government. But by May of 1497, when it became apparent that the French would not be launching a new invasion that would castigate the church, Pope Alexander VI saw his way clear to excommunicate the troublesome friar on grounds of disobedience. Fra Girolamo's fall from power was almost as rapid as his rise. By April 1498, when the economy of Florence was in shambles and plague was spreading in the city, the disgruntled citizens sacked the convent of San Marco and Savonarola was arrested. Under torture he confessed the falseness of his prophecies, a confession that he recanted at the last. On the morning of 23 May 1498, he and two of his Dominican companions, Fra Domenico da Pescia and Fra Silvestro Maruffi, were hanged and burned in the Piazza della Signoria.

Savonarola's rise to power has been interpreted as the result of the friar's invocation of a Florentine millenarian vision that placed the city at the center of the movement for renewal, a movement that would lead to an era in which the citizens would enjoy unprecedented wealth and power.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, the friar extended promises

<sup>30</sup>Gherardi, 335.

<sup>31</sup>Ferrara, 1926, 215–53. The laude are *Ciascun faccia festa e canti* (223) and *O martir glorioso* (232). Ferrara does not mention the lauda on *Ecce quam bonum* by Luca Bettini that will be discussed below. Another lauda, *Chi ha l'occhio della fede*, was written for the bonfire of vanities for the carnival of 1498, and it quotes the *Ecce quam bonum* verse at the end; see Savonarola, 1968, 215.

<sup>32</sup>In addition to the studies on Savonarola by Villari and Schnitzer, the two most important recent works are Ridolfi, and Weinstein, 1970. For extensive bibliography, see Ferrara, 1981.

<sup>33</sup>Weinstein, 142–43.

from the pulpit on numerous occasions: if Florentines followed God's work of reform, they would enjoy far greater wealth than ever, and he was not referring just to heavenly riches. As the realization dawned that this promise was an illusion, and that the bonfires of vanities and processions had led the city to papal interdiction and economic ruin, the citizens turned away from the friar and his fate was sealed.

The Piagnoni clung to the friar's memory after the execution. Indeed, Savonarola's status was raised to that of martyr as well as prophet, and his adherents continued to await the fulfillment of his apocalyptic prophecies regarding the scourge of Italy and the imminent renovation of the church. As one instance of the truth of his prophecies, they pointed to the sack of Rome in 1527, carried out by the troops of Emperor Charles V, while the Medici Pope Clement VII fled to the refuge of Castel Sant'Angelo. For the Piagnoni, the sack came as confirmation of the prediction that Rome, above all, would be scourged.<sup>34</sup> The Florentines seized the moment, once again expelling the Medici and briefly reinstating the republic during the years 1527 to 1530. The memory of Savonarola returned to favor, and Christ was elected king of the city; there was a general rebirth of the old patriotic and religious fervor of the 1490s.<sup>35</sup>

With the restoration of Medici rule in Florence in 1530, the Piagnoni were again forced to retreat underground, and the most active friars from San Marco were silenced. As the Piagnoni continued to promote their message of social and spiritual reform, both state and Church pursued further restrictive actions against them. The Medici, now elevated to ducal status, took firm steps to suppress systematically all remnants of past republican sentiment. In 1545 Duke Cosimo accused the friars of San Marco of promoting dangerous Savonarolan political ideas, and he expelled the entire lot of them briefly from Florence.<sup>36</sup> On the ecclesiastical front, a watershed for the Piagnoni occurred in 1559 when Pope Paul IV called Savonarola another Luther and attempted to have all of his writings put on the Index.<sup>37</sup> The Piagnoni won this particular battle, but they apparently lost the ideological war that the Church was wag-

<sup>34</sup>Schnitzer, 2: 481.

<sup>35</sup>Roth, 1925, 60-62, 141, 201-02.

<sup>36</sup>Amati, 242-46.

<sup>37</sup>Ridolfi, 2: 53-54.

ing against the cult of the friar. While only about a dozen sermons and *Della verità profetica* were actually placed on the Index,<sup>38</sup> a de facto ban on the printing of all of Savonarola's writings went into effect. Up to this time the Venetian presses had poured forth a steady stream of the friar's writings, but after 1559 the flow dried up completely.<sup>39</sup>

Various documents from the sixteenth century, including manuscript biographies of the friar and collections of Savonarolan laude, bear witness that the Church was not completely successful in stamping out all Piagnoni activities. In particular, the cult of the friar flourished in Dominican convents in Tuscany, especially at San Marco in Florence and at San Vincenzo in Prato. The latter had been founded by Dominican nuns in 1503 under the direct influence of Savonarolan reformist ideals of strict poverty and intensive prayer and meditation.<sup>40</sup> As late as 1583, Archbishop Alessandro de' Medici wrote a heated letter to Grand Duke Francesco de' Medici enumerating a whole catalogue of Piagnoni activities:

The matter is thus: through the obstinacy of the friars of San Marco the memory of Fra Girolamo Savonarola, which was extinct ten or twelve years ago (those who knew him having died) now resurges, teems, and flourishes more than ever. His follies are disseminated among the friars, among the nuns, and among the laity; and the young ones carry out the most presumptuous things: secretly they celebrate his office, as for a martyr, and they conserve his relics as if he were a saint, even the instruments with which he was hung, the irons which suspended him, the habits, the cowls, the bones that were left after the fire, the ashes, the hairshirt. They preserve wine blessed by him, and they give it to the sick, and keep track of the miracles. They fashion his image in bronze, gold, cameo, and in print, and—even worse—they inscribe it with martyr, prophet, and virgin and doctor. I have in the past—by my office—thwarted many of these things; I have had the printing plates destroyed. As for a certain Fra Bernardo da Castiglione, who was the author and who had them printed, I ordered him removed from San Marco, and he was sent to Viterbo [a malarial convent] where he died. I have prevented his [Savonarola's] image from being painted in the cloister of Santa Maria Novella among the saints of the Order; I have ordered that the summary of his life and his miracles not be printed;

<sup>38</sup>Schnitzer, 1931, 2: 455–57, 461.

<sup>39</sup>For a list of the prints see Giovannozzi. No Venetian prints of Savonarola's works seem to have been made after 1556, with the exception of the *Confessionale*, which was printed in Pavia, Piacenza, Brescia, Turin, and Genoa in 1567, 1571, 1574, 1576, 1579, 1581, 1586, 1589, 1592 (Venice), 1593, 1595, 1596 (Venice), and 1598. Giovannozzi, 28–33. The presses in the north, on the other hand, particularly in Nuremberg and Antwerp, continued to issue Savonarola's works.

<sup>40</sup>Agresti, 1980, 14.

I have instilled fear in the friars, and I have ordered their superiors to reprimand them and warn them and have them do penance.<sup>41</sup>

A secret office was regularly celebrated on 23 May by the nuns at San Vincenzo, one of the major targets of the Archbishop's complaint.<sup>42</sup> Laude played a part in the preparation for the office; before beginning Matins, the nuns sang laude with texts in honor of Savonarola, and these will be discussed below.

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In addition to singing the laude of well-known poets, the fanciulli, friars, and nuns probably sang laude written by Savonarola himself. He left a small body of fourteen sacred poems, and at present it is possible to recover musical settings for four of them (Table 1).<sup>43</sup> Savonarola's most famous and often-set text, *Iesù, sommo conforto*, occurs in several different musical settings scattered in prints throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.<sup>44</sup> The lauda bears the title *Laude al crocifisso*, and its ten stanzas provide a meditation on the Crucifixion. The first extant musical setting is for three voices by Paulus Scotus, in Petrucci's *Laude libro*

<sup>41</sup>Guasti, 26–28: “Il caso è questo; che per l’ostinatione de i Frati di San Marco, la memoria di Fra Girolamo Savonarola, che era dieci o dodici anni fa estinta (sendo morti quelli che conosciuto l’havevono), resurge, pullula, et è più in fiore che mai stata sia: si semina le sue pazzie fra i frati, fra le monache, fra i secolari; et nella gioventù fanno cose prosuntuosissime: occultamente gli fano l’offitio, come a martire; conservono le sue reliquie come se santo fussi; insino a quello stilo dove fu appiccato, i ferri che lo sostengono, li habiti, i cappucci, le ossa che avanzorono al fuocho, le ceneri, il cilicio; conservono vino benedetto da lui, lo danno alli infermi, ne contono miracoli; le sue imagini fanno in bronzo, in oro, in cammei, in stampa; et, quello che è peggio, li fanno iscrizioni di Martire, Profeta et Vergine et Dottore. Io mi sono per l’addietro, per l’offitio mio, attraversato a molte di queste cose; ho fatte rompere le stampe; un fra Bernardo da Castiglione, che ne era stato autore, et le haveva fatte fare, lo feci levare di San Marco, et fu messo in Viterbo, dove si è morto. Ho impedito che la sua imagine non sia dipinta nel chioostro di Santa Maria Novella in fra i Santi dell’Ordine; che il sommario della sua vita et suoi miracoli, ho fatto che non sia stampato; ho messo paura a i frati, gli ho fatti reprendere et ammonire et penitentiare da i loro superiori. . . .” The letter is dated 26 August 1583. I would like to thank my colleague Massimo Ossi for help with the translation of this passage and the other Italian texts below.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 29: “le imagini . . . erano uscite o da i frati o dalle monache di San Vincenzo di Prato, dove è tutto il ristretto delle cose del Frate.” Letter of Archbishop Alessandro de’ Medici to Grand Duke Francesco, 20 October 1583. The manuscript chronicle of San Vincenzo reveals that 23 May was celebrated as a solemn feast throughout the sixteenth century; *ibid.*, 16.

<sup>43</sup>Edited in Savonarola, 1968. Among the many studies on the lauda by Giulio Cattin, the one most pertinent to the discussion of Savonarolan laude is Cattin, 1971.

<sup>44</sup>Cattin, 1971, 267.

*secondo* published in Venice in 1508.<sup>45</sup> More than half a century later, another musical setting appeared in an anonymous three-voice version in Serafino Razzi's *Libro primo delle laudi spirituali* (Venice, 1563; see Example 1). Giovanni Animuccia employed a similar tune in his four-voice setting of the text, printed in the same year in his *Il primo libro delle laudi* (Rome, 1563). It seems likely that Animuccia and Razzi, both of whom had been trained in Florence, incorporated a tune for the lauda that had been in use in Savonarola's time, since other laude in Razzi's collection can be traced back to the fifteenth century.<sup>46</sup>

Table 1.  
Poetry of Savonarola<sup>47</sup>

*Canzoni*

1. Se non che pur è vero e così credo
2. Vergene casta, ben che indegno figlio
3. Anima bella, che le membre sante
4. \*Iesù, dolce conforto e sommo bene
5. Quando el suave mio fido conforto
6. Iesù, splendor del cielo e vivo lume

*Sonnets*

7. Questa Aquila gentil che se disparte
8. Questa celeste e gloriosa Dona
9. Salve, Regina, virgo gloriosa

*Laude*

10. Onnipotente Idio
11. \*Iesù, sommo confort o
12. \*Che fai qui, core?
13. \*In su quell'aspro monte
14. Alma, che sì gentile

\*Musical setting survives.

Other settings for Savonarola's laude are recoverable if one looks to the music provided by Razzi in his *Libro primo* of 1563 (Table 2; the texts as given in Razzi are in the left column, and the Savonarolan texts that should be sung to the musical settings provided in the collection are in the right column). Here we find not only the music for *Iesù, sommo conforto* (f. 3v) but also for Savonarola's *Che fai qui, core* (f. 15v). It should be noted that the text itself for the latter

<sup>45</sup>Scotus himself is otherwise only known for his five secular songs published by Petrucci in *Frottole libro septimo* and *octavo* (1507/3 and 1507/4).

<sup>46</sup>Another setting for three voices was published by Simone Verovio in his *Diletto spirituale* (Rome, 1586).

<sup>47</sup>Complete edition in Savonarola, 1968. The term "lauda" encompasses the diverse forms of poetry listed in Table 1, including canzoni and sonnets.

Example 1. Savonarola, *Iesù sommo conforto* (1563), f. 3v.

Altus

Ie- sù som- mo con- for- to, Tu  
E'l mio be- a- to por- to, E

Cantus

Ie- sù som- mo con- for- to, Tu  
E'l mio be- a- to por- to, E

Tenor

Ie- sù som- mo con- for- to, Tu  
E'l mio be- a- to por- to, E

se' tut- to'l mio a- mo- re, O gran bon- tà, dol-  
san- to re- den- to- re,

se' tut- to'l mio a- mo- re, O gran bon- tà, dol-  
san- to re- den- to- re,

se' tut- to'l mio a- mor- re, O gran bon- tà, dol-  
san- to re- den- to- re,

ce pie- tà, Fe- li- ce quel che te- co u- ni- to stà.

ce pie- tà, Fe- li- ce quel che te- co u- ni- to stà.

ce pie- tà, Fe- li- ce quel che te- co u- ni- to stà.

Table 2.

Savonarolan Laude in Serafino Razzi, *Libro primo delle laudi spirituali* (Venice, 1563).

	<i>Razzi</i>	<i>Savonarolan text</i>
f. 3v	Iesù sommo conforto Fra Girolamo Savonarola	Iesù sommo conforto Savonarola
f. 15v	Ecco'l Messia (first setting) Mad. Lucrezia de' Medici	Che fai qui, core Savonarola
f. 16	Ecco'l Messia (second setting) (Mad. Lucrezia de' Medici)	Ecce quam bonum / In quanto Fra Luca Bettini
f. 32v	Da che tu m'hai Idio il cor Feo Belcari	Da che tu m'hai dimostro Caterina de' Ricci
f. 44v	La carità è spenta d'Autore incerto	La carità è spenta Fra Benedetto Luschino
f. 45v	Ecce quomodo moritur iustus	(Responsory, Holy Sat.)
f. 80v	In su quell'alto monte d'Autore incerto [Bianco Gesuato]	In su quell'aspro monte Savonarola
f. 116v	Ecce quam bonum	Ps. 132, verse 1 only
f. 131v	Iesù sommo diletto e vero lume d'Autore incerto [Feo Belcari]	Iesù dolce conforto e sommo bene Savonarola

lauda is not actually found in Razzi's print, but the text and music do occur in Razzi's manuscript biography of Savonarola, written late in the sixteenth century. A copy of the biography with musical settings appended is preserved in the Biblioteca Laurenziana in Florence, MS San Marco 429.<sup>48</sup> Here *Che fai qui, core* is transmitted with only a cantus part, the music of which is identical to the cantus for the first version of *Ecco'l Messia* in the 1563 publication. It seems likely, given Razzi's Piagnoni sentiments, that had the Church not placed a de facto ban on the friar's writings, Razzi would have included Savonarola's *Che fai qui, core* along with the several other alternate texts that can be sung to this same musical setting.<sup>49</sup>

A similar case holds for two other pieces printed by Razzi, since he includes two laude whose texts served as models for Savonarola. The first is *In su quell'alto monte* by Bianco Gesuato (Table 2, f. 80v), which Savonarola paraphrased as *In su quell'aspro monte*,<sup>50</sup> and the

<sup>48</sup>FlorL, San Marco 429, f. 215v. Another copy of Razzi's biography includes musical settings of Savonarola's laude, including *Che fai qui, core*; see LuccaBS, MS 2415, f. 281. Eugenia Levi pointed out that *Che fai qui, core* was performed to Razzi's music for *Ecco'l Messia*, but she did not cite any sources; see Levi, xxx.

<sup>49</sup>Razzi provides several texts of his own composition: *Ecco la stella, Ecco'l diletto, and Suso a Maria* (ff. 16v–18).

<sup>50</sup>Savonarola, 1968, 38–39.

second is *Iesù, sommo diletto e vero lume* by Feo Belcari (Table 2, f. 131v), which was paraphrased by Savonarola as *Iesù, dolce conforto e sommo bene*.<sup>51</sup> Mario Martelli, the editor of Savonarola's poetry, notes that for *In su quell'aspro monte* the friar must have had the first stanza of the original lauda in his ear, since he adopted the incipit and meter. Martelli goes on to point out that the meter is unusual because the two-line stanzas feature a seven-syllable line (*settenario*) followed by a double five-syllable line (double *quinario*) instead of the normal eleven syllables (*endecasillabo*). This produces an effect that according to Martelli is "squisita nella sua dissonanza."<sup>52</sup> The opening of Bianco Gesuato's lauda is:

In su quell'alto monte  
 V'è la fontana, che trabocch'ella:  
 D'oro vi son le sponde  
 Ed è d'argento la sua cannella.<sup>53</sup>

Savonarola's lauda clearly echoes Bianco Gesuato's opening line and metric structure:

In su quell'aspro monte,  
 Dove contempla la Magdalena,  
 Andian con dolci canti  
 E con la mente sant'e serena.<sup>54</sup>

As for *Iesù, dolce conforto e sommo bene*, written by Savonarola as a prayer for the Church upon the accession of Pope Innocent VIII in 1484, the opening stanza as well as the rest of the strophic structure are modeled on Belcari's *Iesù, sommo diletto e vero lume*:

Iesù, sommo diletto e vero lume  
 D'ogni purgato core,  
 Fammi annegar nel tuo perfetto amore.<sup>55</sup>

Savonarola's version follows the model fairly closely, including the retention of several of the same words:

Iesù, dolce conforto e sommo bene  
 D'ogni affannato core,  
 Risguarda Roma cum perfetto amore.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 13–15.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 158–60.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 159.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 38.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 211.



The long tradition of providing new texts for old lauda tunes permits the inference that Razzi's music for the laude by Bianco Gesuato and Feo Belcari would also be suitable for singing the Savonarolan texts. Again, it seems likely that Razzi would have used Savonarola's texts, but the de facto ban of the Church on Savonarola's writings probably discouraged him from doing so.

The tunes transmitted by Razzi for the previously discussed four pieces may actually date from Savonarola's time, since the title page to the 1563 print states that many of the tunes were sung in the old days: "with the appropriate music and tune for singing each lauda, as it was sung by the ancients, and as it is performed in Florence."<sup>56</sup> Razzi's statement is supported by the fact that earlier versions of several of the laude in his collection can be traced to fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century sources, including manuscripts of Florentine Carnival songs.<sup>57</sup> And the musical style of the settings for many of the laude suggests their origin in this period. Razzi's print in any case seems to preserve the original tunes that were sung during the 1490s for Savonarola's laude, if not the exact polyphonic versions.

Evidence in lauda manuscripts confirms that musical settings were also once extant for at least two other laude by Savonarola, *Iesù, splendor del cielo et vivo lume* and *Alma, che si gentile*. (One can assume that the remaining texts in Table 1 were also sung, but no direct evidence of a musical setting survives.) Both were still in the active repertory as late as the 1590s, since Razzi included the texts in his manuscript biography of Savonarola.<sup>58</sup> A Florentine lauda

<sup>56</sup>"Con la propria musica e modo di cantare ciascuna Laude, come si è usato da gli antichi, et si usa in Firenze" (Razzi, 1563, title page).

<sup>57</sup>*O Iesu dolce* occurs in a monophonic version in Washington, D.C., Library of Congress MS J6, containing sacred music copied between 1465 and 1480; see Cattin, 1968, 91. A two-voice version of the same lauda is found in the manuscript Capetown Public Library, MS 3.b.12 (copied before 1506); Cattin, 1973, 200–01. It is somewhat simpler than the version in the 1563 print (f. 61v). FlorBN Panciaticchi 27 (copied in the early sixteenth century) presents another setting, for three voices, that has a less ornamented superius than Razzi's version; see Becherini, 1954, 113, and 117–18, where both the Panciaticchi and Razzi versions of the lauda are transcribed. Another lauda, *Cum autem venissem*, is found in a version for three voices in CapetownPL 3.b.12 and in a version for four voices in Montecassino 871 (copied c.1480–1500). The superius melody seems to have been a favorite, since it survives in many early sources; it is concordant with the 1563 print (f. 115v–116). See Pope, 479; for a list of other concordances, see *ibid.*, 646–67. Razzi also drew at least eight of his settings from Florentine canti carnaleschi preserved in early sixteenth century manuscript sources; see Galucci, x; see also Blackburn.

<sup>58</sup>FlorL, S Marco 429, f. 212v and 218.

manuscript dating from the 1490s (Vat Rossi 424) and belonging to a friar from San Marco, the patrician Pandolfo Rucellai, indicates that a certain Ser Firenze composed music for *Iesù, splendor del cielo et vivo lume*. Ser Firenze was employed as a tenor in laudesi companies in Florence, including S. Pietro Martire and S. Zanobi in the 1470s and 1480s.<sup>59</sup> The rubricated heading in the Vatican manuscript indicates that the lauda was provided with its own musical setting (*modo proprio*), one that was not shared with other texts: "Lauda of Saint Mary Magdalene at the feet of Christ, written by Fra Hieronymus; it has its own setting composed by Ser Firenze, priest."<sup>60</sup> Unfortunately, Ser Firenze's music for Savonarola's lauda does not seem to have survived. According to the Vatican manuscript, he also composed the music for another lauda by Francesco D'Albizo, *Conosco ben che pel peccato mio*. The music for this lauda apparently does survive in Razzi's 1563 print, where it is headed "d'Autore incerto."<sup>61</sup>

For Savonarola's other lauda, *Alma, che sì gentile*, only one of the sources, again Vat Rossi 424, has "cantasi come" at the end, but it is followed by a blank space where the title of the tune should have been supplied (f. 192v). Apparently the scribe did not have the information at hand. While Savonarola's lauda is modeled on Gherardo d'Astore's *Alma, che sì gentile, Ti fe' per grazia l'eterno Signore*,<sup>62</sup> there is no extant musical setting for this latter work either, and thus the search for a musical setting for these two laude remains unresolved at present.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

<sup>59</sup>D'Accone, 1975, 90, 100, and 108.

<sup>60</sup>"Lauda di sancta maria magdalena a pie di christo facta da decte fra hieronymo; ha modo proprio facto da ser firenze prete." *Gesù splendor del cielo*, Vat Rossi 424, f. 202. Ser Firenze is mentioned in early sources as the author of three lauda texts, sung to the music of the following well-known settings: *De tous biens pleine* (Hayne van Ghizeghem), *Le serviteur* (attributed to Dufay), and *Questo mostrarsi* (Heinrich Isaac): 1. Lauda di ser firenze cantasi come de tu ben pleni (*Di tutto bene se forte eterno idio*, FlorR, Ed.r. 196, f. 82). 2. Di ser firenze cantasi come le servitur (*Servi tuo maria vengono a te*, Galletti, 228). 3. Di Ser Firenze cantasi come questo mostrarsi adirato di fore (*Ben chadirato si mostril signore*, Galletti, 238).

<sup>61</sup>Vat Rossi 424 has the heading: "Composta da Francesco dalbizo et ha modo proprio molto bello facto da ser firenze prete. *Conosco ben che pel peccato mio*", f. 203v. The musical setting in Razzi's *Libro primo* occurs on f. 138. See Ghisi, 1953, 70.

<sup>62</sup>Savonarola, 1968, 212–14.

After Savonarola's execution the singing of laude continued to play a role in the life of Dominican convents in Tuscany, and the title page of Razzi's *Libro primo delle laudi spirituale* of 1563 suggests that laude were used in Florentine churches after vespers or compline, and especially by nuns and other devout people ("Raccolte dal R. P. Fra Serafino Razzi Fiorentino, dell'ordine de' Frati Predicatori, à contemplatione delle Monache, & altre devote persone"). It is possible to detect some decline in the practice by the 1560s, for the printer Filippo Giunti remarks in his dedicatory letter to Caterina de' Ricci of the convent of San Vincenzo in Prato that the practice of singing laude in the convents is no longer what it once was, and currently the religious, especially nuns, are given to singing lascivious songs that would shock even guests at secular gatherings. One has only to cast an eye over the texts of Florentine Carnival songs from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries to take Giunti's point. To remedy the situation, Giunti notes that Razzi has made a collection of laude that have been and still are sung in Florence, and he has taken the unusual step of supplying the music, instead of following the foolish custom ("scioccha maniera") of merely indicating the tune ("cantasi come") to which one should sing the lauda.<sup>63</sup> Razzi's book thus preserves many of the musical settings that would otherwise have been lost, since the majority of them do not survive in manuscript versions.

Perhaps one should take Giunti's comments about the decline of lauda singing with a grain of salt, since manuscript anthologies of laude texts from the first half of the sixteenth century do survive, and many seem to have Dominican provenance. Razzi himself in his *Istoria de gli uomini illustri* recounts the importance of singing for some of the friars in this period. He tells how the painter Fra Bartolommeo della Porta (d. 1517), who professed his vows at the convent of San Marco in 1501, sang with his fellow friars to lighten the burden of his work.<sup>64</sup> And Razzi notes that a certain Fra Eustachio Fiorentino (d. 1555) from the convent of San Marco enjoyed singing laude with his companions in the evening after supper.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>63</sup>Razzi, 1563, sig. 2-2v.

<sup>64</sup>Razzi, 1596, 364: "Si diletto fra Bartolomeo della musica: onde tal volta per diporto, et alleggerimento delle fatiche, cantava con gli amici."

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 366: "Cantava altresì, all'usanza di Firenze, alcune laudi spirituali, con i compagni suoi, con molta sodisfazione, e contento spirituale de i padre, tal'hora, la sera, dopò la cena in comunanza."

Further evidence that lauda singing remained important in Dominican convents emerges when one studies the identities of authors of lauda texts in Razzi's 1563 print. The print itself contains some ninety-one musical settings for one, two, three, and four voices (most are for three voices), and it transmits 176 lauda texts; the favorite musical settings are provided with up to five or six alternate texts, while others are associated with just one. While several of the authors are well-known Florentines from the Quattrocento, including Lorenzo de' Medici, his mother Lucrezia Tornabuoni de' Medici, her nephew Lorenzo Tornabuoni, and Feo Belcari (a poet and author of *sacre rappresentazioni*), by far the majority of texts were written by Dominican friars, most of whom were active at San Marco during all or much of their careers. The list of nine friars includes Fra Bonifazio Landini (d. 1527);<sup>66</sup> Fra Angelo Bettini (d. 1562), author of three laude;<sup>67</sup> Fra Giovanni Battiloro;<sup>68</sup> Fra Marco della Casa (d. 1580), author of seven laude;<sup>69</sup> Fra Felice de Castelfranco (d. 1571);<sup>70</sup> Fra Hilario Buoninsegni da Siena, who was Razzi's "precettore in religione" at San Marco;<sup>71</sup> and Fra Vincenzo Ercolani da Perugia (d. 1586), under whom Razzi served as secretary.<sup>72</sup> One of the more prolific authors of laude, Fra Niccolò Fabroni (d. 1578), known as "il Sordino" or the deaf one, took his vows at San Marco in 1542, and he composed thirteen of the lauda texts in Razzi's collection.<sup>73</sup> Finally, Razzi himself penned the texts for the largest number of laude in the print, sixty-two in all.<sup>74</sup> Two other friars, Fra Bastiano da Poggibonzi and Fra Pier Felice Caiani, wrote laude that are included in the print, and they were no doubt Dominicans associated in some way with the convent of San Marco.

In addition to the laude of the above friars from San Marco, the shadow of Savonarola stands behind Razzi's lauda collection in

<sup>66</sup>FlorL S Marco 370, ff. 97, 167v.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., ff. 101, 182.

<sup>68</sup>FlorBN Pal 173, f. 165v.

<sup>69</sup>FlorL S Marco 370, ff. 107v, 190v.

<sup>70</sup>Razzi, 1596, 178.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 333.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 121–23. See also Razzi, 1965, xv, xciii.

<sup>73</sup>FlorL S Marco 370, ff. 112v, 187v; Pistoia, Convent of San Domenico, Necrologio, III, f. 33v.

<sup>74</sup>FlorL S Marco 370, ff. 114v, 200. For a complete survey of the life of Razzi, see Ferretti, 168–73, 211–16, 310–18, 361–66, 421–32, 456–64.

other ways. Two other friars who were personal followers of Savonarola fell into disgrace after his execution because of their outspoken Piagnoni sentiments; both were expelled from San Marco in the early decades of the sixteenth century. Each wrote a lauda of homage to Savonarola, and Razzi included elements of these laude in his 1563 print, even though he refrained from naming either friar. The laude are *Ecce quam bonum / In quanto* and *La carità è spenta* (see Table 2). The latter work was bowdlerized and included anonymously by Razzi, while the text of the former was excluded altogether, except that the musical setting was provided in Razzi's print, along with an uncontroversial text.

These texts in honor of Savonarola invoked the friar's assistance for his followers on earth. A large number of such poetic texts survive, and, based on Razzi's 1563 print and his manuscript biography of the friar, musical settings are now recoverable for at least seven of the laude (see Table 3). The texts are all attributed to Dominicans from Florence. Two were written by the disgraced friars mentioned above, Luca Bettini and Benedetto Luschino; and one author is a well-known Italian saint, Caterina de' Ricci, a Dominican nun from the convent of San Vincenzo. Two more laude were penned several decades after the 1563 publication by Razzi himself. The remaining two pieces, *Ecce quomodo moritur* and *Ciascheduno esulti, e canti*, will be discussed presently.

Table 3

Laude in honor of Savonarola for which musical settings survive

<i>Text</i>	<i>Author</i>
<i>Ecce quam bonum . . . In quanto</i>	Fra Luca Bettini
<i>La carità è spenta</i>	Fra Benedetto Luschino
<i>Da che tu m'hai dimostro</i>	Suor Caterina de' Ricci
<i>Ecce quomodo moritur iustus</i>	(Responsory, Holy Saturday)
<i>Vergini deh lasciate</i>	Fra Serafino Razzi
<i>Piangendo i miei peccati</i>	Fra Serafino Razzi
<i>Ciascheduno esulti, e canti</i>	anon.

\*                    \*                    \*                    \*                    \*

Savonarola's message permanently affected the course of many lives. The biographies of four Dominicans—Luca Bettini, Benedetto Luschino, Caterina de' Ricci, and Serafino Razzi—suggest how that influence led them to compose commemorative laude.

The earliest of these Piagnoni Dominicans, Luca Bettini, was born to Piagnone parents in 1489, the first of five sons, all of whom eventually entered the Dominican order.<sup>75</sup> As a fanciullo, Luca almost certainly participated in the Savonarolan processions and heard the friar preach in the duomo. In 1505, Luca entered the convent of San Marco, and in 1516 he authored a defense of the friar's doctrines when a Florentine synod threatened to condemn them as heretical. One year later, he was elected prior of San Marco but was prevented from taking office by his Dominican superiors. In 1526, he was expelled from the congregation for his advocacy of Savonarola's teachings, and he died just a short time later in 1527.

Bettini's lauda survives in several manuscripts, many of which belonged to Dominican convents, and it consists of twenty-two stanzas in what seems to be the earliest version.<sup>76</sup> Only one source, Vat Ferrajoli 84, attributes the lauda to Bettini, but this is a manuscript whose contents and diction reveal that it originated in a Dominican convent in Tuscany before 1559, so the attribution seems reliable.<sup>77</sup> The opening refrain and the conclusion of each of the stanzas features the hallmark verse of the Piagnoni from Psalm 132:

Behold how good and pleasant it is  
for brethren to dwell together in unity.  
What great sweetness it is  
for everyone to be of one heart,  
with rejoicing and readiness  
to offer it to the savior,  
and with a great fervor  
to sing: Behold how good it is.<sup>78</sup>

The subsequent stanzas of Bettini's lauda urge the believers to march on in search of Jesus, singing as they go. On the way, the marchers see the Virgin in heaven, the angel legions, the apostles,

<sup>75</sup>Giorgetti, 164–231; biographical sketch, 197–200.

<sup>76</sup>FlorMa C.262, f. 56v.

<sup>77</sup>Carboni and Ziino, 274.

<sup>78</sup>Ecce quam bonum et quam iocundum  
habitare fratres in unum.  
In quanto è gran dolcezza  
a fare a tutti un core,  
con iubilo e prontezza  
donarlo al salvatore,  
e con un gran fervore  
cantare ecce quam bonum.

Example 2. *Ecco'l Messia* (1563), f. 16, mm. 1-15.

Cantus  
Ec- ce quam bo- num et quam io- cun- dum

Tenor  
Ec- co, ec- co'l Mes- si- a,  
ha- bi- ta- re fra- tres in u- num.  
e la ma- dre su- a Ma- ri- a.  
In quan- to e gran dol- cez- za  
Con iu- bi- lo e pron- tez- za  
Ve- nit' al- me ce- le- ste,  
Ve- nit' e fat- te fe- ste,

and when they come to the martyrs, they see Savonarola and his two companions, who lean down over the clouds and urge them onward. At the end they dance a ballo, hearts aflame with joy, in a version of the millenarian vision of Savonarola.

The underground character of Bettini's lauda is apparent from the fact that it was not printed at all in the sixteenth century, and when Guiducci took it up in 1607 for his *Scielta di laudi spirituali*, all of the stanzas referring to Savonarola were dropped, leaving only seven of the original twenty-two.

One of the manuscripts, FlorBN Magl VII.365, prefaces the lauda with "Di Giesù, e del suo Natale come Ecco'l Messia," indicating that it should be sung at Christmas time to the music for the lauda *Ecco'l Messia*.<sup>79</sup> Turning to the music for the second ver-

<sup>79</sup>FlorBN Magl VII.365, f. 119. The heading is curious, since it seems to refer to a lauda for the Nativity, yet the contents of the lauda have nothing to do with the Na-

Example 3. *Ecco'l signore*, Rossi 395, f. 3v-4, mm. 1-14.

Cantus

Ec-ce quam bo-num et quam lo-cun-dum

Tenor

Ec-co'l si-gno-re, ec-co'l si-gno-re

ha-bi-ta-re fra-tres in u-num.

cia-scun' gli don' il co-re.

In quan-to e gran dol-cez-za a  
Con iu-bi-lo e pron-tez-za do-

Quest' è'l pa-stor che vie-ne a  
Quest' è quel som-mo be-ne che

sion of this lauda in Razzi's print we find a familiar melody (see Table 2, f. 16, and Example 2). A variant of the tune occurs with a setting of a related text, *Ecco'l signore*, which survives in a Dominican lauda manuscript from Pistoia (see Example 3).<sup>80</sup> It is interesting to note that the tune and text are also quoted in complex musical

tivity; rather the lauda is in honor of Savonarola. Could this heading perhaps be an attempt to disguise the lauda so that an inquisitor investigating the convent's books would pass over its Savonarolan content unnoticed?

<sup>80</sup>FlorBN Rossi 395, ff. 3v-4. Inside the front cover of this lauda collection is the following inscription: "Questo libro è ad uso di Fra Leone Forteguerrri da Pistoia dell'Ordine de Predicatori figliuolo del Convento di Santo Domenico di Pistoia della Romana Provincia il qual' prese l'habito nel M.D.XXII, alli xii di Settembre a hore una di Notte." I have been unable to locate a Fra Leone Forteguerrri in the Necrology of the Convent of San Domenico in Pistoia; perhaps his identity is obscured by his taking a new religious name upon his acceptance into the Dominican order. In any case, it is clear that the book was copied after September, 1522.



settings of the kind that Savonarola detested: Latin motets by French composers such as Philippe Verdelot, active in Florence in the 1520s; works by Jean Richafort and Jean Mouton, who travelled to Italy with Francis I in 1515; and finally the setting by Antonius Gallus which appeared as late as 1568 (see Table 4).<sup>81</sup> Gallus was a

Table 4.  
Sources for Settings of *Ecce quam bonum*

1. Tune only, with text *Ecco'l Messia* or *Ecco'l Signore*
  - a. *Libro primo delle laudi spirituali* (1563), f. 16: *Ecco'l Messia*
  - b. FlorBN Rossi 395, f. 3v-4: *Ecco'l Signore*
2. Text only for lauda *Ecce quam bonum*. . . . *In quanto*
  - a. FlorBN Magl VII.365, f. 119: "cantasi come Ecco'l Messia"
  - b. FlorBN Rossi 395, f. 73
  - c. FlorM C.262, f. 56v
  - d. Vat Ferrajoli 84, f. 19v: "Laudae di Fra Luca Bettini"
  - e. *Scielta di laudi spirituali*: "Invito alla gloria De Beati"  
(Florence, 1607; rpr. 1614), 108
3. Motets that quote the *Ecce quam bonum* text and tune
  - a. *Ecce quam bonum*, Nicolas Gombert(?)  
Kassel, Murhard'sche und Landesbibliothek, MS Mus 4° 24, n. 75\*
  - b. *O quam dulcis*, Jean Richafort  
1534/4, *Liber secundus* . . . *Motetos* (Paris, Attaingnant), n. 15
  - c. *Letamini in Domino*, Philippe Verdelot  
Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E.II 55-60, n. 16
  - d. *Ecce quam bonum*, Antonius Gallus  
1568/3, *Novi atque Catholici Thesauri* (Venice, Gardano), 215
4. Mass based on Gombert(?) motet
  - a. *Misse Ecce quam bonum*, Jean Mouton  
Cambrai, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 4, n. 12  
Leiden, Gemeente-Archief, MS 1443, f. 188  
Regensburg, Bischöfliche Zentralbibliothek, MS C.120, f. 46  
's-Hertogenbosch, Archief de Illustre Lieve Vrouwe Broederschap, MS 72C, f. 112v

\*Many attributions in this source are unreliable.

<sup>81</sup>Attention has previously been drawn to the works of these French composers by the late Edward Lowinsky and by Norbert Böker-Heil. On Verdelot's *Letamini in Domino* and its use of the *Ecce quam bonum* tune as a cantus firmus, see Lowinsky, 186-87; and Böker-Heil, 72-75. On additional motets using the tune, including works by Antonius Gallus, and the motet attributed to Gombert in the manuscript Kassel 24, as well as Mouton's Mass based on the latter work, see idem, 411; see also Macey, 426-34.

Frenchman who worked at the Imperial Court in Vienna in the mid-sixteenth century.

Richafort's motet, *O quam dulcis*, bears the subheading "plurimorum martyrum," and there are blank spaces in the text where one can fit the names of Savonarola and his two companions, Dominic and Sylvester. In light of the association of the tune with: 1) Bettini's lauda, *Ecce quam bonum*; 2) Razzi's music for the second setting of *Ecco'l Messia*; and 3) the French settings of *Ecce quam bonum*, it can now be advanced with some confidence that the tune in the Italian lauda sources and in the French motets is the one that Savonarola used for the singing of the psalm verse. A few curious features concerning Razzi's transmission of the tune with the text for *Ecco'l Messia* suggest that the latter text was not the original one intended for the setting (see Example 2, tenor underlay). First, the music does not make a good fit with the opening words of *Ecco'l Messia*: the neumatic flourish on "Ecco" is followed by a full stop, and then the whole first line is stated. Second, Razzi seems to be attempting to disguise the opening of the melody by hurrying through the descending G and F quarter notes in the first measure of the cantus. It is difficult to underlay the words "Ecce quam bonum" to this opening phrase because, after holding out the first syllable the length of a dotted whole note, the singer moves quickly through the second and third syllables. Rossi 395 preserves the tune in a more recognizable rhythmic shape, one closer to the tunes used by Verdelot and the other French composers (Example 3). One final cause for alert is the fact that Razzi provides two musical settings for *Ecco'l Messia*, and this is the only lauda in the print for which he gives two independent settings.<sup>82</sup> Normally the situation works the other way around: a single musical setting accommodates several different texts. The conclusion is that Razzi quietly published this second setting of *Ecco'l Messia* in his 1563 print under the guise of an alternate tune for the lauda, when in fact the music was originally used for the singing of the Savonarolan lauda *Ecce quam bonum*. Because Fra Girolamo's tune had been banned by Dominican authorities, Razzi could not afford to risk printing it openly. It should be noted that later on in Razzi's print (Table 2, f. 116v), there is a brief four-voice setting of the *Ecce quam bonum* verse that surely

<sup>82</sup>Razzi does provide two settings for *Stabat mater*, but here the cantus melody is the same in both the two-voice and three-voice versions.

has Savonarolan significance, even though the musical setting itself makes no reference to the friar's tune.

The second lauda, *La carità è spenta* (Table 2, f. 44v), was written by another friar from San Marco, Benedetto Luschino, one of the more colorful characters in Savonarolan annals.<sup>83</sup> He was born in 1470 and trained as a miniaturist painter. He seems to have revelled in dancing and hunting until, converted by one of Savonarola's sermons in 1492, he finally took the habit at San Marco in 1495. He energetically defended the convent when it was attacked in April of 1498, and attempted to accompany Savonarola into imprisonment but was commanded by the friar to stay behind. After Savonarola's execution, he openly proclaimed the friar's innocence and wrote a tract defending him; for this Fra Benedetto was expelled from San Marco. Some years later, in a confrontation with an anti-Savonarolan, he struck a blow that killed his adversary. As punishment he was sentenced to life imprisonment in the scorpion-filled dungeon beneath the cloister of San Marco. Released sometime after 1523, he was still fighting for the friar's cause in the late 1540s when he penned another defense.

During his years in prison, Fra Benedetto wrote a biography of Savonarola, *Vulnera diligentis*, as well as a book of verse, *Fasciculus mirrhæ*, dated 1514.<sup>84</sup> The latter work contains the lauda *La carità è spenta*, whose short stanzas chronicle the moral decline after Savonarola's death and beseech the prophet in heaven to lend his aid on earth:<sup>85</sup>

Brotherly charity is extinguished,  
There is no love of God.<sup>86</sup>

Couplets 17–20 make direct reference to Savonarola in heaven:

Alas, the saint is dead,  
Alas, Lord, alas.

<sup>83</sup>Patetta. See also Weinstein, 1969; the letter is addressed to Fra Benedetto, who had strayed from the fold of San Marco.

<sup>84</sup>FlorBN Magl XXXV.90. The manuscript is an autograph by Fra Benedetto, written in a neat cursive hand throughout. In addition to containing much poetry by Fra Benedetto, it counts as one of the major manuscript sources for the laude of Savonarola. See Savonarola, 1968, 123–25.

<sup>85</sup>Marchese drew attention to Fra Benedetto's composition of *La carità è spenta* (Marchese, 259–60). One of the Savonarolan stanzas of the lauda is quoted by Eugenia Levi from another source, FlorBN Magl VII.365 (cited incorrectly by her as VII.362); see Levi, 308, n. 21.

<sup>86</sup>“La carità è spenta, / Amor di dio non c'è.”

You took our prophet from us,  
 Made a martyr for you.  
 O prophet Hieronymus,  
 Who are in paradise,  
 The wolf has entered  
 Among your flock.<sup>87</sup>

In Fra Benedetto's autograph copy, the lauda consists of twenty-eight couplets, but when Razzi published it in 1563, he changed the order of the couplets and scrapped more than half of them altogether, including all of those referring to Savonarola. Razzi placed couplet 17 at the end of his version, creating a rather cryptic conclusion. One of the manuscript sources of the lauda, FlorBN Magl VII.365, indicates that it has its own melody (*modo proprio*),<sup>88</sup> and thus Razzi probably presents the original tune from the early sixteenth century (Example 4).

The third lauda in honor of Savonarola was written by Caterina de' Ricci, whose devotion to the friar is well known.<sup>89</sup> Born to a wealthy Florentine family in 1522, she took her vows at the convent of San Vincenzo at the age of fourteen in 1536. By 1540, she had been suffering from an internal disease that had confined her to bed for over a year, and by the end of May the pain had prevented her from sleeping for a whole month. On 22 May, the vigil of Savonarola's execution, some of his relics were brought to her, but initially they provided no relief. In the night she threw them onto the floor in exasperation. Regretting her action, she struggled up from her bed, and as she knelt to recover the relics, the friar appeared to her. He made the sign of the cross and pronounced the healing words "sana facta es."<sup>90</sup> She recovered immediately, and during the course of the next two years the friar reportedly appeared to her in more than a dozen visions.

<sup>87</sup>Ohimè, che'l santo è morto,  
 Ohimè, signor, ohimè.  
 Togliesticì el propheta,  
 Martir fatto per te.  
 O propheta Hieronymo,  
 Che'n paradiso se',  
 Fra le tue pecorelle  
 Entrato el lupo ve.

<sup>88</sup>FlorBN Magl VII.365, f. 132v "Nella morte di fra N. a modo proprio."

<sup>89</sup>On Caterina de' Ricci, see Razzi, 1965, and Agresti, 1963.

<sup>90</sup>The account is from the *Diario* of Fra Modesto Masi; see Agresti, 1963, 98–99.

Example 4. Fra Benedetto, *La carità è spenta* (1563), f. 44v.

Cantus  
La ca- ri- tà è spen- ta, la ca- ri-

Tenor  
La ca- ri- tà è spen- ta, la ca- ri-

Bassus  
La ca- ri- tà è spen- ta, la ca- ri-

tà è spen- ta, A- mor di Dio non c'è.

tà è spen- ta, A- mor di Dio non c'è.

tà è spen- ta, A- mor di Dio non c'è.

Caterina commemorated her miraculous cure in a lauda.<sup>91</sup> The work bears the heading: “Composed in recognition of the first and second miracles performed by the Lord for Sister Catherine de’ Ricci, and mediated through the prayer of the most victorious martyrs, blessed Hieronymus, blessed Dominic, and blessed Sylvester. One sings it to the music for ‘Da che tu m’hai Dio, ’l core.’”<sup>92</sup> Thus one should sing it to the music for the well-known lauda by Feo Belcari (Table 2, f. 32v), and in fact de’ Ricci’s first line is modelled on Belcari; she begins: “Da che tu m’hai dimostro tanto amore.” The music for Belcari’s lauda is given in a two-voice version in Razzi’s print, and, since Razzi dedicated his lauda book to Caterina

<sup>91</sup>Agresti, 1966, 11–17.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., 15: “Composta per ricognoscimento del primo e secondo miracolo fatto dal signore sopra suor Caterina de’ Ricci, mediante le prece delli vittoriosissimi martiri, beato Ieronimo, beato Domenico, beato Silvestro. Cantasi come Da che tu m’hai, Dio, ’l core.”

de' Ricci, this would seem to be the logical place to look for the musical setting for her lauda.<sup>93</sup>

In the lauda Caterina recounts her illness and the miraculous events leading to her cure, as can be seen in the ripresa and first stanza:

Since you have shown me such love,  
servant of Christ, with that sweet glance,  
and with that gift which now is a double dart,  
I will have you always in the center of my heart.

I was submerged in torments and pain  
and you mercifully came down:  
all joy was lost to me,  
when you opened to me your mercy.  
I called you, and you finally came,  
like a tender father to a daughter,  
with that shining vermilion face  
that glowed with brilliant reddish light.<sup>94</sup>

During her tenure at San Vincenzo, Caterina de' Ricci turned the convent into a center for the cult of Savonarola, and she gathered together a large collection of his writings and relics. According to the chronicle of the convent, 23 May was observed as the feast of the three holy martyrs, and novices often took their vows on this

<sup>93</sup>Caterina had already received the dedication of an edition of Jacopone da Todi's laude, *I Cantici*, in Rome in 1558, indicating her interest in laude; see Agresti, 1966, 71–72, 81–83. Razzi prints several similar texts that can be sung to the same music as Belcari's lauda, and one of them on f. 35v, by Fra Niccolò Fabroni, has the same opening line as Ricci's lauda, and several other lines are almost identical to ones from her lauda. Fabroni probably modeled his lauda on Ricci's, since Agresti believes that her version was written around 1540, and Fabroni did not take his vows until 1542. Fabroni himself was closely connected with Caterina: he was one of her spiritual sons, and he assisted her during the weekly ecstasies; he also dedicated two manuscript works to her, including her requested translation into Italian of Savonarola's exposition on the Psalm, *Lauda Jerusalem*. See Agresti, 1966, 75–78.

<sup>94</sup> Da che tu m'ha' dimostro tanto amore,  
Servo di Cristo con quel dolce sguardo,  
E con quel don che or m'è doppio dardo,  
Sempre t'arò nel mezzo del mie' core.  
Nelli tormenti e pene ero somersa,  
E tu pietosamente subvenisti:  
Ogni letizia stava per me persa,  
Quando la tuo' pietade ad me apristi:  
I' ti chiamavo; et tu alfin venisti,  
Come piatoso padre ad una figlia,  
Con quella faccia lucida e vermiglia,  
Che rutilava lucido splendore.

day.<sup>95</sup> Caterina died in 1590, but the convent maintained its devotion to Savonarola under confessors such as Serafino Razzi in the 1590s. Caterina's own devotion to Savonarola was raised as an objection during the examination of the case for her canonization, but it was pointed out that Savonarola had in fact received a plenary indulgence and a pardon from the Church before his execution, so one could assume that he had been accepted into heaven. Caterina was eventually canonized in 1746.<sup>96</sup>

Serafino Razzi, the compiler of the 1563 lauda anthology discussed above, was born in December 1531, and was just ten years younger than Caterina. After taking the Dominican habit at San Marco in 1549 and professing his solemn vows in 1550, he was accepted by her as a spiritual son in 1551.<sup>97</sup> He went on to pursue advanced studies in philosophy and theology in Perugia and Santa Maria Novella in Florence, eventually lecturing on logic at San Marco in 1560–61, and on Aristotle in Pistoia from 1562 to 1565. He was elected prior of San Domenico in Fiesole in 1565; in 1567 he was prior in Orvieto, and he was elected to the same position in Foligno in 1569.<sup>98</sup>

In 1572 the itinerant Razzi traveled to Dominican convents in the Marches, Romagna, and Lombardy, collecting materials for his book, *Vite de santi e beati Domenicani*, which was printed in 1577.<sup>99</sup> Also in 1572 he was appointed *maestro degli studenti* in Perugia, a position that he held until 1574, when he was sent to institute reforms in Dominican convents in the Abruzzi; there he served as prior of San Domenico of Penne (1574–76), and of the Dominican convent in Vato (1576). Razzi remained in the Abruzzi preaching until 1579, except for a pilgrimage to Provence in 1578 to visit the tomb of Mary Magdalene, patroness of the Dominican order; he stopped to pay a visit to Caterina de' Ricci on his voyage back to the Abruzzi.<sup>100</sup>

By 1579 Razzi was again in Tuscany for a spell as lecturer in moral theology at San Marco, and in 1581 he was elected prior in Città di Castello, at the recommendation of Archbishop Alessandro

<sup>95</sup>Guasti, 15–17.

<sup>96</sup>Schnitzer, 1931, 2: 489–90.

<sup>97</sup>Razzi, 1965, 57.

<sup>98</sup>Idem, 1968, 9.

<sup>99</sup>Ferretti, 212–13.

<sup>100</sup>Razzi, 1968, 14–25; Ferretti, 213–15.

de' Medici (the author of the letters of 1583 denouncing the cult of Savonarola). The archbishop noted that the convent merited "un buon capo," one who would promote the observant reforms,<sup>101</sup> but one wonders whether the archbishop was aware of Razzi's Piagnoni sympathies; if so, it seems unlikely that he would have expressed such confidence in Razzi. In 1582 Razzi was sent to Perugia as prior, and served there as *reggente dello studio* from 1583 to 1587; and it was there that he found time to write many of his works.<sup>102</sup> After this period of scholarship, Razzi received an order in 1587 to travel rather far afield on a mission to reform the convents in Dalmatia; he settled at Ragusa (Dubrovnik), and a side benefit of this trip was his *Storia di Ragusa* (Lucca, 1595).<sup>103</sup> He returned to his scholarly duties at Perugia from 1589 to 1590, and in 1590 he was back lecturing at San Marco.

In the later years of his career, Razzi was confessor to convents of nuns that had been founded in line with Savonarolan reforms. These convents continued to promote veneration of the friar in the closing decade of the sixteenth century. Razzi was confessor to the nuns at San Vincenzo in Prato in 1591 (Caterina de' Ricci had died the previous year),<sup>104</sup> where he remained until 1595, when he was transferred back to Florence as confessor to the nuns at Santa Lucia. From 1598 to 1601 he served as confessor to the nuns at another convent named for Santa Lucia, this one in Pistoia, and during the jubilee year of 1600 he attended the festivities in Rome. Finally he returned home to San Marco in 1602 when he was elected prior.

At his death in 1611, the indefatigable Razzi had compiled an impressive bibliography; he had published more than two dozen books, including sermons, theological tracts, biographies of Dominican saints (including his *Vita di Caterina de' Ricci*),<sup>105</sup> and of course two books of laude. This is only the tip of the iceberg, however, since Razzi left some one hundred works in manuscript, including a large collection of laude with music (FlorBN Pal 173), and

<sup>101</sup>Ferretti, 215–16.

<sup>102</sup>Razzi, 1968, 9; Ferretti, 310–12.

<sup>103</sup>Ferretti, 313–18, 361.

<sup>104</sup>The remaining chronology of Razzi's life is drawn from Razzi, 1965, cii–civ.

<sup>105</sup>Censorship, or the threat of it, is apparent when one compares the manuscript copies of the biography of Caterina with the published copy, which appeared in Lucca in 1594. In the manuscript versions there are references, among others, to Savonarola as "beato Jeronimo," referring to Caterina's visions of the friar, but in the published version this is changed to "un altro beato." See Razzi, 1965, xlix.



a biography of Savonarola completed around 1590 that never received the imprimatur.<sup>106</sup> Pope Clement VIII Aldobrandini, a Florentine sympathetic to the case for Savonarola's canonization, was sent a copy of the biography in 1599, and he passed it along to Cardinal Alessandro de' Medici for an opinion. The cardinal, not surprisingly, did not respond favorably; as Razzi notes, the cardinal "did not want to allow it to be printed because of the many opponents that the good father [Savonarola] still had . . . and mostly because the heretics of Germany and England (impudent and iniquitous as they are) numbered him among their false saints."<sup>107</sup> Razzi had better luck with his books of laude, and he noted in the letter of dedication to his *Santuario di laudi* of 1609 that both his first and last printed works were books of laude—the *Libro primo* of 1563 and the *Santuario*—and both were dedicated to prioresses from the convent of San Vincenzo.

Three laude for Savonarola can be directly connected with Razzi. One, *Ecce quomodo moritur iustus*, occurs in the 1563 print (Table 2, f. 45v; Example 5), and at first glance seems to be nothing more than a Latin liturgical text, i.e., the sixth responsory for Holy Saturday. The Savonarolan intent of the piece emerges only when we turn to Razzi's biography of Savonarola. After he has narrated the climactic events of the friar's execution, Razzi writes: "and thus the glorious, holy martyr was consumed [by the flames], as he desired and as he himself had predicted so many years before. His followers could thence truly sing: 'Behold how the just man dies, and no one takes it to heart, and just men are carried off from the world, and no one ponders it. The just man has been taken from the face of iniquity, and his memory will be in peace.'"<sup>108</sup> In the biography, Razzi quotes only this portion of the responsory *Ecce quomodo moritur*,

<sup>106</sup>A complete bibliography is given by Agresti in Razzi, 1965, cv–cxxxv. For a listing of the locations of twenty-three manuscript copies of Razzi's life of Savonarola, idem, cxxv–cxxvi. A brief summary of Razzi's activities relating to the lauda is given by Fenlon.

<sup>107</sup>Ferretti, 425–26: "Non voleva che si stampasse per i tanti contraddittori che ancora teneva il buon Padre . . . et massimamente che gli eretici di Germania et dell'Inghilterra (sfacciati che sono et iniqui) lo annoverano tra i loro finti santi."

<sup>108</sup>Serafino Razzi, "Vita e morte di Fra Girolamo Savonarola da Ferrara," *FlorBN ConvSop* D.9.922, f.273v: "e così consumò il glorioso martirio santo, desiderato, e pronunciato da lui stesso tanto tempo avanti, e poterono i suoi devoti allora veracemente cantare: *Ecce quomodo moritur iustus, et nemo percipit corde, et viri iusti tolluntur de terra, et nemo considerat; a facie iniquitatis sublatu est iustus, et erit in pace memoria eius.*"

Example 5. *Ecce quomodo moritur* (1563), f. 45v, mm. 1-11.

Cantus  
Ec- ce quo- mo- do mo- ri- tur iu-

Altus  
Ec- ce quo- mo- do mo- ri- tur iu-

Tenor  
Ec- ce quo- mo- do mo- ri- tur iu-

Bassus  
Ec- ce quo- mo- do mo- ri- tur iu-

stus, et ne- mo per- ci- pit cor- de,

stus, et ne- mo per- ci- pit cor- de,

stus, et ne- mo per- ci- pit cor- de,

stus, et ne- mo per- ci- pit cor- de,

without the following verse, just as in the 1563 collection.<sup>109</sup> The Savonarolan significance of this text in Razzi's lauda collection becomes clear once we recontextualize it in Razzi's biography of the friar.

This new light on *Ecce quomodo moritur* allows a further Savonarolan reading of the lauda that follows it in Razzi's print: *O anima*

<sup>109</sup>Both the 1563 text and the one in the biography depart from the liturgical text in the same way: they give *sublatus est iustus*, while the liturgical text has simply "*sublatus est.*"

*accecata*.<sup>110</sup> *O anima accecata* is listed by Razzi as “di authore incerto,” but it is modeled on another lauda of the same title by Feo Belcari.<sup>111</sup> Its refrain refers directly back to the second line of *La carità è spenta*, the lauda that precedes *Ecce quomodo moritur* in Razzi’s print:

O anima accecata,  
 tu vai per mala via:  
 dal dimon sei ingannata,  
 qual cerca che sua sia;  
 però con mente pia  
 voltati a Cristo,  
 qual sempre acquisto  
 cerca di far di te.  
 Omè, omè, omè,  
 amor di Dio non c’è.

Compare the last line above with the second line of *La carità è spenta*:

La carità è spenta  
 amor di Dio non c’è.

Given its placement in the 1563 print, *O anima accecata* stands as a direct commentary on the times after the execution of Savonarola, as it urges the blinded soul to turn away from the path of unrighteousness. Razzi in effect nested a hidden triptych of Savonarolan laude on three adjacent openings in his 1563 print:

La carità è spenta	(3 voices)	f. 44v–45
Ecce quomodo moritur	(4 voices)	f. 45v–46
O anima accecata	(2 voices)	f. 46v–47

The slow, solemn chordal harmonies for the prose Latin text, *Ecce quomodo moritur*, resound for just a single verse, a verse calling up a vision of the execution. The somber musical style and non-strophic setting are reminiscent of the mid-century motet. *Ecce quomodo moritur* is thus the musical centerpiece, flanked by the outer wings of the triptych, which provide multiple stanzas of moral commentary on the bad times that followed in the wake of the execution. The two laude are written in lighter textures, with faster rhythms typical of the lauda repertoire. One can well imagine that all three laude were intended to be sung as a unit.

<sup>110</sup>See Savonarola, 1968, 85–96.

<sup>111</sup>The only other source for Razzi’s version of the text is FlorL Antinori Conventi soppressi 161, f. 1v.

In the 1590s, Razzi himself wrote the texts for two other laude in honor of Savonarola: these are *Vergini deh lasciate* and *Piangendo i miei peccati*. The texts and music survive in Razzi's biography of Savonarola, while the music was printed with new and uncontroversial texts in Razzi's last printed work, the *Santuario di Laudi* of 1609.<sup>112</sup> By 1592, Razzi was serving as confessor to the nuns of San Vincenzo in Prato and he remarks in his biography of Savonarola that he wrote the first lauda, a capitolo of thirteen stanzas, for the nuns to sing as they prepared for Matins on 23 May, the feast of Savonarola. The lauda addresses the sleepy nuns in a direct and hortatory tone:

Virgins, o leave those lazy beds,  
And come to praise our Lord  
In the three martyrs so favored by him.<sup>113</sup>

The other lauda, *Piangendo i miei peccati*, also consists of thirteen stanzas and recalls Savonarola's life and execution. Razzi wrote it in 1595, while he was confessor for the Dominican nuns of Santa Lucia in Florence. The first two stanzas set the tone for the lauda:

Weeping for my sins, I was seated  
On the banks of the River Arno,  
When behold I saw a bright light  
In that life that had been snuffed out,  
So that overcome by sorrow I cried aloud:  
Non Jerusalem, who killed  
The prophets of the Lord,  
In how grave an error,  
O unfortunate one, and lost  
Are you today, fallen into such great sin?<sup>114</sup>

<sup>112</sup>Razzi, "Vita di Savonarola," FlorL S Marco 429. The tenor and bass parts for *Vergini deh lasciate* occur on f. 218. One must turn to the *Santuario di laudi* of 1609 (Sig. C2v) for the missing cantus and altus parts. In the latter work, the music is given with a completely new text, *Mente che dorm' in si gelato sonno*. The music is also found in FlorBN Pal 173, f. 3v-4v, with the text *Non potevi signor darci più espresso*, and this same text occurs in the 1609 print, 167.

*Piangendo i miei peccati* occurs in FlorL S Marco 429, f. 214, and the music for all three voices is found on f. 215; there are, however, missing notes in the parts so that it is again necessary to turn to the 1609 print for a correct version of the music (Sig. B2). Here the lauda is titled *Della Resurrezzione di Nostro Signore*, and has a non-Savonarolan text, *Piangendo il mio maestro, io m'era assisa*.

<sup>113</sup>"Vergini deh lasciate i pigri letti, / E venite a lodar nostro signore / Ne' tre martiri a lui cotanto accetti."

<sup>114</sup>Piangendo i miei peccati, i' m'era assiso  
Sopra dell'Arno fiume  
Quand'ecco un chiaro lume

The musical setting (Example 6) has an interesting history, which Razzi recounts in his manuscript collection of laude, FlorBN Pal 173:

Once the author heard a certain canzonetta for three voices being sung, and this aria seemed to him so pretty and pleased him so much that to make it available also among religious persons, he composed for it the preceding lauda of Saint Mary Magdalene, weeping at the sepulchre of our Lord. Not all the parts of the music have been included here, but only the tenor, in order to be more brief, and because there are copies in the convents of Tuscany, and especially in St. Catherine of Siena in Florence, where the author has a sister. And because there are among these mothers a few good singers of music, he has sent them manuscripts of all his compositions, and other pretty tunes that he has occasionally heard.<sup>115</sup>

Razzi does not name the source for his lauda beyond specifying a “certa canzonetta,” but in fact he based it on the music of Domenico da Nola’s villanella, *Occhi miei oscurati*, published as the opening piece in *Il primo libro delle villanelle alla napoletana* (Venice, 1567). Razzi’s lauda faithfully reproduces the rustic effect of the parallel fifths in da Nola’s original. Earlier he had based another lauda on da Nola’s *Tre ciechi siamo*, which was included in the 1563 print as *Tre virtù siamo* (f. 120v).<sup>116</sup> In FlorBN Pal 173, Razzi cited other Carnival songs and canzonette that served as models for the laude contained therein, including Verdelot’s madrigal *Quanto m’è lieto il giorno*,<sup>117</sup> thus indicating the secular origin of the music for many

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Io vidi in quello estinto  
 Onde da dolor vinto alto gridai.  
 Nuova Gierusalemme che’ profeti  
 Uccidi del Signore  
 In quanto grave errore  
 Misera te, e perduta  
 Sei tu oggi caduta en’ che gran fallo?

<sup>115</sup>Becherini, 1959, 97: “Sentendo una volta l’autore, cantare a tre voci, certa canzonetta, cotanto vaga gli parve quell’aria, e così grandemente gli piacque, che per farla comune aziandio [sic] a persone religiose, ci compose sopra la precedente laude di santa Maria Maddalena, piangente al sepolcro di nostro Signore. Non vi sono però poste qui tutte le parti della musica, ma solamente il Tenore, per più brevità, e perchè ne sono copie per i Monasteri di Toscana, e specialmente in S. Caterina da Siena, in Firenze. Dove l’autore per haverci una sorella carnale, e per essere tra quelle madri, alcune buone cantatrici di musica, mandava di mano tutte le sue composizioni, e le belle arie di canti che gli occorreva talhora di sentire” (FlorBN Pal 173, f. 74v). Razzi provides only the tenor part of the lauda in Pal 173, f. 74, with the same text as 1609, *Piangendo il mio maestro*.

<sup>116</sup>See Blackburn, 152.

<sup>117</sup>See Becherini, 1959, 95–98, 101–03 for transcriptions of Razzi’s commentary.

Example 6. Fra S. Razzi, *Piangendo*, San Marco 429, f. 215.

Cantus  
Pian- gen- do i miei pec- ca- t'io m'e- r'as- si- so so-

Tenor  
Pian- gen- do i miei pec- ca- t'io m'e- r'as- si- so so-

Bassus  
Pian- gen- do i miei pec- ca- t'io m'e- r'as- si- so so-

pra dell' Ar- no fiu- me quand' ec- co un chia- ro lu- me io

pra dell' Ar- no fiu- me quand' ec- co un chia- ro lu- me io

pra dell' Ar- no fiu- me quand' ec- co un chia- ro lu- me io

vi- d'in quell' e- stin- to, on- de da do- lor vin- to al- to gri- dai.

vi- d'in quell' e- stin- to, on- de da do- lor vin- to al- to gri- dai.

vi- d'in quell- e- stin- to, on- de da do- lor vin- to al- to gri- dai.

of the laude in his collection. As Luther said, why should the devil have all the best tunes!

One other lauda in honor of Savonarola that is not found in any of Razzi's works but that seems to have been based on a Carnival song is *Ciascheduno esulti, e canti*. The heading for the lauda in FlorBN VII.137 is: "yhs 1530. Laulda chonposta a honore del

profeta frate Girolama Savonarola da Ferrara dell'ordine di sancto Domenicho." The following comment is appended to the end of the lauda: "Detta lalda trovai ad 30 di giugno 1530 in sulla piazza di san giovanni appie del muriccuolo del bacheraiò." The sheet containing the lauda was apparently lying on the ground in the piazza of the baptistry of San Giovanni. The terminus ante quem for the lauda is 1530, and it seems to have circulated in Florence during the heady days of the last republic when Savonarola's memory was venerated throughout the city. The republic ended in 1530 after the siege by Imperial troops under Charles V, and Florence formally capitulated on 12 August, just six weeks after the date on the above source for the lauda.<sup>118</sup>

One of the early lauda prints from Florence (1489) lists a lauda by Lorenzo de' Medici titled *Peccator, su, tutti quanti, cantasi come La canzona de' visi addietro*.<sup>119</sup> A comparison of Lorenzo's lauda with *Ciascheduno esulti, e canti* suggests that the latter lauda was modeled on the former:

Peccator, su, tutti quanti,  
rallegramci con disio:  
questo è il dì c'ha fatto Iddio:  
ciascheduno esulti e canti.

The Savonarolan lauda quotes from lines 3 and 4 of Lorenzo's ripresa:

Ciascheduno esulti, e canti  
questo e'l dì santificato,  
e col sangue consecrato  
per la morte de tre santi.

Further comparisons can be drawn by noting that each lauda has lines of eight syllables (*ottonari*) laid out in six-line stanzas, and the final rhyme of the volta is "santi" in alternate stanzas of Lorenzo's lauda as well as in each stanza of *Ciascheduno*, and this leads back to the rhyme in the first line of the respective ripresa ("quanti" in the former, "canti" in the latter).

The music for the original Carnival song, the *Canzona de' visi addietro*, partially survives in FlorBN BR 230 (fol. 151v), the most

<sup>118</sup>Roth, 320.

<sup>119</sup>Galletti, 117. For both texts, see Medici, 2: 134, 254.

important source for Florentine Carnival songs.<sup>120</sup> Unfortunately, the song is located on what is left of the last folio of the mutilated manuscript, so that only a portion of the cantus part is salvageable; the tenor and contratenor were once contained on the lost facing folio. The music perhaps once served as the setting for *Ciascheduno esulti, e canti*.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Church's de facto ban on the printing of Savonarolan texts apparently explains Razzi's omission of specific reference to the friar in his 1563 lauda book, except for the token inclusion of *Iesù sommo conforto*. But Razzi's print, as we have seen, allows us to reconstruct the music for many of Savonarola's own texts and for many of the underground laude that were sung by the Piagnoni during the sixteenth century. The texts of these laude were either suppressed entirely, or else they were revised when they came to be made available for public use in the prints of 1563, 1607, and 1609. Now it can be seen that a sizeable number of the ninety musical settings in Razzi's print have either a direct Savonarolan reference, or can be—and probably were—used for the singing of Savonarolan texts. And Razzi's manuscript biography of Savonarola also serves as an important source of Razzi's own laude in honor of the friar.

Razzi's 1563 print itself is a milestone in the history of the lauda, since the only previous publications of laude with music are Petrucci's two volumes of 1508. Perhaps the timing of its appearance was designed to appeal to the legates at the Council of Trent, whose members had received the canons for sacred music in August of 1563.<sup>121</sup> The council mandated only in very general terms that sacred music should avoid using "lascivious" tunes, and that the words should be intelligible and not obscured by the polyphony; they did not, however, address the question of vernacular sacred music, thus passing over in silence the musical developments that paralleled the lauda in Protestant lands: German chorales, chansons spirituelles, and English metrical psalms. Furthermore, Razzi's an-

<sup>120</sup>Ghisi, 96, first drew attention to the *cantasi come* indication (and the musical source in FlorBN 230) for Lorenzo's lauda and the *Canzona de' visi addietro*. See also Jeppesen. For a facsimile of the manuscript, see D'Accone, 1986.

<sup>121</sup>See Weinmann, 5; Fellerer, 578–80; and Lockwood, 74–79.



thology contains many contrafacta of Carnival songs and love songs, thus apparently placing his laude outside the pale of the first guideline. The musical style of the laude, on the other hand, does agree with the notions of the bishops: by avoiding all imitative counterpoint, the predominantly three-voice texture in simple chordal style renders the text perfectly intelligible.

Razzi's collection gains further importance because there are very few manuscript sources preserving music for laude in the first half of the sixteenth century. Of the surviving manuscript collections of lauda texts, many of them are of Dominican provenance, suggesting that as a genre the lauda in Tuscany was kept alive at least in part by Dominicans during the first half of the sixteenth century. Meanwhile, according to the research of Ronald Weissman and Lorenzo Polizzotto, the lay confraternities which had previously promoted the singing of laude now experienced repression and disorder under Duke Cosimo de' Medici, who was anxious lest these groups rekindle dangerous republican sentiments.<sup>122</sup>

Razzi's lauda book not only looks to the Savonarolan past for part of its repertory, it also points the way for other lauda prints. Razzi himself remarked how his own example encouraged a fellow Florentine, Giovanni Animuccia, to publish a collection of laude in 1563.<sup>123</sup> Razzi goes on to draw attention to the many prints of laude sponsored by Saint Philip Neri's order of Oratorians in the 1570s and later.<sup>124</sup> Neri was another Florentine who, as a boy during the 1520s, had sung laude regularly at the convent of San Marco. He was an ardent believer in the sanctity of Savonarola, and he corresponded with Caterina de' Ricci. During the scrutiny by a papal commission in 1559 of Savonarola's writings, which had been charged with containing heretical ideas, Neri had a vision of the vindication before it was announced, and he also kept an image of the friar in his cell.<sup>125</sup> It seems that he did not forget the example of the Piagnoni when he moved to Rome, where he promoted the singing of laude in his devotional exercises.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>122</sup>See Weissman, Polizzotto, and also Black.

<sup>123</sup>FlorBN Pal. 173; transcribed in Becherini, 1959, 99. See Animuccia.

<sup>124</sup>Becherini, 1959, 99. For a complete listing of the lauda prints in Rome in the late sixteenth century, see Rostirolla. I would like to thank William Prizer for drawing my attention to Rostirolla's article. For further information on Neri, see Mompellio, 3–33.

<sup>125</sup>Cistellini, 68–69.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., 65–67.

Savonarola created a movement hostile to “high” aristocratic art in general, one that was in particular opposed to the elaborate polyphony that had been imported with the Franco-Flemish singers and composers from the north. His promotion of the lauda was crucial to his success in Florence, since singing during processions and before and after his riveting sermons fostered direct communal internalization of his message of Christian reform. And music played an important role among the Piagnoni friars and nuns in keeping alive, until the end of the sixteenth century, the fervor of the movement that the friar had begun. Savonarola thus cultivated an already flourishing native Italian tradition of vernacular sacred music that placed emphasis on the word and avoided the musical display of the Franco-Flemish composers, and his trend was followed outside Italy by Reformation leaders—Luther in Germany, Calvin in Switzerland, Archbishop Parker in England—who recognized, like Savonarola, the importance of fostering a body of vernacular sacred music, encouraging congregations to sing their new beliefs.

The Counter Reformation Church seems to have taken a similar, though more circuitous and belated route. The Church, in league with secular authority, may have squelched Savonarola’s attempted reforms in the arenas of political and social life, but a stubborn underground of Piagnoni friars and nuns in Tuscany kept his ideals of reform alive. Razzi’s *Libro primo delle laudi spirituali* of 1563 represented laude that were officially approved for public singing in the Counter Reformation Church. Yet, beneath the surface of Razzi’s anthology, one may catch a glimpse of the Savonarolan spirit that inspired the writing and collecting of many of the laude, a spirit that casts new light on the significance of the lauda for the Savonarolan movement, and on the history of the lauda and the course of Counter Reformation music as well.

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Postscript: Since completing this article, I have written another study of the lauda that focuses more closely on its cultivation by nuns. See Patrick Macey, “*Infiamma il mio cor*: Savonarolan *Laude* by and for nuns in Tuscany,” in *Women, Religion and the Arts in Early Modern Europe*, 161–89, ed. Craig Monson (Ann Arbor, MI, 1992).

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