

Mini-Music Seminar, 4. June 25, 2019, **3.00 p.m.** *Musica humana*. Music and medicine.

Primary sources: selections from Ibn al-Jazzar, *Guide for the Traveller (Viaticum)*; Ficino, *De triplici vita* (1489); Athanasius Kircher, *Magnes*

Further reading: Peregrine Horden (ed.), *Music as Medicine: The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity*, 2000; W. F. Wack, *Lovesickness in the Middle Ages*, 1990; N. Siraisi, 'The Music of the Pulse in the Writings of Italian Academic Physicians (Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries),' *Speculum*, 50, 1975; Charles Burnett, 'Spiritual Medicine: Music and Healing in Islam and its Influence in Western Medicine', in *Musical healing in Cultural Contexts*, ed. Penelope Gouk, Aldershot, 2000, pp. 85-91; G. Mina, *Il morso della differenza—Il dibattito sul tarantismo dal XIV al XVI secolo*, Besa: Nardo, 2000 (edition of Guiglielmo de Massa's text from Biblioteca Vaticana, Lat. Barberini 306).

Passages:

1. Boethius, *De institutione musica* (as before): Humanam vero musicam quisquis in sese ipsum descendit intellegit. Quid est enim quod illam incorpoream rationis vivacitatem corpori misceat nisi quaedam coaptatio et veluti gravium leviumque vocum quasi unam consonantiam efficiens temperatio? Quid est aliud quod ipsius inter se partes animae coniungat, quae, ut Aristoteli placet, ex rationabili inrationabilique coniuncta est? Quid vero quod corporis elementa permiscet aut partes sibimet rata coaptatione contineat?
2. Ibn al-Jazzar, *Viaticum* (translated by Constantine the African): Quod melius heriosos adiuvat ne in cogitationes profundentur nimias, vinum temperatum et odoriferum dandum est et audire genera musicorum, colloqui dilectissimis amicis, versus recitatio, lucidos videre hortos, odoriferos et fructiferos, currentem habentes aquam et claram, spatari seu deducere cum femina seu maribus pulcre persone... Item Rufus: non solummodo vinum temperate bibitum aufert tristitiam sed et alia quidem similia sibi, sicut balneum temperatum. Unde fit ut cum quidam balneum ingrediantur, ad cantandum animantur. Quidam ergo philosophi dicunt sonitum esse quasi spiritum, vinum quasi corpus, quorum alterum ab altero adiuvatur. Dicunt alii quod Orpheus dixit: imperatores ad convivia me invitant ut ex me se delectent, sed ego condelector ex ipsis cum quo velim animos eorum flectere possim, sicut de ira ad mansuetudinem, de tristitia ad letitiam, de avaritia ad largitatem, de timore ad audaciam. Hec est ordinatio organorum musicorum atque vini circa sanitatem anime ('Because it better helps the love-sick not to fall into excessive brooding, temperate and odorous wine should be given, and hearing different kinds of music, talking with dearest friends, reciting poems, visiting bright, odorous and fruitful gardens that have water running through them, walk or saunter with a woman or man of good character... Likewise Rufus said: not only wine, temperately drunk, takes away sadness, but also other similar things, such as a temperate bath. Hence it happens that when certain people enter the bath they are roused to sing. Some philosophers say that sound is like the spirit, wine like the body, the one of which is helped by the other. Others say that Orpheus said: Emperors invite me to feasts so that they might take delight from me, but I share my delight in them, since I can lead

- their souls where I wish, e.g. from anger to calmness, from sadness to happiness, from greed to generosity, from fear to daring.’)
3. Hajji Khalifa (1609-1657), *Balance of Truth* (1656), ‘Songs definitely have an influence on bodies and play a great part in stirring up soul and spirit. For this reason the sages have said that the person whose spirit prevails over his soul should overcome his brute soul and should give the reins of government, in the kingdom of the body, into the hands of Sultan Spirit... For this reason Aristotle invented the *Organon* and had it played while giving instruction to the Peripatetics (trans. G.L. Lewis, London, 1957, p. 40).
  4. Gentile da Foligno, commentary to Avicenna, *Canon medicinae*: ...attenditur duplex proportio in sonis. Una est ratione sonorum quia scilicet aliquis est acutus, aliquis est gravis; alia est proportio ratione temporum et quia ibi concurrunt duplex tempus, scilicet mensurans motum percussio cordarum instrumenti et tempus mensurans quietes que sunt inter percussions.... Et eodem modo est intelligendum duas proportiones reperiri in pulsu, unam scilicet que correspondet proprie proportioni sonorum que est secundum acutum et gravem, cui correspondet in pulsu proportio que est secundum fortitudinem et debilitatem...similiter secunde proportioni sonorum que accipitur penes tempus mensurans motum et quietem correspondet in pulsu proportio que sumitur secundum velocitatem et tarditatem (‘A double relation is noticed in sounds. One is by reason of sounds, because one is high-pitched, the other low, another relation is by reason of times—and two kinds of time come together, namely (the time) measuring the movement of the striking of the strings of the instrument and the time measuring the rests which are between the strikes.... In the same way one must understand that two relations are found in the pulses, namely, one that corresponds properly to the relation of sounds which are high and low pitched, to which corresponds in the pulse the relation which is according to strength and weakness... similarly according to the relation of the sounds which is taken from the time measuring movement and rest, there corresponds in the pulse the relation which is taken according to swiftness and slowness’)
  5. Marsilio Ficino, *In Timaeum commentarium, Opera omnia*, Basel 1576: *Concentus autem per aeream naturam in motu positam movet corpus; per purificatum aerem concitat spiritum aereum animae corporisque nodum; per affectum, afficit sensum simul et animum; per significationem, agit in mentem; denique per ipsum subtilis aeris motum penetrat vehementer; per contemplationem lambit suaviter; per conformem qualitatem mira quadam voluptate perfundit, per naturam, tam spiritalem quam materialem, totum simul rapit et sibi vendicat hominem* (‘Harmony through airy nature put into motion moves the body, through the purified air arouses the airy spirit that is the bond of the soul and body; through affect it affects both the senses and the soul; through meaning it acts on the mind; finally through the very movement of subtle air penetrates strongly; through contemplation sweetly licks, through a similar quality pours out wonderful things with a kind of pleasure, through both its spiritual and material nature, at the same time totally seizes and claims man for herself’)
  6. Guglielmus de Marra, *Sertum papale de venenis* (ca. 1362), f. 121v: *ut experientia docet, ex quibusdam sonis in tantum delectantur et iuvantur quod apparent liberati, et propter hoc dicitur in Apulia quod oportet ut in tantum et cum tot diversis sonis pulsetur coram laeso quousque inveniatur sonus*

tarantulae, idem sonus similis sono vel cantui quem tempore morsus tarantula producebat ('as experience teaches, from certain sounds they are so delighted and helped that they appear to be liberated, and because of this it is said in Apulia that one ought to pluck so much and with such different sounds before a sick person until one finds the sound of the tarantula—the same sound corresponding to the sound or the singing which was produced at the time of the bite of the tarantula').