

Tenete il ritmo, se ci riuscite: A Musical Ethnography of Siena's Palio

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents,

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who cheered me on with enthusiasm far exceeding that of any Palio spectator.

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Preface

During the summer of 2002 I participated in a summer music program in Siena, Italy. One cannot spend more than an hour in Siena without hearing about the Palio horse race, but most visitors—passing through for only a few hours or days—mistakenly assume the event is some kind of historical reenactment. Living in Siena for any extended period of time, one begins to understand, to the limited extent that an outsider can, that the event is something much more profound. I first realized the intensity of Palio rivalries when I rounded a street corner to find two enemies exchanging blows in a bloody fight. Just as passionate as these fierce rivalries were the fervent prayers of those gathered at the religious ceremonies associated with the Palio. This juxtaposition was at once mystifying and captivating: I was hooked.

In exploring possible thesis topics, I did extensive reading on the Palio and found that the musical aspects of the race and its associated events had received little scholarly attention. In their otherwise exhaustive anthropological study of the Palio, Alan Dundes and Alessandro Falassi devoted one brief chapter to the music of the Palio, in which they examined only a single folk song.¹ Falassi later compiled a collection of songs representative of each *contrada* (city district; see below for a more detailed explanation), but he admitted that it was far from complete, and he did not include significant commentary.² (A glossary, found on page 116, defines Italian words and phrases associated with the Palio.) Several other articles claimed to explore the “musicality” of

¹ Alan Dundes and Alessandro Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza: An Interpretation of the Palio of Siena* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 162-184.

² Alessandro Falassi, *Per forza e per amore: I canti popolari del Palio di Siena* (Milan: Casa Editrice Valentino Bompiani, 1980).

the Palio, likening the progression of noise in the piazza to symphonic form. However, a thorough ethnography of the music of the Palio had not yet been written.

Fieldwork for this project was conducted in Siena during the summer months of 2007. I carried out extensive interviews of *senesi* (inhabitants of Siena) regarding their participation in the events and explored their feelings, impressions, and memories of the music of the Palio. To acquire data that represented a broad cross-section of Palio participants, I interviewed *senesi* who assume various roles in the events, from performers to enthusiastic spectators. I made certain to represent both genders and various age groups equally in my pool of informants. Interviews were conducted in Italian; translations are mine.

Dundes and Falassi spent years conducting research for their ethnography of the Palio, and I do not pretend to have undertaken a project of similar depth. Rather, my hope is to present a musical “snapshot” of the Palio which seeks to answer the following questions and explore the following issues:

How has music, specifically the role of the Banda Città del Palio and its precursors, remained a constant yet adaptable thread within the tapestry of the Palio’s history? How does this reflect the dichotomy between continuity and flexibility in Palio tradition? How are music and its role in the Palio continuing to evolve today? How is music used as a pedagogical tool to pass on Palio traditions and contrada belief systems through generations? How do folk songs reflect contrada identity? How is public song practice used to demonstrate contrada identity and pride? How is the concept of *vivere il Palio*, a phrase that describes the Palio as an experience “lived” in the present moment, reflected in the high value placed on musical improvisation? What is the basis of the

incongruity between this value in theory and in practice? How is the dichotomy between sacred and secular, one of the most distinctive characteristics of Palio tradition, reflected musically? How are traditional gender roles reinforced and challenged through musical performance? How do contrada anthems reflect contrada identity and the concept of contrada as *patria*?

I will explore not only how music reflects identity and underlying social structure, but also how these identities and structures can be renegotiated through the power of musical performance. By delving deeply into the music of the rituals described by Dundes and Falassi, I hope to contribute to their ethnographic work, as well as to current scholarship on music and identity, music and gender, and music and nationalism.

Introduction

The doors to Siena's medieval cathedral, normally closed tight except for one closely-guarded tourist entrance, were flung wide open on the evening of the August horse race. The towering marble structure, perched precariously on the highest point of the city, silently awaited the arrival of the victorious *contradaioli* (members of a *contrada*) who would soon pour into the church, ecstatically waving *contrada* flags in a salute to their coveted prize: *Il Palio*.¹

As the hour of the race approached, a few members of each running *contrada*—perhaps too nervous to watch the race in the piazza—gathered on the marble steps below the pink and green pastel facade, hoping that their own *contrada* colors would soon appear accompanying the Palio banner. They were joined by a few tourists eager to witness the excitement of the event, but well advised by hotel staff to avoid the packed crowds at the racetrack. Still others were ignorant of the approaching chaos.

Several days earlier, groups of young *contradaioli* had arrived at the Duomo steps bearing meter-tall pillar candles as offerings to the Madonna, in whose honor the Palio race is run. The morning of the race, the *fantini* (jockeys) had been accompanied to the church for a benediction mass, and later in the afternoon delegates of each *contrada* had processed past the Duomo to salute the archbishop of Siena and to receive his blessing for the race. While these events had an air of dignity and devotion, the onslaught of the post-Palio crowd would be a different story. There are no holds barred in the jumble of sacred and secular, which is rumored to incense the archbishop.

¹ *Palio*, from the Latin *pallium* for a piece of cloth, refers to the large decorated banner awarded to the winner of the race.

I had entered the piazza just before it was sealed off for the race, and following the ninety-second contest (the Leocorno horse won easily), I quickly dodged through the crowds to a side street, taking a shortcut to the Duomo.

Despite my haste, the church was already flooded with people by the time I arrived. Usually guards closely inspect visitors' apparel, and those who are deemed too immodest are covered with scratchy blue ponchos. But on the day of the Palio the rules of conduct are flouted, and women in tube tops and short-shorts strolled right into the cathedral. Although the sun was setting, the oppressive August heat did not relent. I tried to make my way to the front and felt the weight of hundreds of others pushing me from behind.

I settled in a place close enough to the front to have a decent view while remaining respectful of the winning contradaoli who gathered near the altar to await the Palio. Distant drumbeats playing the *Marcia di Vittoria* cadence forecast its arrival.

I had lost myself in the excitement of the event, but a nasal voice in my ear jolted me back to reality. "Excuse me!" I turned my head to see a middle-aged blonde woman, obviously a tourist, sneering at me. She started poking me in the back with her finger and said with a loud English accent, "Excuse me, this is *my* spot!" I wondered how anyone could have a "spot" when we were crammed into the church like sardines. I just shook my head and pretended not to understand her as she proceeded to poke all the people around her. "Excuse me! Excuse me, you're blocking my view! This is *my* spot! Scew-zee! Sceeeew-zee!" The Lecaiola in front of me looked with utter disgust at the ignorant outsider who was interfering with her victory celebration.

At the head of the victory procession marched a single *tamburino* (drummer), whose strict cadence became an echoing roar as he entered the cavernous church and continued down the narrow center aisle. Soon after, flourishes of the gigantic white, orange, and blue Leocorno flags could be seen entering the cathedral doors. Ecstatic *contradaioli* greeted each other with hysterical embraces, their bodies sticky with sweat and tears.

When the Palio banner finally became visible, a cry went up from the crowd. *Fazzoletti al collo* (neck scarves decorated with the contrada colors and symbol) were removed and waved to greet the passing trophy. A few meters behind, the shirtless jockey, arms stretched skyward in victory, was carried on the shoulders of several *Lecaioli*.

The pesky English tourist chose that moment to begin poking everyone again. “Scew-zee! I want to take a photo. You’re *blocking* my *photo*. Scew-zee!” The *Lecaiola* in front of me turned around, wound up, and slapped the woman square across the face. Because we were in such close quarters, the tail end of the blow landed just below my left eye. I covered my stinging face with my hand and watched in horror as the English woman clawed at her attacker’s head, then recoiled as the *Lecaiola* spat in her face and disappeared into the crowd.

“Oh! *Oh!*” The woman’s mouth hung open in disgust and disbelief as she tried to wipe the saliva from her face. A local photographer made his way over and inquired in Italian about what had happened. I opened my mouth to explain, but another, older *Lecaiola* wagged her finger at me.

“È meglio non parlare... è pericoloso.” (“It’s better not to say anything... it’s dangerous.”) I decided to keep my mouth shut and sidled away from the troublesome English tourist.

* * *

The preceding anecdote speaks volumes to the intensity and passion with which the citizens of Siena treat the Palio horse race. Twice each summer, the *senesi* gather in the sloping cobblestone arena of the Piazza del Campo to witness this ninety-second contest. Thousands of spectators crowd into the specially-constructed wooden bleachers that line the periphery of the racetrack, and still more watch from the *palazzo* windows overlooking the square. But the Palio is much more than an ordinary horse race. In his 1903 tourist guide to Siena, William Heywood wrote, “He who has not seen [the Palio] does not know Siena.”² Indeed, the Palio is a public demonstration of the culture of Siena, an event in which the identities of each of the rival *contrade* are proudly exhibited.

The center of Siena, enclosed within its high medieval city walls, is divided into thirds called Terzo di Città, Terzo di San Martino, and Terzo di Camollia. These thirds are further divided into the *contrade*, geographical units thought to have been established originally as small military companies, which made up the *senese* army. Throughout Siena’s history, the number of *contrade* has fluctuated widely. Some were combined or

² William Heywood and Lucy Olcott, *Guide to Siena: History and Art* (Siena: Enrico Torrini, 1903), as cited in Alan Dundes and Alessandro Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza: An Interpretation of the Palio of Siena* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 121.

suppressed, and seventeen districts were officially established by a decree of 1729, which fixed the boundaries of the contrade that exist today.³

TABLE 1. Contrade of Siena			
	Contrada Name	Symbol	Colors
Terzo di Città	Aquila (eagle)	Eagle	Yellow, black, and blue
	Chiocciola (snail)	Snail	Red, yellow, and blue
	Onda (wave)	Dolphin	White and light blue
	Pantera (panther)	Panther	Red, blue, and white
	Selva (forest)	Rhinoceros and oak tree	Green, orange, and white
	Tartuca (turtle)	Turtle	Blue and yellow
Terzo di San Martino	Civetta (owl)	Owl	Red, black, and white
	Leocorno (unicorn)	Unicorn	White, orange, and blue
	Nicchio (shell)	Shell	Blue, red, and yellow
	Torre (tower)	Elephant with a tower on its back	Burgundy and white
	Valdimontone (ram)	Ram	Red (or pink), yellow, and white
Terzo di Camollia	Bruco (caterpillar)	Caterpillar	Green, yellow, and blue
	Drago (dragon)	Dragon	Magenta, green, and yellow
	Giraffa (giraffe)	Giraffe	Red and white
	Istrice (porcupine)	Porcupine	Red, black, blue, and white
	Lupa (female wolf)	Female wolf suckling twin boys	White, black, and orange
	Oca (goose)	Goose	White, green, and red

Each contrada has its own colors and a symbol related to its name (table 1). Membership in a contrada is by virtue of birth—infants and young children are baptized into the contrada of their parents in a secular ceremony⁴—but membership is also open to non-*senese* adults who profess loyalty to a certain contrada. In recent years, most

³ Dundes and Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza*, 13

⁴ When a child is born of parents from two different contrade, a dispute may arise over which contrada the child will be baptized into. See *Ibid.*, 36.

contrade have begun baptizing the children of the growing number of immigrants (mostly Albanian and north African) who live within their borders, reflecting the flexibility of Palio ritual to accommodate cultural change. Most contradaoli actually live within their contrada's territory, but some live in another contrada or outside the city walls. Contradaoli from a specific contrada are referred to by a derivation of the contrada name; for example, members of the Bruco contrada are referred to as Brucaioli (Brucaiolo for a single male, Brucaiola for a female). [See *contradaio* in the glossary for a complete listing of these derivations, which will be used throughout this paper.]

Important alliances and rivalries exist among the contrade. While friendly relationships or neutral relationships shift fairly easily from year to year, hostile relationships are long-standing. Historically, the enemy contrada pairs have been: Oca/Torre, Istrice/Lupa, Chiocciola/Tartuca, Nicchio/Valdimontone, Bruco/Giraffa, Aquila/Pantera, and Civetta/Leocorno. The remaining three contrade do not exist as part of an enemy pair. Onda and Drago consider Torre and Lupa, respectively, as their enemies, but Onda and Drago are both small contrade and Torre and Lupa prefer not to acknowledge them. Selva is known as the "friendly" contrada and has no enemy.⁵

The viciousness of contrada enmities cannot be overstated. Some of the rivalries have histories longer than three centuries and may be modern manifestations of medieval and Renaissance family feuds, as well as the Italian idea of *vendetta*.⁶ Inter-contrada violence is common, especially during the Palio season. In July of 2007, members of the

⁵ Ibid., 41.

⁶ Ibid., 41-42.

Oca contrada claimed responsibility for a bomb that detonated in the Torre contrada. Fortunately, no one was injured.

The Palio horse race pits Siena's seventeen contrade against one another in pursuit of honor and glory, represented by the Palio banner. Horse races of this nature have long histories across Italy.⁷ Palio races are still held annually in Ferrara and other cities, although these events are staged primarily as reenactments. In contrast, the Palio of Siena is said to be run "all year round," and the contrada system and race has repercussions in the daily lives of the *senesi*.

As is true with most palio races, Siena's Palio is a religious event. The July Palio (held each year on July 2) is run in honor of the Madonna di Provenzano. (An image of the Virgin Mary, to which several miracles were attributed in the sixteenth century, was located on a street in Siena called Via Provenzano. Today the Chiesa di Provenzano—"Church of Provenzano"—houses the image.) The August Palio (run each year on August 16) is run to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption on August 15.

In each race, only ten of the Siena's seventeen contrade compete. This rule was established in 1721 to minimize injury to the riders, horses, and spectators. The seven contrada who do not run in a given Palio participate *a diritto* (by right) in that same Palio (July or August) the following year. Three others are drawn *a sorte* (by fate) in a public ceremony several weeks before the race. And although all seventeen contrade do not participate directly, all take part in the complicated system of bribes and negotiations (called *partiti*) to aid their allies in victory or to prevent their enemies from winning.

⁷ Ibid., 2.

Therefore, a contrada whose enemy wins is considered to have failed in the race, even if that contrada did not actually run.

Although preparations for the Palio horse race take place throughout the year, the days leading up to the Palio are especially intense. Contrada territories are decorated, and social events are held. A complicated series of trials occurs in the piazza to choose the ten horses that will compete in the race. In the *tratta* ceremony these ten horses are assigned to the contrade by a lottery system. Three days of *prove* (practice races) occur, culminating in the *prova generale* (dress rehearsal) the night before the race. After the *prova generale*, *contradaioi* gather in their respective territories for large banquets that last late into the night.

The day of the Palio, most *contradaioi* gather again for breakfast before heading to the Campo for the *provaccia* (literally “bad practice,” a *prova* in which the horses and jockeys stroll around the track so as not to tire the horses). In the early afternoon, each horse is brought to the contrada chapel for a special blessing by the contrada priest. In the late afternoon the *corteo storico* (historic procession) takes place, in which representatives from each contrada march in costume through the city and around the Campo.

By the time of the *corteo storico*, the piazza is already packed with spectators. Entrances to the square are closed one by one, and for the hour preceding the race only one gate remains open as people continue to pour into the square. Finally the Campo is sealed off, and the track is cleared for the race.⁸

⁸ It is worth mentioning that alcohol is consumed at all Palio events, even before and after the religious benediction ceremony and at the morning race events. Certainly not all spectators imbibe to excess, but drunkenness is common and serves to escalate already-fierce rivalries.

The race itself lasts fewer than two minutes: the horses circle the short track three times. These few seconds are filled with tension, anticipation, and anxiety. As the horses round the final curve and fly past the finish line, those defeated cry in despair as the victorious contradaiooli seize their prize: *Il Palio*.

Chapter 1

Passano gli anni: Musical Continuity and the Palio Band

*Passano gli anni... sei sempre quella
Valdimontone per l'eternità*

“The years pass... you are always that one,
Valdimontone for eternity”

- from the Valdimontone anthem

The *senesi* have a sense that the Palio has always existed, and will always exist. This impression of timelessness is rooted in the knowledge of the Palio's long history. References to *la storia* (the history) of the Palio and of each *contrada* are ubiquitous in *senese* folk song and anthem texts, which will be discussed in greater detail below.

The first known reference to a palio race in Siena was in 1238,¹ although the origins of Palio religious ceremonies go back even further. A thirteenth-century document in Siena's Archivio di Stato describes an antecedent of the *Corteo dei ceri e dei censi* (Procession of the candles and the incense). As today, the procession took place the day before the Feast of the Assumption. Offerings of candles and incense were required of each feudal lord and, according to *senese* statutes, attendance by all citizens was obligatory.² Today representatives of each *contrada* bring pillar candles, but since the Duomo is now illuminated by electric lights, the offering is purely symbolic.

¹ Giovanni Cecchini and Dario Neri, *The Palio of Siena* (Siena: Monte dei Paschi, 1958), 20.

² *Diplomatico Opera metropolitana*, Vetrina 19 (Siena, Archivio di Stato), end of the thirteenth century, copied on vellum from a September 1200 statute. According to D'Accone, the earliest record of this type of offering is from 1147, although this was “surely not the first such offering.” Frank A. D'Accone, *The Civic Muse: Music and Musicians in Siena during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 684.

Music has long been an important part of the unbroken traditions of the Palio. Primarily because the folk songs of the Palio were passed down orally (and still are today), information about their genesis is scarce. One strophe of a song text from before 1650 is extant, although without musical notation:

<i>Colla bufala siamo;</i>	We are with the oxen;
<i>Uscite, donne, questo giorno fuori,</i>	Go out, women, on this day,
<i>Perché fra gli altri onori,</i>	Because among other honors,
<i>Correndo il Palio</i>	Running the Palio
<i>Ancor vincer vogliamo.³</i>	We want to win again.

This text's origin is believed to be pre-1650 based on its reference to the *bufala* (early Palio races involved oxen instead of horses).

As often as the *senesi* sing of *la storia*, they sing of *eternità* (eternity), confident that the Palio will endure for centuries to come. The *senesi* attribute the Palio's durability largely to its adaptability, stemming from their own willingness to remain flexible in the face of change.

* * *

Certainly the best example of musical adaptability is the evolution over centuries of the civic band's role in the Palio race and associated rituals. Cellesi's 1906 *Storia della più antica banda musicale senese*, as well as an introduction by Balestracci to the 1997 facsimile reprint of the same work, provide detailed accounts of the band's activities throughout the centuries, drawing on the many artifacts and records maintained by the civic band. Frank D'Accone, in *The Civic Muse: Music and Musicians in Siena*

³ Remigio De Cristofaro, *Siena: I canti del popolo* (Siena: Edizioni Cantagalli, 1988), 3. Translation mine.

during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, provides further details from his archival work in Siena.

The earliest mention of a government-sponsored musical body is found in Siena's *Biccherna*, a written record of all expenditures of the *senese* government from 1226 to 1818. In the initial years of the financial records, the only musicians listed were cymbal players and drummers, but in 1253 an expenditure for "berets for the trumpeters who accompanied the procession" was recorded.⁴

Throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance, despite numerous changes in government and the eventual fall of the Republic of Siena, the Palio was an elaborate spectacle that included musical performances.⁵ As D'Accone describes, "colorful processions, which traversed the city on both days [of the Palio], high Mass at the cathedral, sumptuous banquets, public feasting, and music everywhere... were the order of the day."⁶ While the size of the civic musical ensemble fluctuated, as well as the types of instruments used (including at various times trumpets, trombones, shawms, tabors, kettle-drummers, *piffari*,⁷ and flutes), it is clear that music remained a constant and important part of Palio ritual into the nineteenth century.⁸

⁴ D'Accone, *The Civic Muse*, 685.

⁵ The plague led to the occasional interruption of Palio festivities in the fourteenth century, although suspension of the race was rare. Giovanni Cecchini, "Palio e Contrada nella loro evoluzione storica," reprinted in Alessandro Falassi, Giuliano Catoni, and Pepi Merisio, *Palio* (Milan: Electa, 1982), as cited in D'Accone, *The Civic Muse*, 684.

⁶ D'Accone, *The Civic Muse*, 683.

⁷ In the fifteenth century, "piffaro" referred to a type of double-reed wind instrument. Howard Mayer Brown and Giulio Ongaro, "Piffaro," *Grove Music Online* ed. Laura Macy [Accessed 6 February 2008], <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.

⁸ See Cellesi, *Antica banda senese*, 16-33 and D'Accone, *The Civic Muse*, 684-697. The developments and changes in the civic musical ensemble were paralleled in the Republic of Florence, Siena's chief rival. See Timothy McGee, "In the Service of the Commune: The Changing Role of Florentine Civic Musicians, 1450-1532," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 30 (1999): 728-731.

The ensemble was renamed La Banda Strumentale in 1815 and consisted of full members and several “supernumeraries,” who performed only occasionally. All the positions were paid, with the costs assumed by the city. The administrative and directorial structure established in 1815 formed the basis of the hierarchy that still exists today: the maestro, the first clarinet (who leads the band in case of the maestro’s absence), and the *capo banda* (band leader, in 1815 designated as the first oboe). The remaining instruments consisted of a supernumerary oboe, two second clarinets, a supernumerary clarinet, a piccolo, one regular soprano clarinet and one supernumerary, two bassoons, seven trumpets, two horns, two snares (one full member and one supernumerary), a *cappel cinese* (literally “Chinese hat,” a now-obsolete percussion instrument), one bass drum, and cymbals.⁹

Francesco Ceracchini became the new maestro as part of this 1815 reorganization. An active professional musician, he served as the organist and *maestro di capella* at Siena’s cathedral and wrote an opera (on a libretto by Metastasio), which was produced in Florence.¹⁰ This established a tradition of highly skilled conductors for the municipal band.

In 1827, La Banda Strumentale was temporarily dissolved for “disciplinary reasons” but was subsequently reinstated because the city “did not know how to celebrate its civic and religious events without the band,”¹¹ showing that the band played an

⁹ Duccio Balestracci, introduction to *Storia della più antica banda musicale senese* by Luigia Cellesi (1906; fascimile Siena: Industria Grafica Pistolesi, 1997), 6.

¹⁰ Balstracci, *Storia* introduction, 7, gives *Antigono* as the name of Ceracchini’s opera; Neville lists Ceracchini as one of many composers who set Metastasio’s libretto *Artaserse* (Don Neville, “Metastasio, Pietro,” *Grove Music Online* ed. Laura Macy [Accessed 10 February 2008], <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.).

¹¹ Balstracci, *Storia* introduction, 7.

integral part in Siena's rituals. That same year, the Società Filarmonica Senese wind ensemble was founded. Although the exact reason for its founding is unknown, one must wonder if it was an attempt to capitalize on the temporary dissolution of the La Banda Strumentale. The Filarmonica was privately funded, and one of its primary donors later wrote that the scope of the group was to "enhance the many sacred and secular public events" of Siena.¹² (Presumably this was identical to the purpose of the municipal band.) Soon after its inception, the Filarmonica appealed to the city for additional monetary support and a rehearsal space, which began more than a century of rivalry and funding battles between the two groups. Much to the chagrin of members of the band, they were forced to share their rehearsal space—located on Via Pispini—with the Filarmonica. An agreement was reached for the two bands to alternate on a schedule of public concerts, and both were engaged for the Palio festivities (specific financial details of this arrangement are unknown). Finally, when the Filarmonica requested funding for new uniforms in 1887, city officials declared that the costs of maintaining one band were already too high, and that the Filarmonica would have to secure its own resources for its survival.¹³

Despite the sharing of the responsibilities between the two groups, the band's calendar in the mid-nineteenth century indicated a demanding performance schedule: it performed in public concerts and for many important religious events, including Pentecost, Christmas, and throughout Holy Week.¹⁴ Its performance schedule specifically for the Palio is found in table 2:

¹² Ibid., 9.

¹³ Ibid., 10.

¹⁴ Ibid., 8.

TABLE 2. Band's performance schedule in the mid-nineteenth century¹⁵			
Date	Description	Time of day	Type of Performance
July 2	Palio race	morning	concert
August 14	two days before Palio race	afternoon	concert
August 15	feast of the Assumption/ <i>prova generale</i>	evening	concert
August 16	Palio race	afternoon	<i>corteo storico</i>

Presumably the concert schedule for the August and July Palio races would have been identical (as they are today); therefore one can construct the likely performance schedule for the Filarmonica, reflecting the sharing of performance responsibilities between the two groups (table 3).

TABLE 3. Filarmonica's likely performance schedule in the mid-nineteenth century			
Date	Description	Time of day	Type of Performance
June 30	two days before Palio race	afternoon	concert
July 1	<i>prova generale</i>	evening	concert
July 2	Palio race	afternoon	<i>corteo storico</i>
August 16	Palio race	morning	concert

In the midst of the Risorgimento movement came another restructuring of the band in 1863. In addition to its service to the city, the band assumed official duties as the band of Siena's National Guard Battalion. It was made up of a total of forty-three paid musicians in addition to the maestro, the *capo banda*, an assistant *capo banda*, and a caretaker. The members were auditioned and signed exclusive four-year contracts, which dictated that permission for any performances outside the band's activities had to be

¹⁵ Ibid., 8.

approved by the mayor of Siena himself. Instruments were to be furnished by the musicians, except the bass drum, snares, cymbals, and the sousaphone. The contract of the maestro further specified his duties: to compose three “grandi suonate” and eight new marches every year.¹⁶

In 1870 Carlo Mostardini became the first member of the band to volunteer to play in the band “for the love of music,”¹⁷ setting a precedent for the volunteer membership which makes up the majority of the band today. But for the paid members, their responsibilities were to be taken seriously: any absence from rehearsal or performance not approved by the mayor risked a significant monetary penalty.¹⁸

In 1876 the band was reorganized yet again, and Pietro Formichi took the helm as maestro three years later. His tenure is notable for its compositional contribution: *La Marcia del Palio* (March of the Palio), which is one of the most recognizable musical symbols of the Palio today.¹⁹

The period of 1896-1898 represented the only time period during which the band was inactive. Faced with perpetual financial concerns and an unsympathetic local government, the band dissolved itself in protest. After fruitless negotiations between the city and the band’s governing body, the group reformed in 1898 as a private society called the Nuova Banda Musicale Senese. Without money from the city, many *senesi* came forward to sustain the group financially. Along with proceeds from performances sponsored by various private citizens, organizations, and the church, the new band was

¹⁶ Ibid., 13-14.

¹⁷ Ibid., 16.

¹⁸ Ibid., 17.

¹⁹ Ibid., 18. Today the *Marcia* is played continuously in the *corteo storico* as the band processes from the Duomo to the Palazzo Comunale. It is certainly possible that the inclusion of all band instruments in the *corteo storico* was prompted by the composition of the new march.

soon able to furnish music, music stands, and uniforms. This represented a major shift in the history of the band, as members participated not for the money but for “a great and strong desire” to recapture the glory days of the band.²⁰

Even the position of maestro was unpaid, and Mario Mascagni, who had a great personal dedication to the (unrelated) composer Pietro Mascagni, assumed the post in 1904. In only a few months he prepared the Nuova Banda for a *concorso bandistico toscano* (Tuscan band competition), where the band won first prize. As a tribute to their maestro, the band members voted unanimously to name Pietro Mascagni honorary president of the society, and asked his permission to name the band in his honor. Mascagni replied via telegram with his permission, and the band became known as Banda Mascagni.²¹

With a new name came a new repertoire to adapt to the tastes of the public. The band began playing transcriptions of operatic and symphonic works. Works performed in concert around the turn of the century included a concerto for euphonium arranged from Bellini’s *Sonnambula*, Act IV from Verdi’s *Aida*, a fantasia from Boito’s *Mefistofele*, the Wedding March from Mendelssohn’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, as well as transcriptions of works by Rossini, Bizet, and Wagner. Concerts in Piazza del Campo in the days of the Palio and throughout the year were sponsored by private companies and the Monte dei Paschi bank.²²

The first half of the twentieth century, despite the support from private donors, saw continued conflict between the band and Siena’s city government. The band

²⁰ Cellesi, *Antica banda senese*, 55.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 56-57.

²² Balestracci, Introduction to *Antica banda senese*, 20.

continued to plead for a permanent rehearsal space and threatened to disband several times. The world wars took a toll on its membership as some members were killed. At the end of World War II, the city government took a renewed interest in funding the group, but musicians were hard to find. In 1959 the city established an official home for the band at the Fortezza Medicea, where the band still rehearses today. That same year, in response to declining membership, the band finally merged with the rival Filarmonica.²³

In the 1970s the band was renamed Banda Città del Palio, which has remained the name of the group to the present day and reflects its primary importance as a performing body at Palio events. Today, the Comune di Siena continues to provide rehearsal and administrative space at the Fortezza, called the *sede* (seat) and—as the incredulous *capo banda* told me—the city even pays the electric bill.²⁴ The facilities are modest, with one large rehearsal space and a gathering room used for meetings and parties (the walls of the gathering space are decorated with band memorabilia such as photographs, phased-out uniforms, and framed scores). Smaller rooms house offices for the director (currently Luciano Brigidi, who has held the position since 1987) and the two *capi banda*, and storage space for instruments and musical scores. Despite the support from the city, elements of the facilities reflect some financial difficulties: in the absence of municipal funding for a much-needed acoustical renovation of the rehearsal space, the group nailed hundreds of egg cartons to the walls for sound absorption (fig. 1). The band rehearses in

²³ Ibid., 24-27.

²⁴ Luciano Bianchi (one of two current *capi banda*), in discussion with the author, Fortezza Medicea, August 17, 2007.

the space twice weekly at 9:15 in the evening²⁵ from March to November. Membership varies from week to week; over eighty musicians participate in Palio events, but a rehearsal after the August Palio was attended by fewer than twenty musicians because many were on vacation.

FIGURE 1. Photograph showing egg cartons nailed to the walls of the band's rehearsal space. *Capo banda* Luciano Bianchi conducts an August rehearsal.



The Fortezza rehearsal space is provided according to the terms of a contract between the band and the Comune di Siena, which stipulates that the band will provide six *chiarine*²⁶ and two *tamburi* for the Palio ceremonies. This contract protects the

²⁵ While 9:15 is the official starting time, rehearsal often starts late and does not seem to have any set ending time; it usually lasts one to two hours.

²⁶ *Chiarina*, a name unique to Siena, refers to a type of straight trumpet without valves. Originally made by the German Hainlein family of brass instrument makers, three of these original instruments dated 1609, 1617 and 1659 are extant in the Civico Museo, Palazzo Comunale, Siena (Edward H. Tarr, "Hanlein,"

interests of both parties: the city avoids the inconvenience of a spontaneous dissolution of the band while the band is guaranteed a home at the Fortezza.²⁷

The *chiarine*, perhaps the most distinctive instruments used in the Palio, are present at all official Palio events—for example the *sorte* drawing, the *tratta* drawing (fig. 2), the *prove*, the *corteo storico*, and the race itself. The *chiarina* players wear medieval-era costumes. Because the *chiarina* is not a standard modern band instrument, its players are drawn from the band personnel regardless of instrument (although many tend to be trumpeters because of the similarity of the mouthpiece). Since the number of *chiarine* in the *corteo storico* is fixed and affects the procession formation of the entire band, having an insufficient number of band members willing to play it is problematic. The *capo banda* Bianchi, himself an oboist, had to substitute as a *chiarina* player only moments before the beginning of the *corteo storico* several years ago. The only problem: he had no idea how to play it. He simply held the instrument to his mouth and pretended to play it for the entire three-hour parade. After several more similar incidents, he recounted, “I finally decided I should actually learn how to play it!”²⁸ He is now a regular *chiarina* player in the Palio procession.

Sixty musicians take part in the *corteo storico*, led by two rows of *chiarine* (six *lunghe* (long) and twelve *corte* (short)). (Until the nineteenth century, musical participation in the *corteo storico* consisted only of snare drums and *chiarine*. At some point after 1800, participation was expanded to include all band instruments.²⁹) Four

Grove Music Online ed. Laura Macy [Accessed 26 February 2008], <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.), as well as several by unknown makers. Today reproduction instruments are used.

²⁷ Bianchi interview.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Bianchi interview.

chiarine ride the ox-drawn *carroccio* (carriage) which brings the Palio banner into the piazza. Positions on the *carroccio* are awarded to the most experienced and proficient players because of their high visibility. The remaining *chiarine* stand ready to announce the drawing of the order of the horses with fanfare.

FIGURE 2. Chiarine announce the *tratta* with a fanfare.



The *chiarina* repertoire consists of a single two-voice fanfare (musical example 1) referred to as the *Squilla delle chiarine* (thought to have been used originally as a call to battle in the *senese* military³⁰), although the instrument is also utilized in the *Marcia del Palio*. Throughout the history of the band, antiquated instruments have given way to standard modern instruments. It is significant that the *chiarine* survive, despite their obsolescence. They remain as a physical and sonic link to the past history of the Palio. The *chiarina* players distinguish themselves visually from the rest of the band by wearing medieval-era costumes, perhaps recalling the glory days of the Republic of Siena. Their repertoire, although limited, spans centuries: from an enduring battle song to a newly-composed march.

³⁰ De Cristofaro, *Siena: I canti del popolo*, 3.

MUSICAL EXAMPLE 1. *Squilla delle chiarine*

Squilla delle chiarine

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of five systems of staves. The first system is divided into two parts: 'Chiarine corte' (top staff) and 'Chiarine lunghe' (bottom staff). The 'Chiarine corte' part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the 'Chiarine lunghe' part provides a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes. The second and third systems are piano accompaniment for the 'Chiarine lunghe' part, featuring a bass line with eighth and sixteenth notes and a treble line with a triplet of eighth notes. The fourth and fifth systems are piano accompaniment for the 'Chiarine corte' part, featuring a bass line with eighth and sixteenth notes and a treble line with a triplet of eighth notes. The score concludes with a double bar line.

The Banda Città del Palio spends the majority of its practice season preparing for its two pre-Palio concerts, held after the evening prova races two days before each Palio, i.e., June 30 and August 14. Continuing a century-old tradition, Monte dei Paschi bank serves as the principal sponsor, and children distribute bank brochures to audience members as the band sets up in front of the Fonte Gaia in Piazza del Campo. The concert repertoire is chosen by maestro Luciano Brigidi, and in 2007 consisted of the works in table 4.

TABLE 4. Concert repertoire for 2007 Palio concerts	
June 30	August 14
Acrobats – Marcia (Sanfilippo)	Al Sindaco – marcia (Gemmiti)
Cuore Abruzzese – marcia sinfonica (Orsomando)	Fontegaia – marcia (Brigidi)
L’Arlesienne, Suite no. 2 – farandole (Bizet)	Carmen – Fantasia dall’Opera (Bizet)
Pomp and Circumstance – Marcia (Elgar)	La vita è bella (Piovani)
Parata d’Eroi – marcia militare (Pellegrino)	Volare (Modugno)
Bohemian Rhapsody (Mercury)	Sing, sing, sing (Prima)
A Portrait (Santana)	Santana – Fantasia di motivi (Gazzani)

Continuing the tradition of composition by the band’s maestro, maestro Brigidi composed a march on the August program. Bizet appears to be a favorite composer, appearing on both programs. As Balestracci noted, repertoire choices accommodated the

tastes of audiences around 1900; likewise, Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody,” originally recorded by the band Queen in 1975, as well as a medley from the film *La vita è bella* represent the influence of popular culture on the August 2007 program.

Several band members also participate in the *Corteo dei ceri e dei censi* procession, which takes place two days before the August Palio (this ceremony is associated the Feast of the Assumption and is therefore unique to the August Palio). While the tradition originated from the church’s need for candles and incense, now the offering brought by each contrada is merely symbolic. A group of young girls from each contrada is selected to carry their contrada’s pillar candles in the procession to the Duomo and are accompanied by *alfieri* (flag bearers) waving their contrada colors. These contrada delegations are led by a small group of band members (this year the group consisted of one euphonium, two trumpets, an oboe, two clarinets, and two flutes, although I am told that the make-up of this group varies from year to year).³¹

One contrada is absent from the procession of the candles, as a Selva informant explained: “La Selva... makes its own ‘personal’ procession the next day, the 15th of August, because the *Madonna Assunta* is its patron saint. And, if you will—although one doesn’t say it out loud—the Duomo is in the Selva territory.”³² The Selva procession is therefore led by a solitary *tamburo* from its own contrada. (When I recounted this exchange to an Aquilina, she snapped back, “It’s not because of the *Assunta*. It’s because

³¹ Bianchi interview.

³² Franco Baldi (organist of the *Selva* contrada and local journalist), in discussion with the author, Chiesa di San Sebastiano Martire della Contrada della Selva, August 15, 2007.

the Selva are crazy. And anyway the Duomo does not belong to any one contrada. It is neutral territory.”³³)

I questioned several band members about inter-contrada tensions within the band, since members come from all parts of the city. Surprisingly, it has never been an issue, even between members of traditional enemy contrade on the day of the race. Bianchi shrugged his shoulders, saying that “musicians are a friendly group. We are here to play our instruments.” Further, at least twenty band members (out of over eighty) have no contrada affiliation at all, as they come from smaller neighboring towns (where there are limited opportunities to play in musical groups) or live outside Siena’s walls. Membership in the band is even open to musicians from other continents: “Since we have the Università per Stranieri [University for Foreigners] in the summer, there are always young people who want to participate [in the band]. This year, for example, we have a Chinese guy, last year there was a Japanese one. It was funny, because you could see from his face that he wasn’t from Siena, even though he was wearing the *senese* uniform. And maybe ten years ago, there was a student from New York.” Only in the past fifty years has the band included females, although their presence was never explicitly prohibited. “Little by little women became involved in the band. Before, there were never any women. Now the whole last line of snares [in the *corteo storico*] is made up only of women.”³⁴ Still, women make up only about thirty percent of the band.

³³ Elisa Loffredo, in discussion with the author, Chiostrò del Carmine, August 18, 2007.

³⁴ Bianchi interview.

Siena has seen its band evolve and change throughout its history to meet contemporary needs. As Cellesi states at the conclusion of his historical account of the band's activities,

“The ancient band is well-deserving of many names: he who has many centuries of history and of life, he who falls and is resurrected and lies dormant to be resurrected again, following the events of its old and proud people, loyal expression of its soul, sincere manifestation of its thriving culture, of its failures, and its enthusiasm, of its perennial harmonious voice which resonates in unison across the centuries with the soul of Siena, *repubblicana, medicea, italiana*.³⁵

Siena has transformed over the centuries from a thriving republic to a bustling tourist destination, its tenacity always echoed by the sound of its oldest musical ensemble.

³⁵ Cellesi, *Antica banda senese*, 58. Translation mine.

Chapter 2

Gli anni di una vita: Music in the Lives of Contradaioi

*E come l'acqua va il tempo che ci fa
volare sopra gli anni di una vita
E come l'acqua va la vita di chi sa
trovare a Siena la felicità*

And as water flows, the time
flies during the years of a life
And as water flows, the life of one who knows
how to find happiness in Siena

- from *Come La Diana*, a *senese* folk song

As the music of the Palio resonates through the centuries, so too does it resonate in the lives of *contradaioi*, both individually and collectively, from birth to death. To grow up in Siena is “to live the Palio” (*vivere il Palio*), and the *contrada* is present at many important life events.

Birth is marked in the *contrada* by a pink or blue ribbon (signifying the sex of the baby) tied on the *contrada* flag outside one’s home. In centuries past, *contrada* affiliation was determined by the physical territory in which one was born (since women gave birth in the home). More recently, rules have changed so that the baby has the same *contrada* affiliation as its parents. Still, *contradaioi* whose children are born in a hospital outside their *contrada* territory will often place a handful of dirt from the *contrada* under the hospital bed to ensure the baby’s *contrada* membership.¹ (Controversy ensues when a child is born of a “mixed marriage,” that is, parents from two different *contrade*.)

¹ Alan Dundes and Alessandro Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza: An Interpretation of the Palio of Siena* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 36.

The contrada is represented by a uniformed page at contradaiole baptisms, first communions, weddings,² subsequent wedding anniversaries, and funerals. Falassi points out that “it is not just the individual who participates in the life of the contrada; rather, it is also the contrada that participates in the life of the individual.”³

Education in the ways of the contrada begins from birth, especially regarding contrada enmities. Children are taught disparaging rhymes and are even permitted to use otherwise-forbidden profanity when referring to their rivals. Falassi overheard a mother from the Pantera instructing her young daughter to shout “merde, merde gialle” (“shit, yellow shit” a common insult referring to Aquila’s yellow flag) to passing Aquilini.⁴

When asked when and how she had learned the Palio folk songs, Aquilina Elisa Loffredo replied, “I don’t remember learning them... it seems that I’ve always known them.”⁵ Lecaiole David Bartalini explained that “[my mother] sang them to me from birth. Then later I sang them in the contrada.”⁶ Many Palio folk songs are shared among all the contrade, with each group singing its own unique text to the same melody. This is the trademark characteristic of the most commonly-sung folk song, *Per forza e per amore*, which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 3.

Another folk song, *Quando ero piccino piccino*, is clearly used as socialization tool for little contradaiole. The singer recalls playing in the enemy territory as a little boy or girl. The enemy described has not won the Palio for many years, and therefore the

² “Mixed marriage” weddings are attended by pages from both contrade, and traditionally the ceremony takes place in the bride’s territory.

³ Dundes and Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza*, 39.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁵ Elisa Loffredo, in discussion with the author, Chiostrò del Carmine, August 18, 2007.

⁶ Davide Bartalini, in discussion with the author, Chiostrò del Carmine, August 18, 2007.

song is sung most frequently by the enemy of the *nonna* (grandmother), the *contrada* which has gone the longest period of time without winning a Palio. However, the song can be sung by any *contrada* by inserting the name of its enemy into the text. In place of “*tanti anni*,” the exact number of years the enemy has waited since its last victory may also be inserted.

*Quando ero piccino/a piccino/a
nella [contrada] andavo a giocar’
mi dicevan Ninetto/a vien grande
mi dicevan Ninetto/a vien grande*

When a was a little boy/girl
I would go play in the [contrada name]
they would tell me, little one, grow up
they would tell me, little one, grow up

*Quando ero piccino/a piccino/a
nella [contrada] andava a giocar’
mi dicevan Ninetto/a vien grande
[contrada] vincerà*

When I was a little boy/girl
I would go play in the [contrada name]
They would tell me, little one, grow up
[contrada name] will win

*Son passati [tanti anni]
e [contrada] non vince più
e anche i merli del Palazzo
e anche i merli del Palazzo*

[Many years] have passed
and [contrada name] has not won
and even the blackbirds of the Palazzo
and even the blackbirds of the Palazzo

*Son passati [tanti anni]
e [contrada] non vince più
e anche i merli del Palazzo
glielo fanno chiù chiù chiù chiù
chiù chiù!*

[Many years] have passed
and [contrada name] has not won
and even the blackbirds of the Palazzo
they say to [the contrada]: cuckoo,
cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo!

Musical example 2 is a setting of the text sung in 2007 by Leocorno, enemy of the current *nonna*, Civetta, which has not won the Palio for twenty eight years (“*ventotto anni*”).

MUSICAL EXAMPLE 2. *Quando ero piccino piccino*

Quando ero piccino piccino



Quan - do e - ro pic - ci - no pic - ci - no e in Ci - vet - ta an -
sa - ti vent - ot - to an - ni La Ci - vet - ta



da - vo a gio - car mi di - ce - van Ni - net - to vien gran - de,
non vin - ce più e an - che i mer - li del Pa - laz - zo



mi di - ce - van Ni - net - to vien gran - de, Quan - do e - ro pic -
e an - che i mer - li del Pa - laz - zo Son pas - sa - ti vent -



ci - no pic - ci - no e in Ci - vet - ta an - da - vo a gio - car
ot - to an - ni La Ci - vet - ta non vin - ce più



mi di - ce - van Ni - net - to vien gran - de La Ci - vet - ta
e an - che i mer - li del Pa - laz - zo glie - lo fan - no



vin - ce - rà! Son pas -
chiù chiù chiù chiù chiù chiù chiù

The folk songs and their texts familiarize young *contradaioli* with markers of *contrada* identity (colors, symbols, enemies, etc.). Additional educational activities for young *contradaioli* include treasure hunts designed to familiarize the children with important *contrada* landmarks and contests involving riddles about *contrada* history. The Pantera *contrada* even holds a summer camp for its youngest *contradaioli*. A family active in the life of the *contrada* will attend activities at the *società* (community center) two to three times a week. Children form friendships—many of which will last throughout their lives—as they interact in play groups organized by age.

Two other groups in the *contrade* are the *alfieri* (flag throwers) and *tamburi* (drummers). They practice outdoors in their respective territories from early spring until the August Palio; the sound of drumming each evening beginning in March announces to the *contradaioli* that the days of the Palio are nearing. Young *contradaioli* may join the *alfieri* and *tamburi* as early as age six. The youngest members attend meetings to observe and to practice, and when deemed ready they are allowed to participate in informal *contrada* processions. These unofficial and often impromptu parades (no uniforms are worn) are not associated with any particular event and serve to rally *contrada* pride. After additional experience, youth may participate in uniformed events such as the *contrada* baptism and the *Corteo dei ceri e dei censi*. Finally, only the most talented *tamburo* and one pair of *alfieri* will take part in the *corteo storico* the day of the Palio race as part of each *contrada*'s *comparsa*. These highly skilled performers compete for the *masgalano* trophy, awarded to the *contrada* with the best-executed routine in the *corteo*. It is considered a great honor to represent one's *contrada* in the *corteo* and many young *tamburi* and *alfieri* aspire to do so.

On my final afternoon in Siena in the summer of 2007, I stopped by a bookstore to pick up an out-of-print volume they had ordered for me. Afterwards I passed a candy shop, where I saw small cakes of *panforte* for sale. Thinking that they would make excellent gifts for family and friends at home, I went inside. In front of me in line was a little boy whom I recognized as the tiniest *tamburino* from the Selva contrada. “You are a drummer in the Selva, aren’t you?” He nodded shyly.

“I took a picture of you with your drum and uniform, do you remember?” I asked (fig. 3).

“No.”

The shop owner chimed in, “See? You are already famous. Keep practicing, and you will be the most famous *tamburino* in Siena! The pride of the Selva!”

The bashful Selvaiolino took his change and skipped out of the shop, trying to hide his grin.

FIGURE 3. The Selva’s youngest *tamburino* in costume.



The owner of the candy shop related that he was well-acquainted with the *tamburino*, as well as with most of the children whose families frequent the *Selva società*. These active *contradaioli* form a close-knit community, and the educational activities are the responsibility of all.

Changing geographic dynamics in recent decades, however, have shifted much of the responsibility of *contrada* education to the family. Many *contradaioli* have moved to areas outside the city walls (*spazio fuori*, or outside space), or even to neighboring towns. Population growth has made it largely impossible for all members of a *contrada* to live within its physical borders, and rising housing prices have caused many to seek out more reasonably-priced accommodations elsewhere. While some *contrade* have

FIGURE 4. The Bartalini family celebrates the August 2007 Leocorno victory.



unofficial territories outside the city walls (neighborhoods dominated primarily by a single *contrada*), it has become increasingly difficult for families to attend *società* events on a regular basis. For this reason, families make additional efforts to celebrate *contrada* identity in their homes. Music is an important part of this celebration.

Davide Bartalini described the sing-along parties that he hosts for his extended family in his palazzo in neighboring Casciano di Murlo. He believes it is important for his five-year-old son Amedeo to learn the Leocorno songs and “to live the Palio,” despite

being located quite far from Siena. In 2007, Amedeo and his mother, Sandra Bartalini, made the hour-long commute to Siena for the *Corteo dei ceri e dei censi*, an effort greatly appreciated by Davide since Sandra herself is not a native *senese*. But, she says, “I think it’s important for Amedeo to know the Palio. It is his heritage.”⁷ The extended Bartalini family gathered around a big-screen television to watch both the 2007 races live. The August race marked Leocorno’s first victory during Amedeo’s lifetime, and the family celebrated by driving into town to take part in the victory celebrations (fig. 4).

As major life events of the *contradaioli* are adorned by the colors of their *contrade*, so too are their day-to-day lives accompanied by a soundtrack of *contrada* folk songs. This soundtrack, created by an energetic and creative community, is echoed in the homes of *contradaioli* within the city walls and beyond.

⁷ Sandra Bartalini, in discussion with the author, Siena, August 27, 2007.

Chapter 3

Viva la bella contrada: Contrada Identity Expressed in Song

*Viva viva la bella Contrada
che di tutte è più grande e più forte*

Long live the beautiful Contrada
Which is the greatest and strongest of all

- from the Bruco anthem

Although the August *tratta* was scheduled to begin around nine o'clock, the contrade arrived in typical Italian fashion—that is, at the last minute or even a little late. Distant singing announced the arrival of each contrada, as those *contradaioi* already in the piazza strained to identify the colors of their scarves. Although the Piazza del Campo is considered neutral territory, each contrada enters the Palio arena seeking to demonstrate its unique identity and its solidarity. The most common physical markers of contrada identity are the *fazzoletti al collo* that all *contradaioi* wear. Other physical indicators include jewelry, clothing, face paint, and balloons. Another important way each contrada establishes its identity is through music, specifically folk songs.

On the day of the *tratta*, a small Chiocciola delegation (in which adult women were notably absent) had gathered immediately in front of the *palco* (platform), which was decked out in the distinctive black and white stripes of Siena. Although all the Chiocciola *contradaioi* had draped their shoulders with identical *fazzoletti al collo*, generational and gender differences were accentuated by other accessories. A group of teenage girls wore matching tank tops and necklaces bearing the Chiocciola symbol and gave each other temporary snail tattoos with a ballpoint pen. A nearby group of teenage boys sported t-shirts decorated with a Superman emblem modified to contain the form of

a snail. Most of the boys wore Chiocciola earrings. They pored over Palio scorecard booklets and argued over which horses would be the best draws. Close by, an equally animated group of middle-aged men, each dutifully wearing his gold Chiocciola ring on the same finger as his wedding ring, weighed the pros and cons of each horse. They reached the conclusion that horses one, nine, and ten would be favorable draws. (One man explained to me that horse nine, named Brento, would be particularly meaningful because it was the same prize horse, since recovered, that was injured and unable to run for Chiocciola in the July Palio, and its reassignment to the same contrada would present an opportunity for retribution).¹ The conversation then turned to their *fazzoletti*, and whose was the oldest. One lifted his *fazzoletto* over his head, proudly pointing out how the blue dye on his twenty-year-old scarf had turned to violet, and explaining which victorious *fantini* had signed in black ink over the Chiocciola insignia. He declared, “Se lo perdo, mi ammazzo” (“If I lose it, I will kill myself”).

The first number to be drawn was two, a horse considered unexceptional.² An impatient Chiocciolino next to me muttered under his breath, “Lascialo stare...” (“Not this one...”) as he waited for the horse to be assigned a contrada.

“Drago,” yelled the mayor, holding up the slip of paper that had been drawn from a rotating container.

Next it was horse number ten, considered a good draw. The Chiocciolino whispered a quiet prayer as he covered his face with his hands. “Dammilo, dammilo, dammilo...” (“Give it to me, give it to me, give it to me...”)

¹ According to Palio rules, an injured or sick horse cannot be replaced after the *tratta* assignments, so Chiocciola did not take part in the July 2007 Palio.

² Although the goal of the *capitani* is to choose ten equally matched horses, there are always “favorites,” particularly those horses who have histories as previous Palio winners.

“Bruco,” announced the mayor.

There was a collective sigh of disappointment from the Chiocciolini, but they still hoped to be assigned horse number nine. Horse seven was drawn next, however, and the crowd waited for the announcement. The Chiocciolino continued his mantra, “Lascialo stare, lascialo stare...”

“Chiocciola.”

After a moment of silent disbelief, the dissatisfied Chiocciolini followed their *barbaresco* (groom) and newly-assigned horse, Giordhan, out of the piazza. Trying to rally some enthusiasm, a song leader called out the first lines of *Per forza e per amore*, and the delegation responded half-heartedly with the remainder of the song.³

Certainly the most iconic Palio folk song, *Per forza e per amore* is seen in musical example 3.

<i>Per forza e per amore</i>	For strength and for love
<i>Nella Piazza del Campo ci nasce la verbena. Viva la nostra Siena, viva la nostra Siena!</i>	In the Piazza del Campo grows the verbena. ⁴ Long live our Siena, long live our Siena!
<i>Nella Piazza del Campo ci nasce la verbena. Viva la nostra Siena, la più bella delle città!</i>	In the Piazza del Campo grows the verbena. Long live our Siena, the most beautiful of all cities!

³ Later, the Chiocciolini would be even more despondent when Brento (the prized horse number nine) won the August 2007 Palio for Leocorno.

⁴ The plant “verbena” is believed to have once grown between the stones of the Campo. Commonly used in ancient Roman and Greek rites, this reference establishes the Piazza del Campo as a “sacred place.” Alan Dundes and Alessandro Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza: An Interpretation of the Palio of Siena* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 164.

MUSICAL EXAMPLE 3. *Per forza e per amore*⁵

Per forza e per amore

The musical score consists of eight staves of music in treble clef, 2/4 time signature. Each staff begins with an accent (>) over the first note. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables across notes. The lyrics are: Nel - la Pia - za ____ del Cam - po; ci na - sce la ____ ver - be - na.; Vi - va la ____ no - stra Sie - na,; vi - va la ____ no - stra ____ Sie - na!; Nel - la Pia - za ____ del Cam - po; ci na - sce la ____ ver - be - na.; Vi - va la ____ no - stra Sie - na,; la più bel - la del - le cit - tà!

⁵ This transcription represents the most basic version of *Per forza e per amore* heard in 2007; textual and harmonic variations are explored below. Another transcription was published in Dundes and Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza* 163, and Alessandro Falassi, *Per forza e per amore: I canti popolari del Palio di Siena* (Milan: Casa Editrice Valentino Bompiani, 1980), 62. I regard this transcription as inaccurate; not only does it contain several pitch errors (unless performance practice has changed quite significantly in the last three decades), but the author's choice of meter does not best represent performance practice.

Although metrical (musical) accent often coincides with verbal accentuation in folk music, that is not the case in *Per forza e per amore*. These accentuation discrepancies are not subtle. The accent marks I have included in the transcription are *heavily* accented, in what I describe as a very aggressive style of vocal production, which includes “scooping” up to the accented beats from pitches as much as a third lower than those notated. (Magrini describes this vocal style as “very taxing.”⁶ For a more detailed discussion of this vocal practice, see chapter 6.) In measure 3, the metrical accent falls heavily on beat 1, while the textual accent falls on the first syllable of “Campo.” In the second line, “ci nasce la verbena,” rhythmic and textual accents *never* coincide. The musical and textual accents are summarized below:

Něllă Piāzză děł Cāmpō
cĩ nāscě lă věrbēnă.
Vīvă lă nōstră Siēnă,
vīvă lă nōstră Siēnă!

Něllă Piāzză děł Cāmpō
cĩ nāscě lă věrbēnă.
Vīvă lă nōstră Siēnă,
lă piũ běllă děllě cittă!

˘ : textually stressed syllable
 ˘ : textually unstressed syllable
underlined: musically accented syllable

It is possible that the discrepancy between musical and textual accents arises from the most common context for the performance of this folk song: group street procession. Contradaiole march in unison to the beat, physically emphasizing the strong beats which

⁶ Tullia Magrini, “Italy: Traditional Music,” *Grove Music Online* ed. Laura Macy [Accessed 2 April 2008], <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.

always fall on the starting leg. However, with the change to triple meter in measure 10, that system breaks down. Franco Baldi, organist for the Selva contrada, cheerfully belittled his fellow *contradaioli*'s musical ignorance: "Have you seen them trying to march to that song? You can't do it, because the meter keeps changing. They trip all over themselves!" He threw up his hands as his belly shook with laughter.⁷

In addition to the *contrada-neutral* text seen above, each *contrada* sings numerous *contrada-specific* texts to the tune of *Per forza e per amore*.⁸ A designated male song leader begins with the first line (to establish which verse will be sung),⁹ followed by all men on the second line. Finally, the women (when present) join the song on line three. Some *contrade* also use harmony in thirds or fifths; song leaders in the Oca *contrada* bragged that *Ocaioli* are the most skilled singers in Siena and often sing in harmony.¹⁰ The following version was sung at the banquet following the July *prova generale* by a group of men¹¹ (musical example 4).

Many of the alternate texts sung to the tune of *Per forza e per amore* establish the physical territory of a *contrada*. Geographical space is transported outside *contrada* boundaries and asserted *musically* in the neutral territory of the Campo.

⁷ Franco Baldi, in discussion with the author, Chiesa di San Sebastiano Martire della Contrada della Selva, August 15, 2007.

⁸ I observed (and recorded) the alternate song texts found below at various Palio events in summer of 2007.

⁹ The song leader establishes the starting pitch; most are quite consistent in choosing a pitch between c' and e'.

¹⁰ Unidentified Oca song leaders, in an informal discussion with the author, territory of the Oca *contrada*, July 1, 2007.

¹¹ Banquets are highly segregated by gender; for a discussion of this practice and its musical implications, see chapter 6.

MUSICAL EXAMPLE 4. *Per forza e per amore* with added harmony

Per forza e per amore

E tut - ti lo sa - pe - te
di Sie - na è la pa - dro - na
Sia - mo dell' in - fa - mo - na
sia - mo dell' in - fa - mo - na
E tut - ti lo sa - pe - te
di Sie - na è la pa - dro - na
Sia - mo dell' in - fa - mo - na
e pa - u - ra non se n'ha.

*E tutti lo sapete
di Siena è la padrona.
Siamo dell'infamona,
siamo dell'infamona.*

And you all know
that [Oca] is the mistress of Siena.
We are of the great famous one,
we are of the great famous one.

*E tutti lo sapete
di Siena è la padrona.
Siamo dell'infamona,
e paura non se n'ha.*

And you all know
that [Oca] is the mistress of Siena.
We are of the great famous one,
and we have no fear.

For example, the Torre contrada sings the following text:

<i>Guardatela la Torre di fianco alla Cappella. Di Siena è la più bella, di Siena è la più bella.</i>	Look at the Tower next to the Chapel. It is the most beautiful in Siena, It is the most beautiful in Siena.
---	--

<i>Guardatela la Torre di fianco alla Cappella. Di Siena è la più bella, e venitela a vede'.</i>	Look at the Tower next to the Chapel. It is the most beautiful in Siena, and come to see it.
--	---

The “Tower” refers to the Torre del Mangia, adjacent to the Palazzo Comunale, which defines the border between Torre’s territory and the Piazza del Campo. Near the base of the tower lies the outdoor chapel referred to in the text.

The Pantera contrada sings:

<i>Tutto il nostro rione forma contrada forte. Siamo delle Due Porte, siamo delle Due Porte.</i>	Our entire territory forms a strong contrada. We are of the Two Doors, we are of the Two Doors.
--	--

<i>Tutto il nostro rione forma contrada forte. Siamo delle Due Porte, ci dovete rispetta'.</i>	Our entire territory forms a strong contrada. We are of the Two Doors, you must respect us.
--	--

“Due Porte” refers to the arches at the base of Via Stalloreggi in the heart of the Pantera contrada. The *società* of the Pantera is also named for the Due Porte, as are several restaurants, pizzerias, and shops within the contrada territory.

The territorial song of the Chiocciola is:

<i>Rione di San Marco è certo un bel rione. Siamo dal Chiocciolone, siamo dal Chiocciolone.</i>	Territory of San Marco is certainly a beautiful territory. We are of the Big Snail, we are of the Big Snail.
---	---

<i>Rione di San Marco è certo un bel rione. Siamo dal Chiocciolone, ci dovete rispetta'.</i>	Territory of San Marco is certainly a beautiful territory. We are of the Big Snail, you must respect us.
---	---

Enclosed within medieval walls, Siena's city center is accessible through eight *porte*, or large doors. Porta San Marco (The Door of St. Mark) is located in the Chiocciola territory, and its adjacent piazza is host to Chiocciola youth parties and *tamburino* practice.

These songs which define the *contrada* geographically may hold even more significance since the previously-mentioned migration of *contradaioli* to the *spazio fuori*. Although these *contradaioli* may not actually inhabit their *contrada*'s territory, they denote it musically through song. These songs also serve as a pedagogical tool, as young *contradaioli* come to recognize the major landmarks of their *contrada*.

Other alternate song texts describe the emblems and flags of each *contrada*. For example, Bruco sings the following text, describing the crowned caterpillar that serves as its mascot. The final line is a vulgar threat to its rivals:

<i>Guardatelo 'l Brucone con la corona in testa. Domani si fa festa, domani si fa festa.</i>	Look at the Big Caterpillar with a crown on its head. Tomorrow we will party, tomorrow we will party.
---	--

<i>Guardatelo 'l Brucone con la corona in testa. Domani si fa festa, e nel culo vi si va.</i>	Look at the Big Caterpillar with a crown on its head. Tomorrow we will party, and give it to you in the ass.
--	---

Aquila, rather, describes its "beautiful bird":

<i>Quando si passa noi levatevi il capello. Ci s'ha l'uccello bello, ci s'ha l'uccello bello.</i>	When you pass us tip your hat. We have the beautiful bird, we have the beautiful bird.
--	---

<i>Quando si passa noi levatevi il capello. Ci s'ha l'uccello bello, il più bello della città.</i>	When you pass us tip your hat. We have the beautiful bird, the most beautiful in the city.
--	---

Colors are a major delineator of contrada identity. Istrice, the only contrada to claim four colors, proudly sings of them in its version of *Per forza e per amore*:

<i>E la nostra bandiera è di quattro colori. Noi siamo Istriciaioli, noi siamo Istriciaioli.</i>	And our flag has four colors. We are Istriciaioli, we are Istriciaioli.
--	--

<i>E la nostra bandiera è di quattro colori. Noi siamo Istriciaioli, e paura non se n'ha.</i>	And our flag has four colors. We are Istriciaioli, and we have no fear.
---	--

Lupa describes its distinctive black, white, and orange flag in the following text:

<i>Bandiera bianca e nera, listata d'arancione. Viva il nostro Lupone, viva il nostro Lupone.</i>	White and black flag, striped with orange. Long live our Big Wolf, long live our Big Wolf.
---	---

<i>Bandiera bianca e nera, listata d'arancione. Viva il nostro Lupone, Il più bello della città.</i>	White and black flag, striped with orange. Long live our Big Wolf, the most beautiful in the city.
--	---

Onda, referring to its distinctive blue flag, sings:

<i>L'Onda ha il color del cielo, e la forza del mare. Lasciatela passare, lasciatela passare.</i>	The Onda has the color of the sky, and the strength of the sea. Let her pass, let her pass.
---	--

<i>L'Onda ha il color del cielo, e la forza del mare. Lasciatela passare, la dovete rispetta'.</i>	The Onda has the color of the sky, and the strength of the sea. Let her pass, you must respect her.
--	--

In addition to singing the praises of one's own contrada, verses also function to ridicule one's enemy. After Oca's July victory last year, and their ruthless mockery of nemesis Torre (see chapter 4 for an in-depth discussion), the rivalry became extremely heated. Although this was manifested in physical fights and even a bomb being detonated in the Torre territory,¹² it also became apparent musically in the Piazza del Campo.

On the evening of the August 14 *prova*, Torre and Oca participated in a "dueling of voices." As large groups of the two contrade paraded into the Campo, each sang its own words to *Per forza e per amore*, trying to surpass the other in volume and ardor. Baldi described it as "a challenge between the contrade, a duel... It is a battle made of words and song."¹³ As other rival contrada pairs joined in, a cacophony of sound echoed in the piazza. At least ten versions of *Per forza e per amore* in at least three keys blurred together in a really delightful way.

A common verse sung by Ocaioli against Torraioli insults the landmarks in their territory, specifically Via Salicotto (Torre's entrance into the Piazza del Campo), Piazza del Mercato (the marketplace behind the Palazzo Comunale), and Passaggio di Pescheria (a small street in the same area):

*Abbasso Salicotto,
Mercato e Pescheria.
Tutta una porcheria,
tutta una porcheria.*

Down with Salicotto,
Mercato and Pescheria.
It is all a pigsty,
it is all a pigsty.

¹² One of Arthur Figliola's informants described a deterioration in relations in recent decades, citing the movement of many contradaioi outside the walls. Because the youth no longer "live the Palio" year round, they don't learn to defend their contrada honorably, and instead resort to violence: "...they don't know how to behave - either in a good way or a bad way. When we're *in piazza*, we defend our colors, our name, '*in buona*' [in the proper way]. Others come expressly to start fights - they cause harm. It's ugly..." Arthur L. Figliola, "Space, society and self in Siena, Italy: A study of community, identity and social change in a small, southern European city" (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2002), 20.

¹³ Baldi interview.

*Abbasso Salicotto,
Mercato e Pescheria.
Tutta una porcheria
che fa schifo alla città.*

Down with Salicotto,
Mercato and Pescheria.
It is all a pigsty
that disgusts the city.

In return, Torraiolli use the following insult:

*O Papero spennato,
sei brutto e fai la spia.
Comandi in Beccheria,
comandi in Beccheria.*

O plucked Duck,
you are ugly and you spy.
You command the butcher shop,
you command the butcher shop.

*O Papero spennato,
sei brutto e fai la spia.
Comandi in Beccheria,
e fai schifo alla città.*

O plucked Duck,
you are ugly and you spy.
You command the butcher shop,
and disgust the city.

Papero is another word for goose or duck and is used by both friends and enemies as an alternate name for *Oca*. A *beccheria* is a butcher shop, and in fact Siena's butcher shops were traditionally located in the *Oca* territory. However, this term may have a double meaning; *becco*, synonymous with *cornuto*, refers to a betrayed husband and its use is considered a very offensive insult in Italian culture.¹⁴

Oca can retort:

*Torre l'han detto l'Orso
Vipera e Spadaforte
farai la stessa sorte,
farai la stessa sorte.*

Torre, they said the Orso,
Vipera and Spadaforte,
you will have the same fate,
you will have the same fate.

*Torre l'han detto l'Orso
Vipera e Spadaforte
farai la stessa sorte,
ti dovranno eliminar.*

Torre, they said the Orso,
Vipera and Spadaforte,
you will have the same fate,
they must eliminate you.

¹⁴ *Becco* also means "ram" or "billy goat." Contradaiooli from Valdimontone are therefore often insulted using the phrase "Becchi Montonaioli," playing on the word's double meaning. Dundes and Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza*, 29..

Orso (Bear), *Vipera* (Viper), and *Spadaforte* (Strong Sword) are three of the six “suppressed contrade” that no longer exist. Given this threat to its inferior size, Torre can reply with the following contrada-neutral verse:

<i>Ci vogliono soppressi.</i>	They want to suppress us.
<i>Levati addirittura.</i>	Even lift [your hat].
<i>Hanno tutti paura,</i>	They are all afraid,
<i>hanno tutti paura.</i>	they are all afraid.

<i>Ci vogliono soppressi.</i>	They want to suppress us.
<i>Levati addirittura.</i>	Even lift [your hat].
<i>Hanno tutti paura,</i>	They are all afraid,
<i>ci dovranno rispetta’.</i>	and must respect us.

And this “battle of song” might continue as the Oca contradaiooli sing:

<i>Il Papero è nell’acqua</i>	The Duck is in the water
<i>e non affoga mai.</i>	and never sinks.
<i>E o Torre tu lo sai,</i>	And Torre you know it,
<i>e o Torre tu lo sai.</i>	and Torre you know it.

<i>Il Papero è nell’acqua</i>	The Duck is in the water
<i>e non affoga mai.</i>	and never sinks.
<i>E o Torre tu lo sai,</i>	And Torre you know it,
<i>ti s’è fatto ripurga’.</i>	and you had to purge yourself.

The common *senese* saying *si è purgata* (he purged himself) refers to being disgraced in the Palio. Figliola likens it to saying “They shit in their pants!” in a socially acceptable way.¹⁵

Last summer the Torre contrada had the audacity to insult the women of the Oca with the following verse, which infuriated Ocaioli. *Fontebranda* refers to the baptismal font in the Oca contrada, a defining landmark of the Oca territory. Describing the women as going “here and there” implies that Ocaioli are promiscuous. Instead, the Torraioli invite listeners to look at Torraiole, who are the most beautiful in Siena:

¹⁵ Figliola, “Space, society and self,” 17.

*Le donne di Fontebranda
vanno tutte in qua e in la.
Guarda le Torraiole,
guarda le Torraiole.*

The women of Fontebranda
all go here and there.
Look at the Torre women,
look at the Torre women.

*Le donne di Fontebranda
vanno tutte in qua e in la.
Guarda le Torraiole,
le più belle della città.*

The women of Fontebranda
all go here and there.
Look at the Torre women,
the most beautiful in the city.

Although in 2007 the most heated rivalry was certainly that between Oca and Torre, other enemy pairs certainly exchanged their share of sung insults. Nicchiaioli taunted Valdimontone with these verses:

*Le corne ce l'hai lunghe
però sei piccolino.
Povero Montoncino,
povero Montoncino.*

You have long horns,
but you are very small.
Poor little Montone,
poor little Montone.

*Le corne ce l'hai lunghe
però sei piccolino.
Povero Montoncino,
fai schifo alla città.*

You have long horns,
but you are very small.
Poor little Montone,
you disgust the city.

*Dici di esse' un Montone
ma invece sei castrato.
Sei becco e bastonato,¹⁶
sei becco e bastonato.*

You claim to be a ram
but instead you are castrated.
You are cuckolded and beaten up,
you are cuckolded and beaten up.

*Dici di esse' un Montone
ma invece sei castrato.
Sei becco e bastonato,
fai schifo alla città.*

You claim to be a ram
but instead you are castrated.
You are cuckolded and beaten up,
you disgust the city.

And in return the Montanaioli sang:

*Arsella velenosa,
sei piena di pidocchi.
Siete tutti finocchi,¹⁷
siete tutti finocchi.*

Poisonous clam,
you are full of lice.
You are all queer,
you are all queer.

¹⁶ *Becco e bastonato*, in Italian parlance, conveys having suffered both “insult and injury.” Dundes and Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza*, 30.

¹⁷ *Finocchio* is a derogatory term for a homosexual man.

*Arsella velenosa
sei piena di pidocchi.
Siete tutti finocchi,
fate schifo alla città.*

Poisonous mussel,
you are full of lice.
You are all queer,
and you disgust the city.

Leocorno ridiculed the current *nonna*, Civetta, with a cruel verse:

*Civetta sgangherata,
sudicia e prostituta,
ti sei sempre venduta,
ti sei sempre venduta.*

Rickety owl,
filthy whore,
you always sold yourself,
you always sold yourself.

*Civetta sgangherata,
sudicia e prostituta,
ti sei sempre venduta,
fai schifo alla città.*

Rickety owl,
filthy whore,
you always sold yourself,
and you disgust the city.

And the Civettini responded:

*E o povero Leocorno
con quel cornino secco,
sembri un cavallo becco,
sembri un cavallo becco.*¹⁸

Poor Leocorno
with that dry little horn,
you look like a cuckolded horse,
you look like a cuckolded horse.

*E o povero Leocorno
con quel cornino secco,
sembri un cavallo becco,
fai schifo alla città.*

Poor Leocorno
with that dry little horn,
you look like a cuckolded horse,
you disgust the city.

The common assertion that one's enemy "disgusts the city" serves to reinforce an insult by asserting that rival *contrada*ioi are not the only ones disgusted; rather, the offense is suffered by the entire population of Siena. It also illustrates that although most *senesi* identify a foe within their city walls, they have a strong sense of civic pride.

¹⁸ Although *becco* has several meanings (see above), I believe that in this case the Civettini are comparing Leocorno's horn to the "horns" assigned to a betrayed husband (*cornuto*) using a vulgar hand symbol in Italian culture.

The Selva, since it has no enemies to degrade, sings of its unwillingness to “sell out,” or participate in *partiti*. Perhaps because of an absence of a nemesis, Selva has one of the best winning records historically, and so has confidence that it “will win in July”:

*Il bianco gli è la pace
il color d'oro e verde.
La Selva non si vende,
la Selva non si vende.*

White is peace,
the colors gold and green.
The Selva doesn't sell out,
the Selva doesn't sell out.

*Il bianco gli è la pace
il color d'oro e verde.
La Selva non si vende,
e di luglio si vincerà.*

White is peace,
the colors gold and green.
The Selva doesn't sell out,
and in July it will win.

The following verse is reserved for that contrada which has won the Palio, and may even be sung throughout the night on the periphery of the enemy contrada's territory:

*Non ci considerate,
per voi non si vale.
Ma il Palio è nella culla,
ma il Palio è nella culla.*

You don't consider us,
for you it has no value.
But the Palio is in the cradle,
but the Palio is in the cradle.

*Non ci considerate,
per voi non si vale.
Ma il Palio è nella culla,
e venitelo a vede'.*

You don't consider us,
for you it has no value.
But the Palio is in the cradle,
come to see it.

Contexts in which alternate verses of *Per forza e per amore* are sung include the Piazza del Campo during the days of the Palio, as well as informal parades of groups of *contradaioli*. A contrada will often visit the territories of its allied *contrade* during these parades. Generally the volume at which the song is sung reflects the level of enthusiasm or anger of the *contradaioli*. For example, when the *Chiocciolini* were disappointed with their assigned horse, they sang their verse with much less zest than when they had entered the piazza, hopeful of a good draw. Likewise, there is also a range of enthusiasm within

a group of *contradaioli*; generally those at the front of the procession are the most spirited singers.

One of the principal functions of these song verses is to demonstrate public solidarity and a common mentality, expressed in the term *anima nostra* (our soul). One *contradaiola* recounts that “to be always together, always in *contrada*, everyone together, every day, results in everyone having a like mentality—the same for all.”¹⁹

However, this outward appearance of solidarity does not necessarily reflect the underlying reality. Many *contrade* have active *sottocontrade* (sub-*contrade*) with differing agendas. These groups are a constant source of disagreement within the *contrada*, and may clash on issues as trivial as banquet menus or as crucial as inter-*contrada* alliances. However, these disagreements do not reflect diminished loyalty to the *contrada*. Loyalty means allegiance “not to the people [of the *contrada*], but to the *contrada* itself.”²⁰ During every interview I conducted, without exception, informants insulted their fellow *contradaioli* or complained about decisions of their *contrada* leadership. However, loyalty to the *contrada* as an entity itself was unequivocal; they extolled its virtues without qualification.

In addition to friction caused by the *sottocontrade*, a group referred to as the *quattrogiornisti* (the four-day people) creates animosity within the *contrada*. These *contradaioli* do not “live the Palio”: they do not attend the *società*, the general assemblies, and may not pay dues. However, they show up to participate in the events of the four days of the Palio. To those *contradaioli* who are regularly involved in the life of the

¹⁹ Figliola, “Space, society and self,” 33.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 51.

contrada, this behavior is very objectionable. It may be likened to the term “Christmas and Easter Catholics,” that is, those Catholics who only attend mass on Christmas and Easter.

Others acquire a distaste for the Palio and for contrada culture altogether. Stefano Paolini, who was baptized as a baby into the Lupa contrada, chooses not to participate in Palio events or to associate himself with the contrada. As a youth, he was the victim of a severe beating by boys from his enemy’s contrada, and ever since he has abhorred the Palio race.²¹

Despite the reality of dissent and conflict within the contrada, public solidarity is emphasized during the days of the Palio. Group song performance and a unique repertoire of texts unify each contrada. These sung texts, describing the geography, the enmities, the symbols, and the colors of each territory, are a means for contrada identity to be proudly exhibited and vividly expressed in the Piazza del Campo and the streets of Siena.

²¹ Stefano Paolini, in discussion with the author, Pizzeria Due Archi, August 11, 2007.

Chapter 4

L'anima nostra che sa le canzoni: Musical Improvisation in Theory and Practice

*L'anima nostra che sa le canzoni,
canta, s'innalza Siena ad esaltar...*

Our soul that knows the songs,
sings and rises to glorify Siena...

- from the official Valdimontone anthem

The Sunday following the July Palio, the distant sound of pulsating drums—but not that of the *tamburini* usually associated with Palio events—made it apparent even several hundred meters from the Piazza del Campo that something unusual was happening. Looking into the steeply-sloped square from its raised periphery revealed nothing short of total chaos. The *estrazione a sorte*,¹ normally a relatively subdued occasion, had been usurped by the Oca contrada as a continuation of its Palio victory less than a week earlier. The Palio banner they had won, designed by *senese* artist Alessandro Grazi, was a striking shade of red (fig. 5)—the color of their nemesis contrada, Torre. The victorious Oca capitalized on this happy coincidence to rub salt in the wound of Torre's defeat.²

¹ The *estrazione a sorte* (drawing by fate, or lottery) determines which three contrade will run in the next Palio, in addition to those already running *a diritto* (by right).

² Torre was considered to be “defeated” in the July race by virtue of their enemy’s victory, despite the fact that Torre did not even run in the race. This reflects the belief by *senesi* that *all* contrade are able to participate in the race via the complicated system of *partiti*. Oca’s victory, therefore, reflects Torre’s failure to block Oca from winning by bribing the other running contrade to intervene on its behalf.

FIGURE 5. July 2007 Palio banner, designed by Alessandro Grazi.



Many Ocaioli were decked out in their own contrada colors—red, green, and white—while others poked fun at Torre by dressing in various red costumes: a group of women wore *Babbo Natale*³ suits (fig. 6); a small army of contradaiooli in red togas played ancient Roman soldiers; and several males cross-dressed in red ball gowns and long blonde wigs. Large homemade signs taunted, “É tutto rosso!” (“It’s all red!”) and a loudspeaker amplified a particularly enthusiastic Ocaiolo hollering out the same line.

Alcohol—appropriately in the form of red wine—flowed freely from several serving stations in the crowd. At the center of the drunken celebration were the drummers of the contrada, their snare drums nowhere in sight. Instead, they banged on a dozen overturned metal barrels in a wildly cacophonous routine. The performance was led by one drummer who held a whistle in his

mouth: he blew a short improvised rhythmic motive, which was then echoed by the drummers. These motives continued in quick succession for more than an hour, the drummers taking only occasional breaks to down some wine. The barrels, as well as the

³ *Babbo Natale*, literally “Daddy Christmas,” is the Italian version of Santa Claus.

large mallets they used to strike them, were painted red, white, and green for the occasion. The drummers' matching t-shirts read, "Tenete il ritmo..." ("Take up the rhythm...") on the front, and "...se ci riuscite!" (... "if you can manage!") on the back, referring to the number of Palio races won by Oca and its enemy. A large sign mounted on a nearby truck summarized the exact tally (fig. 7).

The drumming finally died down when six *chiarine* appeared in the second-story windows of the Palazzo Comunale and began to play the fanfare. The flags of the seven contrade running by right in the August Palio were already hung in a row on the Palazzo's facade, and the crowd waited to see the other three flags that would be added at any moment.

Signs of movement in an open window caused the crowd to hush. A city official mounted a flag outside and silence was suspended for a split second as the *contradaioli* squinted to determine its identity. "Bruco!" a voice called out from the crowd, and a

FIGURE 6. Ocaiole dressed as *Babbo Natale*.



collective cheer was heard from the green-, yellow-, and blue-clad delegation near the Fonte Gaia, followed by a rousing rendition of the folk song *Per forza e per amore*. A few moments later, the distinctive red, yellow, and white flag of the Valdimontone

contrada was placed next to Bruco's, which prompted the pink-clad Montonaioli to belt out their version of the same tune.

Finally, a flag bearing the menacing mascot of the Drago was brandished. Before the Dragaioli had their chance to celebrate, the huge mob of Ocaioli screamed and jeered, pointing to the small Torre delegation nearest the Palazzo. Oca knew that if Torre

FIGURE 7. Sign at an Oca victory celebration that reads “The rhythm of the last fifty years/ us 10 you 2/ for you an impossible rhythm!!!”



couldn't run, they couldn't win; it was a shut-out year for their hated enemy. Following four loud drumbeats by the head drummer, the Oca percussionists resumed their routine. The Torraioli, whose territory intersects the Piazza del Campo, skulked out of the square by way of Via Salicotto.

Usually a victorious contrada celebrates for weeks or even months with nightly parades around the city, including *tamburini*, *alfieri*, and often the horse itself (always with hooves painted gold). I was told by informants from the Oca contrada that the victory celebration at the *estrazione* had arisen somewhat spontaneously. A contrada leader had coined the “*é tutto rosso*” slogan several days earlier, and soon the territory

was abuzz with plans for a rally that would be “all red.” The *tamburini* had their own “rhythmic” take on things, and calculated the victory score of the *contrada* and its foe for the past half-century.

Vivere il Palio (to live the Palio) is a common “verb” in the *senese* vocabulary. It exemplifies the high value placed on the present moment and the view of each Palio as a singular, un-repeatable event. The composition of the field of competitors, the presence or absence of rivals, the assignment of horses, the hiring of jockeys, the amount of money each *contrada* has to spend on *partiti*, the dynamics among *contrada* negotiators, and the drawing of the starting order of the horses: these are only a handful of the constellation of factors which collide to determine the outcome of each unique Palio race.

So to “live the Palio” is not only to observe but to completely immerse oneself in the life of the *contrada* and the events of the Palio; Figliola describes this phenomenon as “the Palio as felt experience.”⁴ In contrast to an awareness of the past (*storia*) and future (*eternità*), it is an embrace of the “present.” Musically, this emphasis on immediacy is manifested in the high value placed on improvisation.

The Oca’s improvised rhythmic routine in the Piazza del Campo is one example of musical creativity in the Palio. Puzzling, however, is the insistence upon the importance of musical improvisation by many of my informants—despite the absence of any concrete evidence that the practice continues today.

Franco Baldi, organist for the Selva *contrada* and a frequent contributor to *Il Carroccio*, a popular *senese* magazine about the Palio, claimed that Selvaioli improvised words to *Advocata Senensium*, a song to the Virgin Mary based on a Gregorian chant, at

⁴ Arthur L. Figliola, “Space, society and self in Siena, Italy: A study of community, identity and social change in a small, southern European city” (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2002), 95.

the end of a ceremony on their patron saint's feast day (for a discussion of the religious music of the Palio and a score of the piece, see chapter 5). "They sing using invented words [on the final lines]. This is very important. They sing mangled, wasted words." Confused,—because it seemed to me that the congregation had sung the same words I had heard at another Palio event—I confirmed that we were indeed discussing the same musical passage. Again, he described to me how the congregation had improvised new words to the familiar tune. I pressed the issue, telling him that *I* had heard the Selva contradaiooli singing the standard words, all in perfect unison. I offered to play back my recording. He insisted again that the words had been invented, and promptly changed the subject.⁵

Intrigued by this apparent incongruity between Baldi's description and my observation of the same event, I inquired about improvisation in subsequent interviews with many informants, especially regarding the oral-tradition folk songs like *Per forza e per amore*.

Without exception, informants responded enthusiastically when asked about improvisation. Davide Bartalini, following the victory of his Leocorno contrada, explained:

The thing that's the most fun to tell you is that when a contrada wins the Palio, immediately all the contradaiooli that have won make up new songs on the notes of the old "hit parade" [*Per forza e per amore*], changing the words to make fun of their adversary, or on the horse that lost, or on the jockey who fell during the race, etcetera.

⁵ Franco Baldi, in discussion with the author, Chiesa di San Sebastiano Martire della Contrada della Selva, August 15, 2007.

However, when asked to give an example of some of these newly-improvised lyrics, he responded, “I can’t think of them now, but maybe later I can sing one.”⁶ This was a typical response.

A tradition of “improvised music-making prevalent in southern and central Italy, but also... found in the north... [is] an essential part of local culture, often being taken as a potent symbol of local identity.”⁷ Indeed, improvisation is highly valued by the *senesi*; they consistently cite it as a point of pride, despite the fact that the practice has died out. Sugarman points out that “ethnomusicologists have rarely tackled the question as to why certain aspects of music are verbalized about while others are not, nor what effect lack of verbalization might have either on musical practice or on the understandings that individuals maintain of themselves and their community.”⁸ What I observed among the *senesi*, however, was essentially verbalization of a defunct tradition, or discourse *without* practice.

Why would the *senesi* explicitly verbalize about improvisation in the absence of its actual practice? I hypothesize that this discrepancy stems from the knowledge on the part of the *senesi* that originally many of the lyrics of *Per forza e per amore* and other folk songs were in fact composed spontaneously to express emotions stemming from a specific victory, loss, or rivalry. Perhaps improvisation is so highly valued because it musically represents the notion of rebirth so fundamental to the Palio. The *senesi* believe that during each Palio race, the glory days of Siena’s Republic are reborn, and the

⁶ Davide Bartolini, in discussion with the author, Chiostro del Carmine, August 18, 2007.

⁷ Tullia Magrini, “Italy: Traditional Music,” *Grove Music Online* ed. Laura Macy [Accessed 2 April 2008], <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.

⁸ Jane Sugarman, *Engendering Song: Singing and Subjectivity at Prespa Albanian Weddings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 25.

winning contrada is likewise reborn. To signify this, winning contradaioli suck on pacifiers and drink milk or wine from baby bottles during celebratory processions throughout the city. Many victorious contradaioli continue to wear pacifiers strung around their necks for months following the race. In subsequent years they celebrate recent victory by singing the “birthday song” to commemorate the day their contrada, and they themselves, were reborn.

The incongruity between theory and practice may be framed within the context of what Slobin calls “layering,” essentially the constant renegotiation in ritual practice of the remnant, the dominant, and the emerging.⁹ The remnant practice of improvisation certainly informs the current value system of the *senesi*, while the dominant activity in performance is the singing of well-established melody and text. Meanwhile, creativity within non-improvised genres, such as the anthems composed for each contrada (see chapter 7) and newly-composed ballads by local poets and composers, has been the emerging practice in the last half-century. So although the practice of improvisation has died out, musical inventiveness continues in the spirit of rebirth so essential to the Palio.

⁹ My thinking on this topic was influenced by a discussion with Professor Mark Slobin at the Society for Ethnomusicology Conference at Wesleyan University in October 2008. I am grateful to Professor Slobin for his insightful comments.

Chapter 5

Maria Mater Gratiae: Sacred Music in a Profane Race

*Maria mater gratiae
Mater misericordiae
Tu nos ab hoste protege
Et mortis hora suscipe*

Maria, mother of grace
Mother of mercy
You protect us from the enemy
And receive us in the hour of death.

- from *Advocata Senensium*

The Valdimontone territory seems stately and spacious compared with the cramped and winding streets of most contrade. Several long, straight streets gradually ascend to the Basilica dei Servi at the highest point in the territory, as if Mussolini had a hand in its planning. Red and yellow flags and banners line the streets in the weeks before each Palio race. On August 16, shade was scarce as the afternoon sun beat down on the red-roofed neighborhood. Pink- and yellow-clad Valdimontone contradaiooli climbed the hill, as if on a pilgrimage, to witness the benediction of their horse. The benediction ceremonies are a blatant mixture of sacred and secular, and are fairly similar in all contrade. Jockey and horse enter the contrada church, where the contrada priest gives a special blessing and issues a stirring command: “Vai, e torna vincitore!” (“Go, and return the victor!”). Most contrade have some type of reliquary¹ which is kissed in turn by the *fantino* and *capitano* (contrada captain), then placed with great reverence on

¹ The contents of the reliquaries are irrelevant; when I asked one *Selvaiolo* informant what was contained in the reliquary of San Sebastiano, he shrugged his shoulders and said, “Who knows?”

the horse's nose. If the horse defecates on the floor of the chapel, it is not seen as a sacrilege; rather, it is looked upon as a good omen.²

Tension was palpable in the Valdimontone territory the day of the August race. It was the second time that summer that they were participating in the race after being drawn *a sorte*. Unless they would be drawn *a sorte* again the following year, the August race was the last time they would race for two years. There were sentiments of lost opportunity since their poor showing in the July race, and rumor had it that contrada officials had spent in excess of €2 million to buy a victory in the August race. They had engaged a veteran jockey with a one-in-three winning record (compared to the average record of one-in-thirteen), and were lucky to have drawn a fine horse, Estremo Oriente, with which the jockey was very familiar.

I had failed to witness a benediction ceremony in July; generally the services are closed to outsiders, as space in the contrada chapels is very limited. Regardless, the day of the August Palio I paid a visit to Valdimontone, hoping at least to listen from outside the chapel.

The contrada chapel (L'Oratorio della Santissima Trinità), the Basilica dei Servi, and the Valdimontone *sede* are situated adjacent to one another in Piazza Manzoni. The piazza bustled with activity, as many contradaioi had just finished lunch at the *sede* and were downing the last of their wine on the front steps of the Basilica. I asked a nearby Montonaiola to clarify the location of the benediction ceremony. "It's there," she said, pointing to the tiny Oratorio. "But *you* can't go in."

² Alan Dundes and Alessandro Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza: An Interpretation of the Palio of Siena* (Berkeley Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 96.

I told her I understood and thanked her. I sensed it was not a good time to ask interview questions. Making myself as unobtrusive as possible, I observed the scene from a nearby bench. Soon two Montonaioli appeared at a side door of the Oratorio and began admitting *contradaioli*. Some were stopped and turned away. Another nearby Montonaiolo explained to me that only certain members of the *contrada*—those who had been especially active in volunteer work that year—would be permitted to enter due to very limited seating.

I joined the large crowd gathered outside the main door, eager to catch a glimpse of the horse and jockey as they arrived. Soon the crowd was being ushered into the church, and I was swept in with them—what luck! The overflow was allowed to crowd into the side galleys of the vestibule. The two *contrada* officials packed us in like sardines and made it very clear that we were not to spill into the main aisle, for the horse would soon arrive. Besides myself, a few foreigners were among the crowd, one of whom—a non-*senese* Italian—was filming with a video camera. When several middle-aged Montonaiole complained, one of the *contrada* officials told him to put it away: “Registrazione vietato.” (“Recording forbidden.”)

“Sì, sì,” he replied, turning his camera to photograph mode. He started snapping pictures, (as many of the other attendees were doing) and this time the *contrada* worker put his hand over the lens. “Vietato,” he growled, losing patience. The Italian explained that he was just taking pictures, but the Montonaiolo insisted he put it away. Not wanting to lose his place in the Oratorio (there were still at least a hundred people waiting outside), he conceded, and tucked the camera under his arm. The middle-aged Montonaiole looked at him with pursed lips.

After the dust had settled, the Italian furtively passed his camera to his wife, who was standing behind him in the crowd. One of the Montonaiole exploded: “I saw you! I saw you! Put it away or I’ll tell! You will have to leave!” The woman quickly shoved the camera into her bag, and raised her hands in surrender.

Within a few minutes, the contrada officials hushed the crowds both inside and outside the chapel. “Arriva, arriva.” (“He’s coming, he’s coming.”) The distant sound of a *tamburino* became closer, and soon a small delegation of costumed *contradaio*—those who would participate in the *corteo storico* later that evening—appeared at the steps of the chapel. The *tamburino* closed his cadence, and the members of the delegation turned their gazes expectantly back down the hill.

At least ten more minutes passed, and the crowd became restless in the stifling heat. Finally, the horse could be heard approaching the church. “Shhhhhhhhh!” was heard all around, and a reverent silence fell over the chapel. The horse’s first step inside the building hit the marble with a startling clatter. The *barbaresco* led him up the center aisle to the altar, followed closely by the *capitano*, *priore*, and pink-costumed *fantino*. The contrada priest led the congregation in a solemn *Ave Maria* and then recited a prayer asking God to protect the horse and rider from danger through the intercession of St. Anthony and *La Madre del Buon Consiglio* (the Madonna of Good Counsel, patron saint of the Valdimontone contrada). The congregation remained intensely silent at the end of the ceremony as the horse was led outside. Following close behind was the tiny Sardinian³ *fantino*, who fairly floated as he walked arm in arm with the *capitano* and *priore*, feet barely touching the floor. A middle-aged Montonaiola stepped into the aisle

³ Most of the jockeys in the race are from Sardinia or the area around Grosseto.

and firmly cupped the bewildered jockey's face in her hands. "*Forza*," she whispered, tears streaming down her face. The *capitano* politely extracted the jockey from her embrace, and the three of them descended the Oratorio's front steps. The Montonaiola tearfully waved her *fazzoletto* after them, as if bidding farewell to a soldier going to battle.

Horse and jockey had barely left the church when the congregation began to sing *Advocata Senensium* (musical example 5) in a hushed and devout tone. After the words "in sempiterna saecula," a startling unison cry of "Pe- Pe- Péoro!" (replacing the "Amen") echoed in the tiny chapel. A loud bass voice called out the first line of *Per forza e per amore*, and the standard two-tiered response followed: the men joined in on the second line, followed by the women on the third. Cries of "Forza! Forza!" and thunderous applause echoed all around as a *tamburino* began his cadence to lead the *contradaioli* out of the chapel. Within the space of only a few seconds, the reverent ceremony had turned into a cacophonous and irreverent victory rally.

Advocata Senensium

Maria mater Gratiae

Mater misericordiae

Tu nos ab hoste protege

Et mortis hora suscipe.

Advocate of Siena

Maria, mother of grace

Mother of mercy

You protect us from the enemy

And receive us in the hour of death.

Iesu tibi sit gloria

Qui natus es de Virgine

Cum patre et almo spirito

*In sempiterna saecula, Amen.**

Jesus to you is the glory

You born of the Virgin

With the father and the nourishing spirit

In the everlasting age, Amen.

* The "Amen" is often omitted and replaced with the *contrada*'s battle call.

MUSICAL EXAMPLE 5. *Advocata Senensium*

Advocata Senensium

Ma - ri - a ma - ter gra - ti - ae

Ma - ter mi - se - ri - cor - diae Tu nos ab ho - ste pro - te - ge

Et mor - tis ho - ra su - sci - pe Ie - su ti - bi sit glo - ria

Qui na - tus es de Vir - gi - ne Cum Pa - tre et al - mo spi - ri - tu

In sem - pi - ter - na sae - cu - la *A - men.

The benediction of the Palio race horses in the churches of each contrada is the most obvious example of the mixture of sacred and secular that defines the Palio. The race, as most foreigners are surprised to find out, is run in honor of the Virgin Mary. Indeed, the very Palio banner bears an image of the Madonna, and each contrada prays to Mary for victory.⁴ Musically, secular folk songs infiltrate sacred ceremonies such as the

⁴ Baldi laughed as he explained to me, “Each contrada thinks they are the only ones praying to the Madonna!” Franco Baldi, in discussion with the author, Chiesa di San Sebastiano Martire della Contrada della Selva, August 15, 2007.

benediction of the horses. Additionally, sacred music itself may be profaned by its performance in a traditionally secular style, as in the following situation.

The July 2007 race was slow to get started. As dictated by Palio rules, the first nine horses (in this case eight, since Chiocciola's horse had been injured in the first *prova*) must line up at the outset in the exact order in which they were drawn. The final horse, who gets a running start from the outside edge of the track, can only begin when all the other horses are in their proper positions. This whole process usually takes quite some time—usually more than half an hour, sometimes lasting until after sunset—and there are usually false starts, which are signaled by the firing of the *mortaretto* cannon. In that event, all horses return to the starting line, where the process begins anew. In extreme cases, a new line-up order will be called by the mayor.

Although the horses and *fantini* are able to practice this routine during the *prove*, stakes are much higher on the day of the actual Palio. The common practice of drugging the horses with stimulants causes the horses to be extremely nervous and skittish.⁵ Depending on the exact order of the horses—especially the proximity of enemy or alliance pairs—there may be attempts to edge an enemy out of position in the line-up or last-minute *partiti* negotiations.⁶ Whatever the reason, the jockeys lined up their horses for the July Palio with great difficulty.

I stood in the center of the piazza, and as the race started thousands of people revolved in unison to follow the path of the horses around the track. Oca's Fedora Saura, the lone white horse, took an early lead. On the final lap, however, Nicchio's

⁵ Dundes and Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza*, 98.

⁶ These last-minute negotiations have become more infrequent since advances in video technology: television close-ups can easily reveal the treachery of a *fantino* to watchful *contrada*ioi.

Dostoevskij closed in as both jockeys madly beat their horses with *nerbi* (whips). Within a few meters of the end, the two horses were nearly even, but it appeared that Oca's white horse pulled ahead slightly just as they crossed the finish line.

Ocaioli jumped from their bleachers onto the track, and those in the center of the piazza leaped over the fences to surround the victorious horse and rider, and to claim the red Palio banner. Their elation was short-lived, however: *senesi* and tourists alike gasped collectively as the flag of the victorious contrada was brandished from the Palazzo Comunale: it was Nicchio.

A Nicchiaiolo near me, who had collapsed onto the cobblestones in despair, raised his tear-stained face to see the dark blue flag of his contrada waving from the window. After a moment of disbelief, he screamed in joy, leaping up to join his comrades heading toward the Palio. Two mobs, one green and one blue, wrestled over the bright red banner. The image of the Madonna lurched from side to side as the two clans played tug-of-war.

As we watched this drama play out, my friends and I expressed confusion: it seemed clear to us that Oca had won, even if by the smallest of margins. We concluded that the judges in the Palazzo Comunale must have seen a close-up on their television screens that revealed the true winner.

Then, another gasp from the crowd: the Nicchio flag had been retracted! Perplexed, the crowd watched the Palazzo expectantly. After a few moments, a Palio official hastily mounted the Oca flag outside the window. The mob of Ocaioli made a final effort to extract the Palio from the grasp of the Nicchiaioli, yelling "Guarda la

bandiera!” (“Look at the flag!”) Triumphant, they marched to the Chiesa di Provenzano with their trophy.

As a mass of Ocaioli entered the small church, they began to sing *Advocata Senensium*. While the song is usually sung in long chant-like phrases, this rendition sounded as if it were in 3/8 time after the incipit line, with heavy accents on the downbeat of each measure (musical example 6). In addition, the Ocaioli did not use the hushed, reverent vocal production usually reserved for this devotional song. Instead, they *yelled* with the cocky tone normally used for belting out the folk songs in the Campo.

Falassi describes the relationship between secular and sacred, as well as other contrasting concepts in Palio culture, in terms of dyadic relationships: “The ambiguity of the Palio pageant, which conveys signs of both cooperation and competitions, solidarity and conflict, the sacred and the profane, communal pride and antagonistic factiousness, is solved by the tumultuous horse race.”⁷ First, I don’t view any tension being “solved” through the race. Certainly the victors experience a release of tension when their contrada wins, but that victory in turn spurs renewed antagonism, alliances, negotiation, and plans for the next Palio race. The race itself is therefore only a very brief moment in the cyclic life of contradaioi, a life in which the tensions Falassi describes are constantly renewed and perpetuated.

⁷ Alessandro Falassi, “Palio Pageant: Siena's Everlasting Republic,” *The Drama Review* 29 (1985): 89.

MUSICAL EXAMPLE 6. Post-victory performance of *Advocata Senensium* by Ocaioli.

Advocata Senensium

Ma - ri - a - ma - ter - gra - ti - ae

Ma - ter mi - se - ri - cor - diae

Tu nos ab ho - ste - pro - te - ge Et

mor - tis ho - ra su - sci - pe

Ie - su ti - bi - sit - glo - ria

Qui na - tus es de Vir - gi - ne

Cum Pa - tre et al - mo - spi - ri - tu In

sem - pi - ter - na sae - cu - la Pa - Pa - Pa - pe - ro!

Second, rather than viewing the sacred/secular as a simple dichotomy, I prefer to apply Slobin's concept of "layering." While the tension between sacred and secular has always existed in the Palio's history—after all, in simplest terms it is a competitive and sometimes violent sporting event run in honor one of the most important religious figures in the Roman Catholic belief system—I would propose that in recent decades this sacred/secular relationship has shifted. Reflecting a Europe-wide trend toward secularism, many Italians have abandoned traditional Roman Catholic beliefs, if not traditional rituals. Indeed, while some Italians report going to church occasionally, they may be described as "cultural Catholics"—those who maintain some rituals (such as going to Mass, celebrating Catholic holidays) but admit to not subscribing to most of the Church's beliefs.

In Siena this shift is well-illustrated by generational differences; older informants (those older than fifty or sixty) generally reported viewing the Palio as a religious event, whereas younger (those in their forties or younger) participants tended to focus on the importance of the Palio as a sporting event. While younger participants take part in the remnant rituals of a more traditional Roman Catholic culture, the dominant viewpoint is that of the secularist. One wonders what practices will emerge in the future, as Siena continues to adapt to an influx of immigrants, many of whom come from non-Christian backgrounds. I expect the *senese* will continue to adapt and change their rituals, as they have done throughout the centuries.

Chapter 6

Rompe un grido: Voice and Gender Identity in Group Song Practice

*Sempre alta la testa di gloria,
rompe un grido dai petti e dal cuor...*

Heads always high in glory,
a cry breaks from chests and hearts...

- from the Giraffa anthem

Historically, the Palio has been a male-dominated event. Although female participation in the Palio has changed somewhat in the past century, male and female roles are still very different. The discrepancy between male and female participation in contrada government is especially pronounced.

The *seggio* (contrada government) is made up of several officials. The *priore* (called the *governatore* in the Oca contrada) is the administrative head of each contrada, as well as the delegate to the *magistrato*, the seventeen-member body which makes decisions about Palio rules. Additional offices are the *vicario* (assistant to the *priore*), *camarlengo* (treasurer), *bilanciere* (bookkeeper), and *economo* (the officer who maintains an inventory of contrada possessions). The *collegio* is an advisory board within each contrada made up of all its past *priori*.

All positions are elected by the *consiglio generale* (made up of all the members of a contrada) and are traditionally all male. In recent decades these positions have been opened to women, although today most contrada officials are male. Currently the only female *priore* is Anna Carli of Valdimontone. Other less important positions, called

deputati (deputies), oversee various facets of contrada life and are now commonly held by women.

Although the *seggio* makes administrative decisions most of the year, during the days of the Palio the contrada becomes in effect a dictatorship, ruled by the *capitano*, whose primary responsibility is to secure victory in the Palio through negotiation of *partiti*. Two or more *mangini* act as assistants to the *capitano* in his diplomacy, arranging meetings and assisting in negotiations with other contrade. As is the case with *priori*, female *capitane* are rare. Currently the only *capitana* is Maria Aurora Misciattelli of the Torre. After I met Simonetta Losi, who introduced herself as *capitana* of the Onda contrada, I discovered that Onda maintains a parallel female administration which is solely titular.

With the exception of two females,¹ *fantini* have always been exclusively male, although jockeys are regarded somewhat as “outsiders.” Women are prohibited from participating in the *comparsa* as drummers or flag-throwers. As mentioned in chapter 1, only in the past fifty years have women participated in the Banda Città del Palio, and they are still greatly outnumbered in the band’s membership.²

The role of women in the contrada, therefore, is limited mostly to their activities within the *gruppo donne* (women’s group). The primary responsibility of this group is

¹ The legendary female jockey Virginia Tacci raced in the August 1581 Palio for the Drago contrada. I was told by several informants that Tacci disguised herself as a man in order to ride in the race. However, this appears to be a legend: archival letters and verses dedicated to Tacci indicate that she participated as a woman, with full knowledge on the part of the Palio officials. See Elizabeth MacKenzie Tobey, “The Palio In Italian Renaissance Art, Thought, And Culture,” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2005), 102-105. Giuseppe Pietri’s 1928 opera *Rompicollo* (with libretto by *senese* playwright Luigi Bonelli and Ferdinando Paolieri) tells the story of a fictional female jockey who wins a victory for the Selva contrada when its jockey was too intoxicated to race. Bonelli’s own daughter, Rosanna Bonelli, later rode in the August 1957 Palio for the Aquila contrada and recently released her autobiography. Rosanna Bonelli Flamini, *Io, Rompicollo: storia della donna che ha corso il Palio di Siena*, (Siena: Terre di Sienna Editrice, 2007).

² Luciano Bianchi, in discussion with the author, Fortezza Medicea, August 17, 2007

organizing the recreational and educational activities of the *gruppo piccoli* (children's group) and the *gruppo giovani* (youth group). In addition, they organize contrada banquets and repair uniforms for the *fantini* and the *comparsa*. These duties fulfill traditional female roles: child care and other "domestic" duties.

The women I interviewed, ranging in age from nineteen to sixty-something, were very matter-of-fact about the different roles that men and women play in contrada life and in the Palio. While to American women this imbalance may seem unfair, to the *senesi* it seems perfectly natural. One of Figliola's informants summarized it well: "It happens that men and women at times have different roles, no?... it's obvious that differences in character, behavior, etc. exist between men and women. And these differences appear also within the contrada... There are jobs that, traditionally, are *da uomo* [for men], while others are more *da donna* [for women]."³

Viewing the Palio as a battle or war was a common reason used to explain the different roles of men and women in the Palio. The *priore* is often described as the "peace-time" leader, while the *capitano* is viewed as the "war-time" leader, much like a commander-in-chief. Other war-like elements include uniforms worn by the bellicose contrade, and the similarity of the *chiarine* fanfare to a battle call. Elisa Loffredo explained: "The Palio is a war, and it's men who go to war."⁴

Until recent decades, women did not participate in contrada street processions, perhaps the most important public demonstration of contrada solidarity and identity.⁵ In

³ Interview with 33-year-old Simonetta Losi from the Onda contrada in Figliola, "Space, society and self," 55.

⁴ Elisa Loffredo, in discussion with the author, Chiostro del Carmine, August 18, 2007.

⁵ Franco Baldi, in discussion with the author, Chiesa di San Sebastiano Martire della Contrada della Selva, August 15, 2007.

fact, in the recent memory of many *contrada*ioi, women did not participate in *any* evening *contrada* activities because they simply did not leave the house at that time of day: “The women never used to participate; after 9 p.m., the women never used to go out. When I was a boy (early 1960s), you never used to see women in the street at night after dinner. So the Palio, in this respect alone, had far fewer participants.”⁶ While young unmarried women now participate heartily in the life of the *società* and public processions, married women still report attending the *società* and other events much less frequently because of responsibilities at home.⁷

A striking characteristic of the *contrada* street processions is the order in which the *contrada*ioi congregate. A given parade is led by the *barbaresco* and horse (only during the days of the Palio, otherwise they are replaced by a single *alfiere*). The crowd follows and is comprised of adult men, then adolescent males, followed by adolescent females and finally adult females. Baldi says that men have “the role of defending the horse and the honor of their own colors.”⁸ Men and women also have different roles musically, specifically in the singing of *Per forza e per amore* in these *contrada* street processions.

A male repertory of traditional Italian music is well-documented, and is described as “two-voice parallel third structure, enriched by octave doublings, drones, or additional harmony notes. Generally there is a solo opening before the entry of the chorus, which is loud, emphatic, and slow... [it] is directed towards emphasizing the social and cohesive

⁶ Interview with 40-year-old Alfredo Taconi of the Nicchio *contrada* in Arthur L. Figliola, “Space, society and self in Siena, Italy: A study of community, identity and social change in a small, southern European city” (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2002), 66.

⁷ The absence of adult women from the *tratta* ceremony was noted in chapter 3.

⁸ Franco Baldi, in e-mail correspondence with the author, March 28, 2008.

value of the simple act of singing together.”⁹ In contrast, the female repertory in Italy has consisted of the ballad, often narrative in nature with texts on the subject of male-female relationships. This female repertory consisted of one- or two-voice singing and was performed in the context of collective work with a singing style described as “tense and high-pitched.”¹⁰ One of its primary functions was educational, reinforcing traditional gender roles.

The performance custom of *Per forza e per amore* clearly falls into the category of traditional male song practice in Italy. As described in chapter 3, one or two song leaders belt out the first line of the song, followed by all the men on the second line, and finally the women on the third. In this way, the women not only follow the men physically, but also musically in the singing of *Per forza e per amore*. In another sense, the song practice mirrors the delayed participation of women historically in the *contrada* processions.

Despite the presence of intra-*contrada* tensions described in chapter 3, *anima nostra* (our soul), or the ideal of solidarity, is emphasized in public processions. To this end, the song practice has great cohesive value. The pressure for conformity, however, has manifested itself in an unnatural vocal production on the part of female singers. One of the most striking characteristics about the group song practice is the belted “chest voice” used by the women, sung on pitches well below the natural female vocal range. The male song leader chooses the starting pitch, and although the women could hypothetically join an octave above, they choose to match the men in unison.

⁹ Tullia Magrini, “Italy: Traditional Music,” *Grove Music Online* ed. Laura Macy [Accessed 2 April 2008], <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Additionally, they echo the strident vocal production (as a voice teacher I would describe it as “pitched yelling”) of the male singers.

Intrigued by this phenomenon, I asked several of my female informants to sing the tune of *Per forza e per amore* during conversations about the music of the Palio. Without exception, they sang the tune significantly higher (sometimes more than an octave) than the standard range used for group performance. They also used the “head voice” vocal register, a less strident vocal technique used at higher pitch levels, or they mixed the head and chest registers.

Voice is a significant marker of personal identity: listeners can determine age and gender with surprising accuracy based on the range and timbre of a voice.¹¹ Vocal range is linked to gender physiologically (the average female vocal tract is much shorter than the average male’s and therefore produces higher pitch), but is also influenced by learned behavior (socially-prescribed vocal roles). In a culture where female roles are rigid, it is significant that the pressure for conformity in the song practice of *Per forza e per amore* (manifested as a sort of “sonic transgendering” by female singers) trumps the traditional female “vocal role,” that is, higher pitched singing. The value placed on *anima nostra*, a show of unconditional loyalty to one’s *contrada*, is of paramount importance.

Sugarman asks “how are asymmetrical power relations, as gender relations often are, reproduced from one generation to the next, even with the willing complicity of those who are subordinate?”¹² I have already explored how music is an important educational

¹¹ Engineering conglomerate Siemens AG recently announced the development of voice recognition software that will be used to sort callers to customer service centers by age and gender in order to target certain demographics for product sales.

¹² Jane Sugarman, *Engendering Song: Singing and Subjectivity at Prespa Albanian Weddings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 31.

tool in passing down Palio traditions to younger generations (see chapter 2), but this mechanism extends beyond the level of outward physical identity (i.e. colors, symbols) to reinforce underlying social structures and power relations, including traditional gender roles. In *senese* ritual the absence of a separate female vocal identity in performance practice reflects, and indeed perpetuates, the subordinate and “behind-the-scenes” role of women in *senese* culture. Sugarman asserts the “power of musical performance to shape [lived experience of gender], often encouraging members of any gendered group to regard their position within society as unquestionable.”¹³ While this is undeniably the dominant practice, an isolated musical performance by the women of the Pantera contrada seems to suggest that perhaps a unique female song practice is emerging.

During the course of my thesis revisions, I would often listen again to the hours of field recordings I made during the summer of 2007. At times this was to clarify a specific point, but occasionally I simply clicked on a random sound file to help transport myself mentally back to Siena. Recently I came across a recording that, despite the careful labeling of my sound files, I had somehow previously missed. I usually attended events with two sound recorders, one which I kept with me at all times for interviews and another which was fixed in a central location to record ambient singing. This second recorder had captured an interesting musical moment at the Pantera banquet the night before the July Palio.

Palio banquets, like the Palio processions, are highly segregated by age and gender into four general groups: married men, married women (with their young children

¹³ Ibid., 33.

when applicable), young unmarried men, and young unmarried women.¹⁴ Rarely is a nuclear family seated together at these events. Because the Pantera contrada has no large piazza within its territory that can be used for large gatherings, the Palio banquets take place on Via San Quirico.¹⁵ Long tables are lined up end to end the entire length of the steeply inclined street, making the traditional segregation especially conspicuous; at the July 2007 banquet the married women and their children were seated at least fifty yards from the married men.

Although the group of young men and the group of young women were seated adjacent to each other at the Pantera banquet, there was little interaction between the two. Wine flowed freely from bottles with labels commemorating the previous year's victory, and after several hours of raucous drinking songs, most of the young women had become quite intoxicated.

While I was conducting interviews in another area, my second sound recorder captured the version of *Per forza e per amore* seen in musical example 7.

¹⁴ Certainly there are exceptions in cases that contradaioi do not fit into any of these groups. For example, an unmarried woman in her thirties or older may sit with the married women because they are closer in age. Dating couples who are teenagers or in their twenties or thirties generally separate to join their respective gender groups; dating couples in their late thirties or older generally remain together, seated on the periphery of the group of married men.

¹⁵ Via San Quirico is a narrow side street traveled mostly by pedestrians; for large victory banquets the Panterini obtain the permit required to close the wider adjacent Piano dei Mantellini to motor traffic.

MUSICAL EXAMPLE 7. *Per forza e per amore* with harmony added by female singers

Per forza e per amore

The musical score consists of eight staves. The first four staves show the vocal line in treble clef with lyrics underneath. The last four staves show the piano accompaniment in treble clef. The lyrics are: "Il no - stro ca - pi - ta - no sem - pre ce lo _____ di - ce - va d'a - go - sto _____ si vin - ce - va d'a - go - sto _____ si vin - ce - va! Il no - stro ca - pi - ta - no sem - pre ce lo di - ce - va d'a - go - sto _____ si vin - ce - va e la cor - sa si fa - rà! Pa - pa - pa - pe - ra!"

*Il nostro capitano
sempre ce lo diceva
d'agosto si vinceva,
d'agosto si vinceva!*

Our captain
always told us
that in August we would win,
that in August we would win!

*Il nostro capitano
sempre ce lo diceva
d'agosto si vinceva,
e la corsa si farà!*

Our captain
always told us
that in August we would win,
and we will run the race!

While the text does affirm male dominance (“our captain [masculine form] told us...”) and the song itself is the most iconic in the *senese* male song practice repertoire, this performance is significant in that the women not only began on a pitch higher than that usually sung by their male counterparts (g’ rather than c’-e’), but they harmonized upward rather than downward, therefore creating a uniquely female performance practice. One must wonder if this assertion of a distinct female “voice”—albeit the only occurrence I witnessed in the course of all my fieldwork—is the genesis of an emerging female song practice in Palio ritual, a practice through which *senese* women are transforming their own identity within the Palio hierarchy.

Chapter 7

Un inno di passion: Contrada as Patria

*Ora corriam,
ora cantiam
un inno di passion...*

Now we run,
now we sing
a hymn of passion...

- from the Civetta anthem

An initiative to create a repertoire of official contrada *inni* (hymns or anthems), led by the local RAI radio station in Siena, began in the 1960's, and by 1965 each contrada had commissioned an author and composer (sometimes one and the same) to write its anthem.¹ The contrade drew on a relatively small pool of poets and composers; Carlo Sottili wrote both the text and the music for Aquila and Nicchio, as well as the music for Drago and Valdimontone. (Complete anthem texts with English translations, as well as a listing of poets and composers, are found in appendix 1.) Giovanni Bonnoli composed the music for both Chiocciola and Onda, while Ezio Felici penned the texts for both Lupa and Onda. Therefore, an anthem may not necessarily have been written by a member of its corresponding contrada. The practice of hiring outsiders to write these pieces is likely a function of the relatively small size of contrade; perhaps many contrade did not have suitable poets or composers within their ranks. However, one must wonder if the Nicchio and Valdimontone contrade were aware that their composer was also working for their sworn enemy.

¹ Luciano Bianchi, in discussion with the author, Fortezza Medicea, August 17, 2007.

After the *inni* were composed and approved by each *contrada*, the maestro of the Banda Città del Palio, Mario Neri, arranged each composition for band instruments. In June 1965, the seventeen anthems were debuted in a joint concert of the Banda Città del Palio and the civic choir, and the composition and performance of the Giraffa *inno* was awarded a special prize.² In 2007, Giraffa in turn organized a similar event, in which a chorus from each *contrada* performed their anthem with the Banda.

The *inni* are composed as marches in 4/4, 3/4, or 6/8 meter, and are performed most often in the context of parades, either during the days of the Palio or on a *contrada*'s patron saint day. In contrast to the shifting meter of *Per forza e per amore*, the steady beat of these stately, militaristic marches lend themselves well to group procession. The hymns are sung less often than folk songs like *Per forza e per amore*, primarily because they are usually sung by a *contrada*'s official choir³ (accompanied by instrumentalists hired from the Banda). Therefore the formal conception of the anthems is reflected in a more formal performance practice.

Città-patria, a term that Figliola translates as “city-fatherland” rather than “city-state,”⁴ lies at the core of Italian identity. While this concept of identity likely originated in the republics of the Italian peninsula during the Middle Ages, it is still very much in the consciousness of modern Italians—after all, Italy the modern state is still relatively young. Sentiments of national pride are far overshadowed by an emphasis on local and regional identity. Dickie argues that although Italy was unified in 1860, the previous

² Ibid.

³ The official *contrada* choirs vary in their level of organization and preparation. Some rehearse weekly and, in addition to their Palio-related duties, give concerts of general choral repertoire; still others are hastily assembled the day of a given event with no rehearsal.

⁴ Arthur L. Figliola, “Space, society and self in Siena, Italy: A study of community, identity and social change in a small, southern European city” (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2002), 51.

“‘disunity’ of Italian history, or better, its open-endedness and internal diversity, continue to this day.”⁵

A typical Italian is far more likely to describe himself as *fiorentino* (from the city of Florence), *milanese* (from the city of Milan), or *calabrese* (from the region of Calabria) than he is to describe himself as *italiano*, and long-standing regional and civic rivalries (such as that between Siena and Florence) persist. These micro-identities become even more specific among the *senesi* where identity is primarily based on contrada affiliation. *Senesi* commonly say phrases such as “I am from the Oca,” or “I am a Montonaiola” when introducing themselves to strangers. Just as many Italians may speak with more enthusiasm about their city’s soccer team than about an upcoming national election, the passion with which *senesi* discuss the Palio contrasts with their general apathy for Italian politics.

Certainly the parallels between contrada and state are striking (Falassi prefers to call the contrade “cities-within-the-city”⁶). Many contrade have bestowed explicitly nationalistic titles upon themselves, such as *Imperiale* (Imperial) and *Sovrana* (Sovereign). Falassi documented contradaoli from the Istrice contrada singing the following version of *Per forza e per amore*, which explicitly refers to the contrada as “nation,” in 1978:⁷

<i>Non siamo una contrada</i>	We are not a contrada
<i>noi siamo una nazione</i>	we are a nation
<i>siamo dall’Istricione</i>	we are from the great Istrice
<i>siamo dall’Istricione.</i>	we are from the great Istrice.

⁵ John Dickie, “The Notion of Italy,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture*, ed. Zygmunt G. Baranski and Rebecca J. West (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 18.

⁶ Alessandro Falassi, “Palio Pageant: Siena’s Everlasting Republic,” *The Drama Review* 29 (1985): 82.

⁷ Alessandro Falassi, *Per forza e per amore: I canti popolari del Palio di Siena* (Milan: Casa Editrice Valentino Bompiani, 1980).

<i>Non siamo una contrada</i>	We are not a contrada
<i>noi siamo una nazione</i>	we are a nation
<i>siamo dall'Istria</i>	we are from the great Istria
<i>ci dovete rispettarla</i>	you must respect us.

As with all states, contrada identity is strongly tied to its physical territory, demonstrated by the tradition of placing dirt from within the contrada's borders under the hospital bed when a *contrada* gives birth, as well as the intolerance for enemy *contrada* within one's territory. Each contrada has its own government, economic system,⁸ flag and totem, religious authority (its own priest, parish, and patron saint), common history, and even cuisine.⁹ While contrada-state parallels abound, *contrade* have no political sovereignty (although within the context of the Palio race, *contrade* have complete authority over their affairs) and are therefore not states. However, the term "nation," while often used synonymously with "state," may be used to describe a group of individuals with cultural ties whose members "care about their identity as members of that nation."¹⁰ *Contrada* care immensely about their identity as members of a *contrada*.

How does Palio ritual fit into this *contrada-as-nation* analogy? As discussed previously, many *contrada* view the Palio as a war or battle. Indeed, *contrade* may have originated as *senese* military companies, and precursors to the Palio horse race include the *pugna*, violent and often deadly group boxing matches which took place in

⁸ Contrada government levies mandatory taxes, although enforcement is difficult. In addition, many *contrada* frequent businesses outside their own territory only when absolutely necessary.

⁹ Many *contrade* publish cookbooks with recipes typical of their territories; some recipes are even named or were invented in honor of a specific Palio victory, horse, or *fantino*.

¹⁰ Nenad Miscevic, "Nationalism," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2008 Edition)* ed. Edward N. Zalta [Accessed 15 November 2008], <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/nationalism/>>.

the Piazza del Campo during the Middle Ages.¹¹ In this sense, a single Palio race may be viewed as a battle (in a greater unending war) between seventeen warring “nations.” This comparison is problematic in that the war can never be won—only the individual battle, or race.

Alternatively (and more pacifistically), the Palio race could be likened to the Olympic Games, in which great nations come together to compete. The *corteo storico* is similar to the “Parade of Nations” which constitutes part of the Olympic opening ceremonies. Each participant group processes into the arena (in this case the Piazza del Campo), proudly displaying its colors and flag. As the Olympic Games, the Palio is rife with use of performance-enhancing drugs,¹² bribery, and terrorism. Again, however, this analogy can only go so far. No one “nation” hosts the Palio; the event is held in the neutral territory of the Campo. Additionally, in contrast to the numerous Olympic contests in which (presumably) patriotic athletes compete, the Palio is a single, ninety-second event and its “athletes”—the horses or the jockeys—are simply agents paid to participate.

However loose the contrada-nation parallels, the contrada *inni* bear a strong resemblance to national anthems—“the equivalent in music of a country’s motto, crest or flag.”¹³ Themes of praise, adoration, and admiration of one’s contrada abound in the anthem texts.

¹¹ Alan Dundes and Alessandro Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza: An Interpretation of the Palio of Siena* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 2.

¹² *Capitani* often give their horses either a *beverone* (big drink) or *bomba* (bomb) to either calm or stimulate them before the race, although doing so is expressly prohibited by Palio rules. Ibid., 98-99.

¹³ “National anthems.” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, ed. Laura Macy [Accessed 10 November 2008], <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>>.

The refrain of Aquila's hymn describes how the other contrade admire its mascot,
the Eagle:

<i>Aquila vola, chi di te più in alto ancor potrebbe andar... Quasi ammaliato, restan tutte le contrade ad ammirar...</i>	Aquila flies, who among you could go higher still... Almost charmed, the other contrade remain to admire...
---	--

Likewise, Nicchiaioli sing of the admiration their symbol inspires:

<i>O Nicchio, Nicchio bello, col tuo costume, desti ammirazion... I tuoi contradaioi hanno passione e si fanno rispettar...</i>	O Nicchio, beautiful Nicchio, with your costume, you awaken admiration... Your contradaioi have passion and they make themselves respected...
---	--

Meanwhile, the Drago contrada asserts that all *senese* are jealous of their contrada:

<i>Contrada nostra sei tanto grande tutti t'invidian nella Città...</i>	Our contrada, you are so grand everyone in the city is envious...
---	--

Many contrade cite important historical events or notable contradaioi in their anthem texts, as is common in national anthems. The Giraffa contrada sings of the “grande Salvani,” who was leader of the *senese* troops in the Battle of Montaperti and was said to have lived in Giraffa territory. Additionally, they use explicitly nationalistic adjectives for their contrada: “regal, imperial, and republican.”

<i>Giraffa Giraffa del grande Salvani. Fra tutti i rioni il più grande sei tu. Giraffa Giraffa di storici allori tu vantì l'onore reale, imperiale, repubblicana ancor...</i>	Giraffa Giraffa of the great Salvani. Among all the territories you are the greatest. Giraffa Giraffa you boast the honor of historic laurels, regal, imperial, republican still.
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Chiocciola's text brags of the number of Palio wins, and therefore the verse is slightly altered each time the contrada secures another victory:

<i>Cinquantaquattresimo Palio che abbiamo,</i>	The fifty-third Palio that we have,
<i>Caro teniamo,</i>	we hold dear,
<i>caro teniamo</i>	we hold dear,
<i>ed ai sessanta</i>	and to sixty
<i>or t'avvicina:</i>	now we get closer:
<i>o Chiocciolina,</i>	oh Chiocciolina,
<i>o Chiocciolina!</i>	oh Chiocciolina!

The Oca text is the most overtly war-like, describing its *fantino* (who is not afraid to use his whip) and horse as “beast and warrior:”

<i>Di Fontebranda fiera e guerriera,</i>	Of Fontebranda beast and warrior,
<i>siamo gli araldi senza timor,</i>	we are heralds without fear,
<i>siamo la Contrada la più battagliaiera,</i>	we are the most war-like contrada,
<i>forte col nerbo e salda nel cuor.</i>	strong with the <i>nerbo</i> and firm at heart.

However, the Tartuca likens its own *contradaioli* to an army marching towards the Campo, where honor (victory) will be secured:

<i>In alto Tartuca</i>	Tartuca, aloft
<i>col tuo valor</i>	with your colors
<i>marceranno le schiere compatte</i>	march in tight rank
<i>verso il Campo dell'onor.</i>	towards the Campo of honor.

Much like the alternate texts of *Per forza e per amore*, the *contrada* hymn texts vividly describe the physical territory, symbols, flags, and colors of each *contrada*. Nearly every hymn text makes mention of colors or flags, such as the following verse from the Valdimontone anthem:

<i>È il bianco rosso e giallo</i>	It is white, red, and yellow
<i>spiegato al primo sole,</i>	unfolded to the first sun,
<i>che del Palio di Siena è lo splendor.</i>	that is the splendor of Siena's Palio.

Selva not only sings of its colors, but it refers to its reputation as the “friendly” *contrada*, pointing out that all of Siena will rejoice for its victory:

<i>O Selva, Selvina va!</i>	O Selva, little Selva go!
<i>il Palio si vincerà</i>	you will win the Palio
<i>con l'arancione il bianco e il verde</i>	with the great orange, white, and green
<i>ogni cuore sarà</i>	every heart will be
<i>in festa nella città.</i>	celebrating in the city.

And, again as in the folk song texts, the contrade define their physical borders musically by highlighting important territorial boundaries or landmarks. The following excerpt from the Pantera hymn refers to the “Two Doors,” two large arches that are a major landmark in the contrada:

<i>Di Letizia ogni volto sorrida.</i>	In happiness every face smiles.
<i>Le “Due Porte” s’adornano a festa!</i>	The “Two Doors” dress themselves for a party!
<i>La Pantera non dorme s’è desta:</i>	The Pantera does not sleep but wakes
<i>la “Madonna del Corvo” la guida!</i>	The Madonna of the Raven guides her!

While the texts of the *inni* and the texts of *Per forza e per amore* serve similar purposes—to highlight the history, symbols, and territory of the contrade—the language used is substantially different. The texts of *Per forza e per amore* use very informal, and sometimes vulgar, language. The hymn texts, on the other hand, are what Baldi describes as “elite.”¹⁴ The *Per forza e per amore* verses were composed spontaneously and collectively, but the hymn texts were composed in formal poetic style by single authors.

However, a less informal performance practice has emerged using snippets of the *inni* music. I observed an alternate text being sung to the incipit musical phrase of Oca’s refrain¹⁵ by members of the Pantera contrada:

¹⁴ Franco Baldi, in discussion with the author, Chiesa di San Sebastiano Martire della Contrada della Selva, August 15, 2007.

¹⁵ Interestingly, I observed Oca’s hymn refrain (with original words) sung quite often by other contrade in informal contexts, probably in part because of its catchy tune but also because of the ambiguousness of the name “Paperone.” In addition to meaning “large duck” (i.e. the Oca), it is also the Italian name for the Disney character Donald Duck and can therefore be sung as a child-like song outside the context of Palio ritual.

Aquilone, Aquilone, tu sei sempre allo sciacquone... Big eagle, big eagle, you are always getting a good rinse.

The use of *sciacquare* (to rinse) in *senese* terminology refers to being purged (see chapter 3) and is highly insulting to Pantera's enemy, the Aquila contrada. Similarly, the Oca contrada often belts out its own version of the final line of Torre's *inno*, singing "sarà sarà la Torre che si purgherà! Ei!" ("it will be, it will be the Torre who purges itself! Hey!"), attempting to drown out the Torraioli who sing the original line "sarà sarà la Torre che trionferà!" ("it will be, it will be the Torre who triumphs!").¹⁶ Thus, even the composed genre of the *inno* has been subject to creative alteration of the *senesi*.

* * *

The remnant, the dominant, and the emerging: in every aspect of Palio tradition, this constant negotiation of tradition and change is evident. As often as they sing of *la storia*, the *senesi* sing of *eternità*, confident that the Palio will endure for centuries to come. Their own willingness to remain flexible and adaptable since the early days of the Palio's history has insured this legacy, and nowhere is this better reflected than in the music of the Palio. From the tumultuous days of the civic band's history, to the sometimes-vulgar improvised lyrics of the rousing folk songs, to the patriotic *inni* which evoke rich history and symbols, and most recently to a small body of original *senese* ballads and an emerging female song practice, the musical thread in the varied tapestry of the Palio's history remains unbroken.

¹⁶ I asked many informants if they remembered how long these parody lyrics had been used, and those that expressed an opinion (some could not recall) believed that these alternate hymn verses sprung up almost immediately after the introduction of the *inno* as a new genre of Palio music. Originally I had hypothesized that perhaps textual improvisation in *Per forza e per amore* had given way to that in the *inni*. However, accounts by many informants corroborate that the practice of creating new lyrics in both folk songs and contrada anthems has died out.

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Appendix 1

Translations of Contrada Anthem Texts

Inno della Nobile Contrada dell'Aquila

*Immensa folla che gremisci piazza
dubbi puoi aver?... se corre l'Aquilon
La sua vittoria è certa perchè ha l'ali
e avanti a tutti sempre resterà.*

*Anche se il Palio è spesso lottato
con un cavallo alato che vuoi far?
È l'Aquilon giallo celeste e nero
primo su tutti vedono arrivar...*

*Aquila vola,
chi di te più in alto ancor potrebbe andar...
Quasi ammaliato, restan tutte le contrade
ad ammirar...
Se tu sei sovrano dell'aria,
della Piazza sarai tu
la più bella e sempre prima,
chi potrà arrivarti più:*

*L'uccello nostro
è il più grosso che nel mondo non ha equal.
Chi combatte col suo rostro
presto vinto nella polvere cadrà!*

*Giubbotto d'or dai simboli imperiali
che ardito sfrecci in dura tenzon,
non puoi temer se anche i più grossi
dettano legge e vogliono fa i padron.*

*Poi viene il giorno che valore vero
di una contrada fulgere già sa.
È l'Aquilon giallo celeste e nero
primo su tutti vedono arrivar...*

*Aquila Vola,
che di te più in alto ancor potrebbe andar...
Quasi ammaliato restan tutte le Contrade
ad ammirar...*

Anthem of the Noble Aquila Contrada

Great crowd that fills the piazza
can you doubt? ...if the great Aquila runs
Its victory is certain because it has wings
and will always finish ahead of the others.

Even if the Palio is often a battle
with a winged horse what can you do?
It is the great Aquila, yellow, blue, and black
that they see arrive before all others...

Aquila flies,
who among you could go higher still...
Almost charmed, the other contrade remain
to admire...
If you are sovereign of the skies,
in the Piazza you will be
the most beautiful and always the first,
who could arrive before:

Our bird
is the biggest in the world and has no equal.
Who fights with its beak
will fall in the dust immediately!

Coat of gold of imperial symbols
which bravely darts in great strain,
you cannot fear even if the greatest
lay down the law and want to be master.

Then comes the day of true valor
of a contrada which already shines.
It is the great Aquila, yellow, blue, and black
that they see arrive before all others...

Aquila flies,
who among you could go higher still...
Almost charmed, the other contrade remain
to admire...

*Se tu sei sovrano dell'aria,
della Piazza sarai tu
la più bella e sempre prima
chi potrà arrivarti più:*

If you are sovereign of the skies,
in the Piazza you will be
the most beautiful and always the first, who
could arrive before:

*L'uccello nostro
è il più grosso che nel mondo non ha egual.
Chi combatte col suo rostro
presto vinto nella polvere cadrà!*

Our bird
is the biggest in the world and has no equal.
Who fights with its beak
will fall in the dust immediately!

Text (and musical setting) by Carlo Sottili

Inno della Nobile Contrada del Bruco

*Viva viva la bella Contrada
che di tutte è più grande e più forte.
Vada fiero chi schiuse le porte
all'impavida sua Nobilità.*

*Gialla e verde bandiera festante
con il blu che ci diè Barbicon.¹
Son colori di gloria e di festa
i colori del nostro Brucon.*

*O Brucone sei più bello
il più forte e luminoso.
Sei Tu solo il vittorioso
tutta Siena fai esultar.*

*Quando il passa il giallo e verde
è una gran dimostrazione.
Questo Bruco è una passione
che fa i cuori innamorar.*

Text by Sergio Ghiselli
(Musical setting by Mario Caciagli)

Anthem of the Noble Bruco Contrada

Long live the beautiful Contrada
which is the greatest and strongest of all.
Proud is the one who opens the doors
to the boldness of its nobility.

Yellow and green its festive flag
with blue that gave us Barbicon.
They are colors of glory and celebration
the colors of our great Bruco.

O great Bruco you are the most beautiful
the strongest and brightest.
Only you the victor
all of Siena you make exalt.

When the yellow and green passes
it is a great demonstration.
This Bruco is a passion
which makes hearts fall in love.

¹ Barbicon was a fourteenth-century political leader who hailed from Bruco's territory. Alessandro Falassi, *Per forza e per amore: I canti popolari del Palio di Siena* (Milan: Casa Editrice Valentino Bompiani, 1980), 36.

Inno della Contrada della Chiocciola

*Viva, viva! Le nostre bandiere
Alla gloria del sole innalziamo
Sciogli al vento, o baldo alfiere
Lo stendardo dei nostri color!
Gloria a Te nostra “Chiocciola” bella!
Di te parla, di Siena, la storia,
sia benigna a te ognora la stella
e ti guidi a nuova vittoria!*

*Cinquantaquattresimo Palio che abbiamo,
Caro teniamo,
caro teniamo
ed ai sessanta
or t'avvicina:
o Chiocciolina,
o Chiocciolina!*

*Suona ovunque di canti e di festa
di San Marco il rione esultante;
dal tuo guscio solleva la testa
e gioisci del nostro gioir.*

*Rosso, giallo e celeste, i colori
del vessillo, che a te è dedicato
son per sempre segnati nei cuori di coloro
che il cuore t'han dato.*

*Cinquantaquattresimo Palio che abbiamo,
Caro teniamo,
caro teniamo
ed ai sessanta
or t'avvicina:
o Chiocciolina,
o Chiocciolina!*

*A te, “Chiocciola” solo pensiamo
quando in Piazza del Campo tu sei
sol per te, sol per te trepidiamo
e invociamo vittoria per te.
Sulla pista vediamo un cavallo:
primo giunge al traguardo veloce,
è guarnito di rosso e di giallo
il tuo nome gridiamo a gran voce!*

Anthem of the Chiocciola Contrada

Long live [Chiocciola]! Our flags
We raise to the glory of the sun
Open to the wind, oh proud *alfiere*
The standard of our colors!
Glory to You our beautiful Chiocciola!
Siena's history speaks of you,
may the star always be kind to you
and guide you again to victory!

The fifty-third Palio that we have,
we hold dear,
we hold dear,
and to sixty
now we get closer:
oh Chiocciolina,
oh Chiocciolina!

Play everywhere of songs and of celebration
the territory of San Marco exalts;
from your shell raise your head
and rejoice in our jubilation.

Red, yellow, and blue, the colors
of the banner, which to you is dedicated
they color the hearts of those
who have dedicated themselves to you.

The fifty-third Palio that we have,
we hold dear,
we hold dear,
and to sixty
now we get closer:
oh Chiocciolina,
oh Chiocciolina!

We only think of you, “Chiocciola”
when you are in the Piazza del Campo
only for you, only for you are we anxious
and we appeal for your victory.
On the track we see a horse:
it is first to quickly reach the finish line,
it is adorned with red and yellow
we loudly shout your name!

*Cinquantaquattreesimo Palio che abbiamo,
Caro teniamo,
caro teniamo
ed ai sessanta
or t'avvicina:
o Chiocciolina,
o Chiocciolina!*

The fifty-third Palio that we have,
we hold dear,
we hold dear,
and to sixty
now we get closer:
oh Chiocciolina,
oh Chiocciolina!

Text by Bruno Zalaffi
(Musical setting by Giovanni Bonnoli)

Inno della Contrada Priora² della Civetta

*Il Castellare³ è tutto in festa:
quanta letizia c'è nei nostri cuori!
Inneggiamo alla Civetta,
inneggiamo ai suoi colori.
Sventola al vento la Bandiera,
rulla il tamburo, tutti a te corriam;
per te fremiam,
per te cantiam,
un inno di passion...*

*Civetta va,
Civetta va,
tu gloria e vanto sei di tutta la città.
Civetta va,
Civetta va,
sei Priora e fieri ci sentiam.
Ecco alla mossa già i fantini andar,
freme la piazza e urla piena di passion...
Per te soltanto
noi viviamo l'incanto
di una corsa che il cuore soffrirà...
Civetta va,
Civetta va,
Palio stasera si festeggerà!...*

*Piazza del Campo è tutta in festa:
Siena ritorna come ai tempi d'or!
Suona lento il campanone
e, torna Cecco⁴ tra di noi.
Tutti in Contrada questa sera.
Il cavallino benedetto è già:*

*Ora corriam,
ora cantiam
un inno di passion...*

Text (and musical setting)
by Salvatore Cintorino

Anthem of the Civetta Priora Contrada

The whole Castellare is celebrating:
how much happiness is in our hearts!
We praise the Civetta,
we praise its colors.
The flag waves in the wind,
the drum rolls, we all run to you;
for you we quiver,
for you we sing,
a hymn of passion...

Go Civetta,
Go Civetta,
you are the glory and praise of the whole city.
Go Civetta,
Go Civetta,
you are the Prior and we feel proud.
Look, to the *mossa* the jockeys already go,
the piazza shudders and cries, full of passion...
Only for you
are we enchanted
by a race that the heart will suffer.
Go Civetta,
Go Civetta,
Tonight we will celebrate the Palio!

The whole Piazza del Campo celebrates:
Siena returns to its golden age!
The big bell rings slowly
and Cecco returns to us.
Everyone will be in the Contrada tonight.
The little horse is already blessed:

Now we run,
now we sing
a hymn of passion...

² The title *Priora* honors the Civetta for hosting the first *magistrato* meeting.

³ *Castellare* is a nickname given to the Civetta contrada; its baptismal font is located in a small piazza named Castellare within the contrada's territory.

⁴ The poet Cecco Angiolieri, a contemporary of Dante, was born in the Civetta territory. The Civetta *società* is named for him.

Inno della Contrada del Drago

*Quanto sei bella, contrada nostra
che sorgi in centro della Città!
È la tua storia che ci dimostra
gloria, coraggio, fede e amor...
In Camporegio⁵ la pugna ardente
dei figli tuoi contro l'Imperator,
l'invitto Arrigo tanto possente,
con le sue genti indietreggiò!⁶*

*Il rosso il giallo il verde
son magici color,
che danno ai nostri cuori
la gioia e la passion!
Sul campo il tuo corsiero
non corre, vola e va...
Se scopre artigli e dardo
il Drago vincerà.
Cento bandiere in festa
verranno a salutar
noi canteremo in gloria
la più bella canzon!
Prepara o Camporegio
smaglianti feste e fior
che Siena in Paradiso
verrà a trovarti ancor!*

*Contrada nostra sei tanto grande
tutti t'invidian nella Città
che la tua fama ognor si spande
e fa balzare in petto il nostro cor,
il più bel palio che Siena vanta,
Virginia, a te portò col suo valore:
Dragone invitto; trionfa e canta,
tu sei una stella che brilla ognor!*

Text by Nello Cortigiani
(Musical setting by Carlo Sottili)

Anthem of the Drago Contrada

How beautiful you are, our contrada
that rises in the middle of the city!
It is your history that shows us
glory, courage, faith, and love...
In Camporegio the ardent punch
of your sons against the Emperor,
the undefeated Arrigo, very strong,
retreated with his troops!

The red, yellow, green
are magic colors
that give to our hearts
joy and passion!
On the campo your jockey
doesn't run, he flies and goes...
If he uncovers his claws and his arrow
The Drago will win.
One hundred flags in celebration
will come to greet him
We will sing in glory
the most beautiful song!
Prepare, O Camporegio
bright celebrations and flowers
that Siena in heaven
will come to visit you again!

Our contrada, you are so grand
everyone in the city is envious
that your fame is always growing
and makes our hearts jump in our chest,
the most beautiful banner that Siena boasts,
Virgin, gave to you with its valor:
The undefeated Drago who wins and sings,
you are a star that always shines!

⁵ Today *Camporegio* is used to refer to the entire Drago contrada. Via di Camporegio and Piazza Camporegio lie within Drago territory.

⁶ *Imperator Arrigo* refers to Henry VII, Holy Roman Emperor, who attempted to restore imperial power in Italy in the 14th century. Military companies from Siena fought with the anti-imperial forces.

Inno della Imperiale Contrada Giraffa

*Bianco e rosso nei cieli più alti,
bianco e rosso del nostro rione,
quando Siena alla pugna giocava
già di te sentiva parlar.*

*Forte il rullo dei nostri tamburi,
lieve il gioco dei nostri vessilli,
sempre alta la testa di gloria,
rompe un grido dai petti e dal cuor:*

Giraffa

Giraffa

del grande Salvani.⁷

Fra tutti i rioni il più grande sei tu.

Giraffa

Giraffa

*di storici allori tu vanti l'onore
reale, imperiale, repubblicana ancor.*

*Bianco e rosso nel campo di Siena,
bianco e rosso più alto lassù.*

*Quando corri si sente nell'aria
una febbre, una forza di amor.*

*Fra le altre più bella tu sei,
perché tutte non son come te.*

*E dai vicoli giunge quel grido,
che per Siena fa fremere i cuor.*

Giraffa

Giraffa

del grande Salvani.

Fra tutti i rioni il più grande sei tu.

Giraffa

Giraffa

*di storici allori tu vanti l'onore
reale, imperiale, repubblicana ancor.*

Text by Bruno Tanganelli (Tambus)
(Musical setting by Nino Oliviero)

Anthem of the Imperial Giraffa Contrada

White and red in the highest heavens,
white and red of our territory,
when Siena was playing *alla pugna*
already they were speaking of you.

Strong is the roll of our snare drums,
Light is the game of our banners,
heads always high in glory,
breaks a cry from chests and hearts:

Giraffa

Giraffa

of the great Salvani.

Among all the territories you are the greatest.

Giraffa

Giraffa

you boast the honor of historic laurels,
regal, imperial, republican still.

White and red in the campo of Siena,
white and red the highest up there.

When you run one feels in the air
a fever, a strength of love.

Among the others you are the most beautiful,
because the others are not like you.

And from the streets arrives that cry,
that for Siena makes the heart tremble.

Giraffa

Giraffa

of the great Salvani.

Among all the territories you are the greatest.

Giraffa

Giraffa

you boast the honor of historic laurels,
regal, imperial, republican still.

⁷ Provenzano Salvani was leader of the *senese* troops in the Battle of Montaperti and was said to have lived in what is now the Giraffa territory.

Inno della Contrada Sovrana dell'Istrice

*Istrice nostro dai quattro colori
l'anima sei di tutta Camollia
nei tuoi vessilli vibran mille cuori,
e la passion spandi in ogni via...
Sol per difesa, pungo, e nella sfera
alta del cielo a pungere l'azzurro
con il suo dolce serafico sussurro
vola in grembo del venti la bandiera...*

*Istrice amato
torna per ogni strada a stamburar...
Come l'estate
il cuor riscaldi e il sangue fai vibrar...
Bella contrada
apri il tuo cuore più della tua porta
sei ormai risorta
e più nessuno vincer ti potrà!...*

*Si sa che la tua gente quando scende
giù verso Piazza è come un fiume in piena
Risuona per le antiche vie di Siena;
un canto che nel cielo si distende
e tutta Siena grida: Istrice avanti
e ne verrà sicura la vittoria
perché ormai uniti siamo tanti
torna di Siena vetusta, un'altra gloria!...*

*Istrice amato
torna per ogni strada a stamburar...
Come l'estate
il cuor riscaldi e il sangue fai vibrar...
Bella contrada
apri il tuo cuore più della tua porta
sei ormai risorta
e più nessuno vincer ti potrà!...*

Text by Luciano Fini
(Musical setting by Marco Sottili)

Anthem of the Sovereign Istrice Contrada

Our Istrice with four colors
you are the soul of all of Camollia
in your banners beat many hearts,
and the passion grows in every street...
Only in defense do I prick, and in the sphere
high in the heavens to prick the blue
with its sweet seraphic whisper
the flag flies in the bosom of the wind...

Beloved Istrice
return to every street with a drum roll...
Like the summer
you warm the heart and make blood throb...
Beautiful Contrada
open your heart more than your door
you are resurrected by now
and no one else can win!...

One knows your crowd when it comes
down to the Piazza it is like a flooding river
Resounds in the old streets of Siena;
a song which reaches to the heavens
and all of Siena shouts: forward Istrice
and the victory will be sure
because now we are many united
return to old Siena, another glory!...

Beloved Istrice
return to every street with a drum roll...
Like the summer
you warm the heart and make blood throb...
Beautiful Contrada
open your heart more than your door
you are resurrected by now
and no one else can win!...

Inno della Contrada del Leocorno

*La mia contrada è sempre la più bella,
per me nessuna c'è simile a quella.
San Giorgio, Pantaneto e San Martino,
Logge del Papa e Santo Giovannino.⁸*

*Il bianco è la fede, l'arancio è la storia
l'azzurro è la gloria del nostri color.
Leocorno gridiamo nei canti di baldoria
il segno di vittoria
nello stemma scolpito dal fato per sempre
starà:
"Leocorno rampante fortuna sarà!"*

*Volano in alto le nostre bandiere,
rulla il tamburo e il cuor ti fa godere.
Sfreccia un cavallo primo al bandierino:⁹
oggi e sempre sarà Leocone primo.*

*Il bianco è la fede, l'arancio è la storia
l'azzurro è la gloria del nostri color.
Leocorno gridiamo nel canti di baldoria
il segno di vittoria
nello stemma scolpito del fato per sempre
starà:
"Leocorno rampante fortuna sarà!"*

Text (and musical setting) by Edoardo Del Pino

Anthem of the Leocorno Contrada

My Contrada is always the most beautiful,
for me no other is the same.
San Giorgio, Pantaneto e San Martino,
Logge del Papa e Santo Giovannino.

White is faith, orange is history
blue is the glory of our colors.
We shout Leocorno in riotous songs
the sign of victory
in the coat of arms, chiseled by fate, will
always be:
"Rampant Leocorno brings good luck!"

Our flags fly high,
the drum rolls give pleasure to the heart.
A horse darts first to the *bandierino*:
the great Leocorno will be first
today and always.

White is faith, orange is history
blue is the glory of our colors.
We shout Leocorno in riotous songs
the sign of victory
in the coat of arms, chiseled by fate, will
always be:
"Rampant Leocorno brings good luck!"

⁸ *San Giorgio, Pantaneto, San Martino, Logge del Papa, Santo Giovannino* are names of landmarks or streets within the Leocorno territory.

⁹ The *bandierini*, iron rods holding up small black and white flags, are situated at the two sharp turns of the racetrack and at the finish line.

Inno della Contrada della Lupa

*O valle che attingi la fama
dal genio dei Rozzi, noi siamo
tuoi figli fedeli e t'amiamo
con tutto lo slancio del cuor
T'amiamo se brilla la sorte
se avverso c'è il Campo, se avanza
soltanto nel cuor la speranza
di quanto sognammo per te.*

*Di Roma lo stemma¹⁰
di Siena i colori¹¹
c'infiammano i cuori
di schiette virtù.*

*Gentile tra l'altre contrade
che ingemmano Siena vetusta
rammenti con Roma l'Augusta
le origini prime di Te.
Ma pur dai ricordi lontana
di tutta l'italica storia
tu sei per la nostra memoria
il palpito primo d'amor.*

*Di Roma lo stemma
di Siena i colori
c'infiammano i cuori
di schietta virtù.*

Text by Ezio Felici
(Musical setting by Leonida Botarelli)

Anthem of the Lupa Contrada

Oh valley that obtains fame
of the genius of Rozzi, we are
your faithful sons and we love you
with all the recklessness of the heart
We love you if fate shines
if the Campo is against us, if there is
only in our hearts the hope
of how much we dream of you.

From Rome is the coat of arms
from Siena the colors
that enflame hearts
of pure virtue.

Friendly among the other contrade
which adorn old Siena
remember with Rome Augustus
the origins before you.
But also from the memories far
from Italian history
you are in our memory
the first throb of love.

From Rome is the coat of arms
from Siena the colors
that enflame hearts
of pure virtue.

¹⁰ Lupa's coat of arms shows a wolf suckling Romulus and Remus.

¹¹ Lupa's colors are black and white with orange accents. The traditional colors of the city of Siena are black and white.

Inno della Nobile Contrada del Nicchio

*Contrada azzurra come il nostro cielo
dal mare cullata,
conchiglia di corallo coronata,
simile al Campo, ove si corre il Palio!
Perciò la strada sai della vittoria
che spesso premia il tuo gran valor!*

*O Nicchio, Nicchio bello,
col tuo costume, desti ammirazion...
I tuoi contradaioli hanno passione
e si fanno rispettar...
Ed il sorriso di tue brune e bionde
nell'aria effonde eterno un nome: amor!
Lo stesso amor che fremere farà,
se al bandierino prima ti vedrà!*

*Al rullo cupo del tuo tamburone
superbo incendi...
i tuoi velluti disinvolto porti,
perché puoi far di nobiltade sfoggio.
Né dormi sugli allori conquistati,
fiera travolgi chi ti è rival!*

*O Nicchio, Nicchio bello,
col tuo costume, desti ammirazion...
I tuoi contradaioli,
hanno passione, e si fanno rispettar...
Ed il sorriso di tue brune e bionde
nell'aria effonde eterno un nome: amor!
Lo stesso amor che fremere farà,
se al bandierino prima ti vedrà!*

Text (and musical setting) by Carlo Sottili

Anthem of the Noble Nicchio Contrada

Contrada, blue like our sky
cradled by the sea,
shell of crowned coral,
like the Campo, where the Palio is run!
This is why you know the way of victory
Which your great valor often wins!

O Nicchio, beautiful Nicchio,
with your costume, you awaken admiration...
Your contradaioli have passion
and they make themselves respected...
And the smile of your brunettes and blondes
spread one name in the air: love!
The same love that will make you quiver
if it sees you first at the *bandierino*!

At the deep roll of your great drummer,
superb, you blaze...
you confidently wear your velvet,
because you can make a noble display.
You do not rest on your laurels,
you overwhelm pride, your rival!

O Nicchio, beautiful Nicchio,
with your costume, you awaken admiration...
Your contradaioli have passion
and they make themselves respected...
And the smile of your brunettes and blondes
spread one name in the air: love!
The same love that will make you quiver
if it sees you first at the *bandierino*!

Inno della Nobile Contrada dell'Oca

*Di Siena nostra gentile e bella
siamo il vanto, siam l'onor.
All'Oca amata, vivida stella,
con passion doniamo il cuor.
Di Fontebranda fiera e guerriera,
siamo gli araldi senza timor,
siamo la Contrada la più battagliaiera,
forte col nerbo e salda nel cuor.*

*Paperone, Paperone
di te siam le ardite schiere,
sempre in alto le bandiere,
sempre in alto il nostro amor.*

*Siam delle conce, siam dei macelli,

ma abbiam un cuore grosso così
però anche in piazza siamo i più belli,
tutte le citte ci dicono di sì.
Quando pel Palio nella grande Piazza,
passa abbagliante il Paperon,
nel veder noi la folla impazza,
con gli occhi accesi di ammirazion.*

*Paperone, Paperone
di te siam le ardite schiere,
sempre in alto le bandiere,
sempre in alto il nostro amor.*

*Ci si strafotte delle fischiate,
ci fanno un baffo, poveri chiù,
la maggior parte son smanacciate
e l'Oca esulta sempre di più.
Viva la Santa¹² viva le Fonti,¹³
dell'Incrociata¹⁴ viva l'union!
Al Paperone siam sempre pronti
a dare il cuore pien di passion.*

Anthem of the Nobile Oca Contrada

Of our kind and beautiful Siena
we are the pride, we are the honor.
To the loved Oca, vivid star,
with passion we give our hearts.
Of Fontebranda beast and warrior,
we are heralds without fear,
we are the most war-like contrada,
strong with the *nerbo* and firm at heart.

Great Goose, great Goose,
we are your daring crowd,
always high the flags,
always high our love.

We are from the leather factories, we are
from the slaughterhouses,
but we have a large heart like this
but we are also the most beautiful in the piazza,
everyone tells us so.
When for the Palio in the great Piazza,
the dazzling great Goose passes,
to see us the crowd goes wild,
with eyes filled with admiration.

Great Goose, great Goose,
we are your daring crowd,
always high the flags,
always high our love.

We don't care about the jeers,
it doesn't bother us, the poor things,
most of them are just flapping their arms
and the Oca rejoices all the more.
Long live the Saint, long live le Fonti,
of the Incrociata long live the union!
To the great Goose we are always ready
to give hearts full of passion.

¹² St. Catherine.

¹³ Fontebranda, the baptismal font in the Oca contrada.

¹⁴ *Costa dell'Incrociata* is a street in the Oca territory.

*Paperone, Paperone
di te siam le ardite schiere,
sempre in alto le bandiere,
sempre in alto il nostro amor.*

Text by Borghesi and Servadio
(Musical setting by Rovello Banducci)

Great Goose, great Goose,
we are your daring crowd,
always high the flags,
always high our love.

Inno della Contrada Capitana dell'Onda

*Viva l'Onda del cielo e del mare
tu rispecchi il divino sorriso,
la vittoria che al fine t'ha arriso
paga il cuore della lunga ansietà.*

*Tu in omaggio a Euterpe vincesti
l'aspra forte leale battaglia
nessun' altra contrada t'eguaglia
nell'affetto dei propri color.*

*Dalla nostr'anima forte e gioconda
evviva l'Onda evviva l'Onda
dalla nostr'anima forte e gioconda
evviva l'Onda tutti gridiam.*

*Su te veglia il più grande Patrono,¹⁵
per te Siena, nel mondo si onora
del Duprè che alla fede innamora
con la bella immortale "Pietà."¹⁶*

*Quando in "Campo" tra l'altre contrade
coi tuoi vaghi costumi discendi,
ogni sguardo incateni ed accendi
il più vivo entusiasmo nei cuor.*

*Dalla nostr'anima forte e gioconda
evviva l'Onda evviva l'Onda
dalla nostr'anima forte e gioconda
evviva l'Onda tutti gridiam.*

Text by Ezio Felici
(Musical setting by Giovanni Bonnoli)

Anthem of the Onda Captain Contrada

Long live the Onda of the heavens and the sea
you reflect the divine smile,
the victory that at the end smiled on you
satisfies the worried heart.

In homage to Euterpes you won
the bitter, strong, loyal battle
no other contrada equals you
in affection for its colors.

From our strong and joyous soul
Long live Onda long live Onda
From our strong and joyful soul
we all shout long live Onda.

Our great Patron keeps watch over you,
for you Siena, is honored world-wide
by Duprè who inspires love of faith
with the beautiful immortal "Pietà."

In the Campo among the other contrade
with your refined costume you dismount,
every command every eye and light
great enthusiasm in every heart.

From our strong and joyous soul
Long live Onda long live Onda
From our strong and joyful soul
we all shout long live Onda.

¹⁵ Patron saint of the Onda contrada, the Virgin Mary.

¹⁶ Italian sculptor Giovanni Duprè was an Ondaiolo. One of his most famous sculptures, the 1862 *Pietà*, is currently displayed in a chapel at the Cimitero della Misericordia in Siena.

Inno della Contrada della Pantera

*Su Pantera! Ogni angol di strada,
ogni casa del nostro rione,
si risveglia! La bella contrada
canta, lieta, una dolce canzone.*

*Rosso, ardente colore di fiamma
ed azzurro di ciel: la più cara,
la più amata: la nostra bandiera,
ci fa figli di una stessa mamma.*

*Oggi è festa: sorride Vittoria
ed il sole che coi raggi indora
il rione di Via Stalloreggi
bacia, al vento, la nostra bandiera.*

*Salga al cielo quest'inno di gloria!
La Pantera, sì indomita e fiera
con audacia ben vinca ogni gara:
oggi esulta il tuo popol per te!*

*Scatta, balza, Pantera! Ogni vetta
si raggiunga! La nostra speranza
si trasformi, per te in esultanza!
Vinci un Palio! S'invoca... s'aspetta!*

*Di Letizia ogni volto sorrída.
Le "Due Porte" s'adornano a festa!
La Pantera non dorme s'è desta:
la "Madonna del Corvo" la guida!*

*Oggi è festa: sorride vittoria
ed il sole che coi raggi indora
il rione di via Stalloreggi
bacia, al vento, la nostra bandiera.*

Text by Bruno Zalaffi
(Musical setting by Alberto Bocci)

Anthem of the Pantera Contrada

Rise Pantera! Every street corner,
every house in our territory,
awake! The beautiful contrada
happily sings a sweet song.

Red, ardent color of flame
and blue of the sky: the most dear,
the most loved: our flag,
makes us sons of the same mother.

Today is a party: Victory smiles
and the gilds with its rays
the territory of Via Stalloreggi
kisses our flag in the wind.

Rise to the heavens this anthem of glory!
The Pantera, wild beast
with audacity wins every match:
today your people exult you!

Jump, prance, Pantera! Every summit
you reach! Our hope
transforms us, in elation for you!
Win a Palio! We invoke you... we await you!

In happiness every face smiles.
The "Two Doors" dress themselves for a party!
The Pantera does not sleep but wakes
The Madonna of the Raven guides her!

Today is a party: Victory smiles
and the sun gilds with its rays
the territory of Via Stalloreggi
kisses our flag in the wind.

Inno della Contrada della Selva

*Nel nostro cuor
vibra l'amor
che trepidar ci farà.*

*Si vincerà,
lo sento già,
e festa grande sarà.*

*O Selva, Selvina va!
il Palio si vincerà
e quando in cielo saliranno le bandiere
la Selva prima giungerà nelle carriere.
O Selva, Selvina va!
il Palio si vincerà
con l'arancione il bianco e il verde
ogni cuore sarà
in festa nella città.*

*Siam vincitor,
dominator,
il sogno è realtà.*

*S'impazzirà,
si brinderà,
e ognun ripeterà:*

*O Selva, Selvina va!
il Palio si vincerà
e quando in cielo saliranno le bandiere
la Selva prima giungerà nelle carriere.
O Selva, Selvina va!
il Palio si vincerà.*

Text (and musical setting) by Nevio
Bardelli

Anthem of the Selva Contrada

In our hearts
love resonates
which will make us anxious.

We will win,
I already feel it,
and the celebration will be great.

O Selva, little Selva go!
you will win the Palio
and when the flags will rise to the sky
the Selva will win.
O Selva, little Selva go!
you will win the Palio
with the great orange, white, and green
every heart will be
celebrating in the city.

We are the winner,
the dominator,
a dream and reality.

We will go crazy,
we will toast,
and everyone will repeat:

O Selva, little Selva go!
you will win the Palio
and when the flags will rise to the sky
the Selva will win.
O Selva, little Selva go!
you will win the Palio.

Inno della Contrada della Tartuca

*L'azzurro splendente del cielo
con l'oro brillante del sole
abbraccian di un serico velo
il nostro Tartucon.*

*Tartuca sei solida e forte
sul Campo t'è amica la gloria
sorridi al nemico e alla sorte
ti batti con onor.*

*In alto Tartuca
coi tuoi color
mai paghi sarei di cogliere
nelle pugna nuovi allor.*

*In alto Tartuca
col tuo valor
marceranno le schiere compatte
verso il Campo dell'onor.*

*La rossa crociate bandiera
dei prodi e antichi guerrieri
Porta all'Arco¹⁷ inalbera alfiere
con fede e con amor.*

*Cantiam e scriviamo la storia
di un popol che ha un solo grande cuore
cantiamo alla bella vittoria
del nostro Tartucon.*

Text by Giulio Pepi and Mauro Barni
(Musical setting by Rovello Banducci)

Anthem of the Tartuca Contrada

The splendid blue of the sky
with the brilliant gold of the sun
embrace of a silky veil
our great Tartuca.

Tartuca you are solid and strong
in the Campo glory is your friend
smile at your enemy and at fate
you strive with honor.

Tartuca, aloft
with your colors
we will never have enough victories
to rest on our laurels in battle.

Tartuca, aloft
with your colors
march in tight rank
towards the Campo of honor.

The red-crossed flag
of the proud and ancient warriors
Porta all'Arco raise the flag
with faith and with love.

We sing and we write the history
of a people that has a single large heart
we sing to the beautiful victory
of our great Tartuca.

¹⁷ Porta all'Arco is an old military company of the Tartuca contrada.

Inno della Contrada della Torre

*Siena accesa di vita risplende
brilla il Campo di mille colori
già nel cuore la fede s'accende:
corri e vinci: Torre, Torre!*

*Fate largo che passa la Torre
tutta Siena, le strade, i palazzi
fanno ala alla folla che corre,
la bella vittoria festeggerà.*

*A te va la gloria
con te la vittoria
perchè solo tu
sai l'onor conquistar.*

*Beltà nel vessillo
che in ciel sventolerà:
sarà, sarà la Torre
che trionferà!*

*Sei del cielo di Siena la stella
scintillante di luce vermiglia;
sei del Palio la figlia più bella;
corri e vinci: Torre, Torre!*

*Lanceremo con balda possanza
sempre in alto la nostra bandiera;
un augurio, una grande speranza:
la bella vittoria ci bacerà.*

Text (and musical setting) by Alvaro
Davididi

Anthem of the Torre Contrada

Siena, lit with life, shines
the Campo glitters with a thousand colors
faith already kindles in the heart:
you run and you win: Torre, Torre!

Make room, for the Torre passes
all of Siena, the streets, the palaces
makes way for the crowd that runs,
it will celebrate the victory.

To you is the glory
with you the victory
because only you
know how to conquer honor.

Beauty in the flags
that fly high in the sky:
it will be, it will be the Torre
who triumphs!

You are of the sky, the star of Siena
sparkling vermilion light;
you are the most beautiful daughter of the Palio
run and win: Torre, Torre!

We throw with great strength
our flags always high;
a wish, a great hope:
the beautiful victory will kiss us.

¹⁸ A landmark in the Valdimontone territory.

Inno della Contrada di Valdimontone

*Noi siamo i primi a rullar i tamburi,
durante il maggio in cui sbocciano i fiori...
E siamo i primi a recar gli onori,
a tutti quelli che ci vogliono ben.*

*È il bianco rosso e giallo
spiegato al primo sole,
che del Palio di Siena è lo splendor.*

*Valdimontone... sei la più bella
fra le contrade della città.
Valdimontone... sei tu la stella
che su via Roma risplende e stà...*

*Passano gli anni... sei sempre quella,
Valdimontone per l'eternità.
Della contrada, sacra fiammella
che il padre al figlio, trasmetterà...*

*Ci dicono pochi: pochi ma siam buoni...
sempre decisi primi ad arrivar.
L'anima nostra che sa le canzoni,
canta, s'innalza Siena ad esaltar...*

*Dal Ponte di Romana¹⁸
Valdimontone apri il tuo cuore,
saprai altre vittorie conquistar...*

*Valdimontone... sei la più bella
fra le Contrade della città.
Valdimontone... sei tu la stella
che su via Roma risplende e stà...*

*Passano gli anni... sei sempre quella
Valdimontone per l'eternità.
Della contrada, sacra fiammella
che il padre al figlio, trasmetterà...*

Text by Bruno Masi
(Musical setting by Carlo Sottili)

Anthem of the Valdimontone Contrada

We are the first to roll our drums,
during May when the flowers blossom...
And we are the first to bring honors,
to all those who love us.

It is white, red, and yellow
unfolded to the first sun,
that is the splendor of Siena's Palio.

Valdimontone... you are the most beautiful
of all the contrade in the city.
Valdimontone... you are the star
that on via Roma shines and stays...

The years pass... you are always that one,
Valdimontone for eternity.
Of the contrada, sacred flame
that the father will pass on to the son...

They say we are few: few but good...
always with conviction to arrive first.
Our soul that knows the songs,
sings and rises to glorify Siena...

From Ponte di Romana
Valdimontone, open your heart,
you know you will conquer other victories...

Valdimontone... you are the most beautiful
of all the contrade in the city.
Valdimontone... you are the star
that on via Roma shines and stays...

The years pass... you are always that one,
Valdimontone for eternity.
Of the contrada, sacred flame
that the father will pass on to the son...

Appendix 2

Glossary

alfiere (pl. *alfieri*)

Flag thrower. Each contrada's *alfieri* (exclusively male) participate in contrada processions. The two most skilled *alfieri* in each contrada perform as part of their *comparsa* in the *corteo storico*.

anima nostra

Our soul; refers to the ideal of solidarity within a contrada.

a diritto (or *d'obbligo*)

By right (or by obligation); the seven contrade who did not run in a given Palio the previous year participate *a diritto*.

a sorte

By fate; the three contrade who run in the Palio after being chosen by lottery participate *a sorte*.

bandierino (pl. *bandierini*)

An iron rod holding up a small black and white flag. The three *bandierini* are situated at the two sharp turns of the racetrack and at the finish line.

barbaresco

Groom, or caretaker of a contrada's horse from the time it is assigned at the *tratta* until after the race, when it is returned to its owner.

bilanciere

Bookkeeper in a contrada's government.

camarlengo

Treasurer in a contrada's government.

capitano (pl. *capitani*)

Democratically elected captain of a contrada during the days of the Palio. The *capitano* is responsible for the negotiation of all *partiti* and is considered a contrada's "war-time" leader.

chiarina (pl. *chiarine*)

A type of straight trumpet without valves used in Palio ritual.

città-patria

City-fatherland; refers to the tendency of many Italians to draw self-identity from their city or region of birth rather than from their nationality.

collegio

Advisory board within each *contrada* made up of all its past *priori*.

comparsa

Delegation of costumed *contradaioli* who represent each *contrada* in the *corteo storico*. The *comparsa* consists of two *alfieri* and a *tamburino*, a *duce* who carries the largest *contrada* flag, two armed men who guard the *duce*, three pages, the *barbaresco* and racehorse, and finally the *fantino* riding a show horse (in order to not tire the race horse).

consiglio generale

Voting body of a *contrada*, made up of all the adult members of a *contrada*.

contrada (pl. *contrade*)

One of seventeen territories or neighborhoods in the city center of Siena. Each *contrada* has defined borders, a constitution, government, and church. It serves as a social, political, financial, educational, and religious institution.

contradaiolo (pl. *contradaioli*)

Member of a *contrada*. See the table below for *contrada*-specific names for *contradaioli*.

Contrada	Contradaioli (plural)	Contradaiolo (singular male)	Contradaiola (singular female)
Aquila	Aquilini	Aquilino	Aquilina
Bruco	Brucaioli	Brucaiolo	Brucaiola
Chiocciola	Chiocciolini	Chiocciolino	Chiocciolina
Civetta	Civettini	Civettino	Civettina
Drago	Dragaioli	Dragaiolo	Dragaiola
Giraffa	Giraffini	Giraffino	Giraffina
Istrice	Istriciarioli	Istriciariolo	Istriciariola
Leocorno	Lecaioli	Lecaiolo	Lecaiola
Lupa	Lupaioli	Lupaiolo	Lupaiola
Nicchio	Nicchiaioli	Nicchiaiolo	Nicchiaiola
Oca	Ocaioli	Ocaiolo	Ocaiola
Onda	Ondaioli	Ondaiolo	Ondaiola
Pantera	Panterini	Panterino	Panterina
Selva	Sevaioli	Selvaiolo	Selvaiola
Tartuca	Tartuchini	Tartuchino	Tartuchina
Torre	Torraioli	Torraiolo	Torraiola
Valdimontone	Montonaioli	Montonaiolo	Montonaiola

carroccio

Oxen-drawn carriage that carries the Palio banner into the piazza in the *corteo storico*.

Corteo dei ceri e dei censi

Procession of the candles and the incense; each contrada brings pillar candles to the Duomo as a symbolic offering two days before the August Palio.

corteo storico (or *passeggiata storica*)

Historic procession (or historic walk) that precedes the Palio race.

deputato

Elected official in each contrada's government who oversees various facets of contrada life.

economo

Officer in each contrada who maintains an inventory of contrada possessions.

estrazione a sorte

Drawing of lots in which three contrade are chosen to run the Palio *a sorte*.

fantino (pl. *fantini*)

Jockey.

fazzoletto (pl. *fazzoletti*) *al collo*

Neck scarf decorated with the colors and symbol of a contrada, worn over the shoulders. *Fazzoletti* are removed to be thrown towards the Palio at the *Corteo dei ceri e dei censi*, waved at the passing Palio during the *passeggiata storica*, or thrown towards or hung on the Palio by members of the winning contrada.

Fonte Gaia

Large rectangular fountain on the northwest edge of Piazza del Campo.

gruppo donne

Women's social group.

gruppo giovani

Youth social group.

gruppo piccolo

Children's social group.

inno (pl. *inni*)

Hymn or anthem.

magistrato

The voting body, comprised of the *priori* from all seventeen contrade, which makes decisions about Palio rules.

mortaretto

Small but loud canon that fires when the horses and jockeys exit the Palazzo Comunale before the start of the race, to signal a false start, and three times at the end of the race.

nerbo (pl. *nerbi*)

Dried pieces of ox penis used by jockeys to whip their horses during the Palio race.

nonna

Grandmother; a derogatory term for the contrada which has gone the longest period of time without winning a Palio.

oratorio

Small church within each contrada's territory, usually located near or adjacent to the *sede*.

Palazzo Comunale

Town hall palace which serves as the focal point of the Piazza del Campo.

palchi

Wooden bleachers, specially constructed for the Palio race, that line the periphery of the Piazza del Campo; ticket prices in 2007 started at three hundred euros per seat. Singular *palco* refers to a decorated platform where contrada officials are seated.

Palio

From the Latin *pallium* for a piece of cloth, refers to the large decorated banner awarded to the winner of the race, or to the race itself.

partito (pl. *partiti*)

Bribe or deal made between two contrade, between a contrada and a jockey, or between two jockeys before the race.

Per forza e per amore

The most iconic Palio folk song; each contrada sings many different texts to its melody.

Piazza del Campo

The concave, shell-shaped public square of Siena which serves as the center of social life and the site of the Palio race.

priore

Administrative head of each contrada, as well as the delegate to the *magistrato* (called the *governatore* in the Oca contrada).

prova (pl. *prove*)

Practice race held in the days leading up to the Palio.

provaccia

Literally “bad practice” in which the horses and jockeys stroll around the track so as not to tire the horses the morning of the Palio.

prova generale

Dress rehearsal, or the *prova* the evening before the Palio race.

pugna

Violent and often deadly group boxing matches which took place in the Piazza del Campo in the Middle Ages, involving hundreds of participants from Siena’s *Terzi*.

quattrogionisti

Four-day people, or *contradaioli* who only participate in contrada activities during the four days of the Palio race.

rione

Territory of a contrada.

sede

Seat, or center of contrada administration and home to its museum.

seggio

Contrada government.

senese (pl. *senesi*)

An inhabitant of Siena, or, as an adjective, “of Siena.”

società

A community center which serves as a gathering place for contrada social events, usually located adjacent to or near the contrada *sede*.

sottocontrade

Sub-contrade, small groups within a contrada that have differing agendas.

spazio fuori

Outside space, the area outside Siena’s city walls where many *contradaioli* have relocated for financial reasons.

tamburino (pl. *tamburini*)

A drummer (in the context of the Palio, a snare drummer), or the snare drum itself.

tratta

The ceremony in which ten horses are assigned by lottery to the ten competing contrade.

vicario

Assistant to the *priore*.

vivere il Palio

To live the Palio, a phrase in the *senese* vocabulary that has two meanings: 1) to live as *contradaio* year-round, not just during the days of the Palio, reflecting the many ways in which social structures are exhibited in Palio ritual, and likewise ways in which Palio ritual defines social structures; and 2) to experience the Palio in the “now” moment as sensory experience, which exemplifies the high value placed on singularity and spontaneity.