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John Lanchbery, Christopher Caliendo and Film Music History: A Comparison between two Modern Scores (1997 and 2007) for John Ford's 1924 Silent Epic Western, *The Iron Horse*

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Introduction

- 1 The topic of this article is the relation between two art forms, music and cinema, as they are brought together in a silent film's orchestral accompaniment. By comparing two modern scores¹ that were composed for modern audiences to accompany the same film, John Ford's *The Iron Horse*²(1924),³ this article will make various issues come to light. To start, the relevance of the original context of production is complicated by such modern compositions, notwithstanding their ignorance of Erno Rapée's original score, which was discovered only recently in 2012. In the 1920s, live orchestral accompaniment of a silent film had become a staple special event at film festivals around the world. However, when printed music remains, "we rarely know when it was used" (Altman 7-8). In parallel, during the same period, books on film music scoring were published to cater to the new picture palaces' need for a change in the quality of music accompaniment, owing to the advent of the feature film.⁴ Two such books were published by Erno Rapée,⁵ who also composed the music for John Ford's silent epic Western *The Iron Horse* (1924); Rapée's score was played when it premiered at the Lyric theatre in New York on August 28, 1924 (Graff 2014, 144-146). While little was known about this original score until recently (Kalinak 2007, 30), the notable differences between the two modern musical accompaniments for the film, John Lanchbery's 1997

score and Christopher Caliendo's 2007 one, exemplify how contemporary composers may tackle the challenges involved in the screening of silent films with a live performance.⁶ Although silent film music was an ephemeral affair, performed either by a single musician or with an orchestra and unrecorded, familiar tropes were nevertheless invented, and both Lanchbery and Caliendo attempted to adapt or deconstruct them. Indeed, *The Iron Horse* participated in the creation of a musical aesthetic specific to Ford, a music "born in the silent era" (Kalinak 2007, 16), which became familiar to audiences as it repeatedly characterized his later westerns. Moreover, composing for *The Iron Horse* meant that both Lanchbery and Caliendo had an understanding of Ford's own blending of cinema and music in the fabric of the film, since the latter has indications of strong structural links that neither composer could overlook. Peter A. Graff's detailed analysis of Rapée's score, which he located in 2012,⁷ confirms these formal characteristics of Ford's film. Although this article will be tapping into the wealth of information provided by Kathryn Kalinak, this comparative study will hopefully show significant differences between Lanchbery's 1997 score and Caliendo's 2007, which Kathryn Kalinak had not yet heard when we met at the SERCIA conference held in Nijmegen in 2014. I will argue that while Lanchbery saw the necessity of integrating Ford's familiar tropes in his music, Caliendo sometimes deconstructed them by introducing a more knowledgeable approach of the historical background of Ford's film.

- 2 After recalling how essential music was to Ford's conception of his film, I will examine the main titles and conduct two case studies to show by what means the two film composers attempted to make these issues clear. Beginning with their scoring of the main title, in the choice of Hollywood so-called "Indian" music in one case and "ethnic" Native-American music in the other, I will then move to a discussion of their dramatic music for the scene of Brandon's murder. Third, I will look at the scoring of the workers' favourite song. Technical constraints will be recalled, such as the synchronisation with the editing, in particular when actual music is taking place and imposes its own rhythm. I will then turn to Rapée's score, since it casts an interesting light on the challenges that the two modern composers had to overcome.

John Ford's Cinema and/as Music

- 3 Keenly sensitive to the power of music in his films, Ford "directly influenced the scores of the films that bear his name. He was notorious for collaborating on all aspects of a film's production, including the musical score" (Kalinak 2007, 12). His self-assertion as filmmaker and his knowledge of music⁸ are explicitly expressed in the intercutting of a score and words on intertitles with shots of workers in the sequence "Drill, Ye Tarriers, Drill" [23:28]. This made it impossible for anyone to attempt later "cuts" in his film.⁹ Moreover, its repetition throughout the film expressed two major epic motifs: it was a vehicle for the National Myth of "the conflict between wilderness and civilization" (Eyman 88), and it welded the different workers into one nation by making them work in harmony.¹⁰ On the other hand, Ford's interest in the expressive power of songs led him to use this onscreen singing performance¹¹ to enforce the illusion of authenticity in his reconstruction of US national history, even though the actual railroad workers of the 1860s probably did not sing that song, since it was published in 1888 (Eyman 88).

- 4 Songs were, in fact, used on the set during the shooting of the film, and the actors were free to decide to what extent it would influence their acting unconsciously or transpire in their interpretations of their parts (Kalinak 2007, 18). If singing was encouraged throughout the film's production, it also took place before as well as after the day's shooting: "The day would start with the arrival of cast and crew [...] each of the major players accompanied by a theme song, selected by Borzage" (Kalinak 2007, 18). Danny Borzage, brother of director Frank Borzage, was hired to provide mood music on his accordion for *The Iron Horse*, and he continued to do so during the shooting of Ford's later films. Kalinak further explains that, "On *The Iron Horse*, the singing started as the train bearing cast and crew left Union Station in Los Angeles, with 'My darling Clementine' and 'The Yellow Rose of Texas' sung that first night. Ford joined in the singing and told some stories of his own" (Kalinak 2007, 18). Brigham Young University provides access to two disks entitled "Echoes from the Iron Horse," totalling about six and half minutes, which were part of Ford's private phonograph collection. The recordings are "a short medley of folk songs that Rapée arranged to accompany the elaborate Grauman's prologue" (Graff 145). Most of the songs recorded for the "Echoes" do not, however, appear in Rapée's score for *The Iron Horse*; the only ones "are 'Pop Goes the Weasel,' 'Drill, Ye Tarriers, Drill,' and 'Indian Orgy' from the *Capitol Photoplay Series*,"¹² the latter being used for "Indian theme 2" (Graff 145). On the other hand, two *Photoplay* contributions by Rapée appear in the final score: "program three, 'Misterioso [sic] No1: For Horror, Stealth, Conspiracy, and Treachery', program 13, labelled 'Indian Orgy...'" (Graff 145), which, along with a third unidentified work, Graff sees as indications of the characterization of the Cheyenne and Pawnees. I wish to add, here, that film music composer Robert Israel, who knows about these recordings, says that neither Lanchbery nor Caliendo used the rediscovered fragments of the "Echoes" from Rapée's music score, which is in a minor key, is limited to low notes, and has a stronger repetitive rhythm but hardly any melody. Instead, Lanchbery and Caliendo employ a major key and a melodic line. Israel thus believes¹³ that Lanchbery would not have been trying to reappropriate Rapée's then lost score, but would, rather, have been quoting popular musical strains from *Stagecoach* (1939) and other famous Westerns because they are pleasurable. The *Stagecoach* score will be quoted below as a model for Lanchbery's own.
- 5 Notwithstanding the available historical documents and despite important differences in style in their scores,¹⁴ both Lanchbery and Caliendo concentrate on the rhythm of the editing, as well as on the different moods of the scenes, suggesting that they could, in Kalinak's words "hear the music in John Ford's silent film" (Kalinak 2007, 23).

The main title by John Lanchbery and Christopher Caliendo

- 6 Careful attention to the main titles of the film's opening credits reveals that both composers were addressing late-20th-early-21st-century audiences' expectations,¹⁵ but only Lanchbery composed a score that sounded like the music in Ford's Westerns. Indeed, his 1997 main title resorts to archetypal themes,¹⁶ such as "the train sound," an orchestral transposition of the sound of a steam engine, as well as a lyrical melody for "the romance." These aural motifs and the iconic image of the train that they conjure up are repeated regularly throughout the narrative, following the classical Hollywood

music tradition that repetition is “the link between narrative content and musical accompaniment” (Kalinak 1992, 113). Unlike the Wagnerian leitmotiv, which is modified, ever so slightly, along the narrative to express the character’s evolving emotions, classical Hollywood themes serve to identify the characters as unmistakable archetypes by remaining the same from their introduction in the main title till the end of the film.¹⁷

7 By contrast, Caliendo’s 2007 main title thwarts our expectations by drawing our attention to the sound and the music for their own sake instead of reassuring us by catering to our cultural habits. The use of a “loud noise” produced by a percussion to evoke the steam engine’s central role in the narrative creates an abstract non-figurative space-time rather than a naturalist world.¹⁸ And when Caliendo finally includes a “melody,” it is an abstract representation of a lyrical mood avoiding figurative description.

8 Lanchbery’s main title introduces an aural motif specific to the main characters, but the movie Indians are associated with the familiar themes of Ford’s Westerns. Hollywood conventions for Indian scenes remained firmly entrenched until the 1950s. These are analyzed by Claudia Gorbman in detail; she writes that an Indian-on-the-war-path musical cliché accounts for most Indian music before 1950:

The conventions were the ‘tom-tom’ rhythmic drumming figure of equal beats, with the first of every four beats accented (Dum-dum-dum-dum). This percussive figure is typically heard either played by actual drums or as a repeated bass note or pair of notes in perfect fifths, played on the low strings (Gorbman 2001,180).

9 It is noteworthy that an additional melody, consisting of “a two-note motif, the initial note being brief and strongly accented, followed by a longer note a second or third lower” (Gorbman 2001, 180) provided the necessary dramatic “threatening” effect. That this Western music was familiar to a 1997 filmgoer can be documented by the “Indian music” from the score of Ford’s 1939 *Stagecoach*¹⁹ (Gorbman 2001,182). In the scenes showing the stagecoach from a high angle, winding its way through Monument Valley, as the music accompanies the action, it follows the inter-cutting of long shots of the stagecoach travelling and close shots of passengers inside the stagecoach, as when for example Ringo is picked up on the way [18:43-20:12]. One is threatening, the other is “Western music,” an orchestral version of “O Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie,” the 1939 film’s famous main title theme. The threat is part of the construction of the Other, in this case the Native-Americans; they are shown as dangerous enemies launching an attack on the isolated and defenceless travellers. As for the Western music, the transposition of the popular melody evokes the travellers’ naïve illusion of safety.

10 An interesting parallel can be established between Lanchbery’s melody n°3 introducing the Indians in the main title of *The Iron Horse* (1924/1997) and the main title from *Stagecoach*, in which the threat of enemy Indians is introduced by the equal beats of drums. In Gorbman’s words,

The main title [of *Stagecoach*] includes a few bars of Indian music. Over shots of silhouetted Indians, the tom-tom motif enters in the form of fifths in the low strings; then one hears the two-note motif in French horns, joined by trumpets, with a brief section of the treble voices moving in parallel fourths. (Gorbman 2001, 181).

11 The name “Indian music” here refers to Hollywood music that assigned the same musical formula to all Indian tribes, whether Cheyenne or Apache. In addition to the encoding of the tom-tom motif, followed by a two-note motif, the musicologist adds

that, paradoxically, “Indian music” also included a choice between two modes: the threatening (Indians on the war path) and the innocent (the Noble Savage) (Gorbman 2001, 192). This dichotomy in the representation of Native Americans is actually what Ford’s 1924 script integrates, when the hostile Cheyennes attack the workers and friendly Pawnees come to their rescue. Listening to ensuing sequences of the film that have been introduced in the main title, it is noteworthy that the difference between the two groups’ political choices is not indicated by a variation in Lanchbery’s score.

- 12 As for Caliendo’s use of ethnic music, also introduced in the main title, it is similar to the original Native American music found in the early recordings;²⁰ it features “monodic melodies or chants, in any number of scales, accompanied by a regular drumbeat without that Hollywood downbeat” (Gorbman 2001, 195). There are no violins, the primary instruments being drums and voices, a characteristic that is consistent with Caliendo’s use of percussive music as a means of rendering ethnic differences with an effect of authenticity. In this modernist score, such original music ultimately deconstructs classical Hollywood Western conventions by portraying these movie Indians as Native Americans in their own land. And yet Caliendo’s use of ethnic music also overrules the dichotomy between hostile and friendly Indians in Ford’s film script, as is also the case, oddly enough, in Rapée’s own music discussed below.
- 13 The film’s main theme is the reconciliation of opposite parties, first among the workers who are of different European origins (the Irish versus the Italian), then those who are former Union and Confederate soldiers. Lanchbery’s score is careful to highlight the differences between these groups in order to dramatize their union in the national myth of Manifest Destiny; however, it does not use a specific music to characterize the Chinese working for the Central Pacific. Caliendo, on the other hand, associates them with the high-pitched sound of tambourines of Chinese music.²¹ As for the hostile Cheyennes, they are accompanied by Native-American music in Caliendo’s score, which alters the stereotype of “savagery” and “illiteracy” conveyed for example, when they are filmed looting the train [28:00]. It seems to me that Lanchbery’s music remains descriptive, and focuses on the Irish versus Italian Americans as the main picturesque theme of the film. Caliendo’s score is necessarily descriptive as well, while broadening the scope of ethnic differences that contribute in different ways to the construction of the National Myth. By deconstructing the familiar music of the Western genre, Caliendo enables us to distinguish—or at least emote to—the sound of instruments that all have a distinctly ethnic connotation, such as the Irish country violin for Brandon, the tambourines for the Chinese, and the Native-American flutes for the Indians.

Two Scores for a Short Silent Screen Drama: the Murder of Dave’s Father, David Brandon Senior

- 14 A close analysis of the scene in which the young Davy witnesses the murder of his father by hostile Indians will highlight the differences between the two film scores [09:53-12:60]. The scene shows David Brandon Sr. camping happily in the woods with his son. In Lanchbery’s version, we hear the earlier theme of Lincoln’s American dream of unity through railway transport [7:37], while Brandon thinks of his discovery of the pass, looking offscreen to his right (our left) before calling his son to show it to him [9:53-10:03]. Suddenly, when the camera frames the explorer lending a cautious ear to his surroundings, the mood changes. The camera cuts to a close-up of an Indian’s foot

stepping forward. When Brandon sits up and drops his pipe to look to his left (and thus on the right side of screen), we understand that his attention has been drawn by sounds whose source he has now located. Brandon covers his son's mouth to silence him. Body language, here, denotes silence and the perception of a sound breaking it. The camerawork itself suggests the aural icon of silence, as the slow gesture of the intruder denotes the trope of silent bare-footed Indians [10:50]. This climactic moment is an interesting example of the camerawork drawing our attention to sound, and in particular barely perceptible sounds from presumably carefully silent assailants. Both silence and sound are visualized, and therefore diegetised, on screen.

- 15 In terms of scoring, Lanchbery opts for a distant horn and repeats the theme used for the first sequence announced by the intertitle "Springfield, Illinois, in the days when a transcontinental railroad was but a dream" [7:37]; the melody is softened by a change from staccato to legato. Lanchbery's symphonic music favors a continuous flow of sound, and the low horn calls are heard in quick repetition without any synchronous effect to match the action. Because of the continuity in the flow of musical accompaniment, we do not pay any attention to it, even though its beat and intensity no doubt influences our experience of the scene.²² The stereotypical Hollywood Indian music can then be heard (a long note and four higher notes, set off by drums), while we see the assailants moving forward and Brandon being attacked by a "two-fingered" Indian swinging his tomahawk at him. Our attention is maintained throughout by the visual tension created by the additional information we are given and our anticipation of tragedy (numerous assailants are pitted against a single father and his defenseless child). Lanchbery's choice of a continuous flow of sound to sustain the dramatic mood is characteristic of the usual recommendation "that music was to be provided in an unbroken stream" (Kalinak 2007, 49); it harks back to Munsterberg's ideal background music, which should create a "harmonious smoothing of the mind by rhythmical tones" (Munsterberg 88). Thus the editing—and the cross-cutting in particular—are given unity by the non-diegetic music, because sound both unifies and punctuates the onscreen continuum (Chion 47-49).
- 16 Caliendo's own nondiegetic music grows especially conspicuous in this scene and clearly deconstructs the generic music tropes used by Lanchbery in a modernist fashion. In the dream of campfire happiness section [09:53], the music and dance rhythm which are heard evoke their innocent enjoyment of nature. The Celtic music and the dance rhythm may, for some members of the audience, bring to mind Brandon's Irish background, while a piano can also be heard playing soft chords. From the moment Brandon's attitude changes and suggests he has noticed suspicious noises, the orchestra stops playing, and we are steeped in a deep silence. The latter becomes mimetic, as it is diegetised by the gestures of the character paying increased attention to the silence around him as if his ear had caught some slight sound.²³ Given the Hollywood convention of continuous musical backdrop, the silence may even become unnerving. The father's fear is first expressed by this silence; then, the nondiegetic music that follows—piano chords and a single shrill held note (a *tenuto*) on a violin—invites us to engage emotionally with the characters. Caliendo also uses musical instruments to arouse our emotions by producing off-screen "noises" rather than "notes."²⁴ When the camera cuts to the shot of bare feet, music now introduces Indian ethnic instruments such as an Indian flute, which plays four notes in quick succession, imitating a bird's high-pitched whistle, and thus depicting the Indians' own use of such

sounds in order to communicate. The use of original Native American instruments underscores the editing at that particular moment. A POV shot (in close-up) indicates that we must keep this clue in mind, as it shows Dave's noticing this detail—indeed, it follows an intertitle telling us that he can overhear Brandon loudly identifying his assailant as “a white man” [12:52]. During the ensuing fight and offscreen murder—which is followed by a reaction shot of Davy's horrified face at the sight of the murder before he loses consciousness in his hiding place—Celtic instruments (dramatically asserting the victims' identity, Brandon's as well as his son's) can be heard, along with the Peruvian flute (connoting the movie Indians' hatred); the two brief melodic motifs are dissonant, thereby expressing the violence of the confrontation.

- 17 Caliendo's score for this tragic scene clearly deconstructs Hollywood musical tropes, which Lanchbery, conversely, endeavored to respect. The appeal to our emotions is of a different order; before shifting to nondiegetic music, Caliendo's use of silence causes us to pay more attention to the soundtrack, and thus become fully aware of the jarring dissonances and limited resolution in the chords when the music returns. However, what is remarkable is that both composers, each in their own way, attempt to resolve a problem that musicians in the 1920s already faced: the ambiguity of any film score, which serves to characterize the protagonists on one level, while creating a mood and emotional amplification when the scene requires it. This is illustrated here by the option of either ignoring the visible reference to silence, or, on the contrary, making it audible. Rapée's music, we shall see, is exemplary in so far as it borrows from popular music to conform to such ambiguities.

A Particular Challenge for the Two Composers: the Workers' Song

- 18 The second case study will add to our understanding of the difficulties musicians face when composing a music score for this film. When considering the “Drill! Ye Tarriers” song, the diegetic use of music becomes a major point of comparison between the two scores, since it is an interesting case of synchronous sound and of “the occasional but identifiable synchronization between music and image during screenings” (Kalinak 2007, 15). This brings to mind the question of the imitative or illustrative function of music and the differences between its diegetic and nondiegetic use (Chion 74), dramatic effects being obtained with such shifts in the involvement of characters with the soundtrack. The theme of national union, which has already been mentioned and is the aim of the diegetic scenes of workers singing together, is dramatized in the film script by the depiction of the competition between the two railroad companies.
- 19 Two parallel sequences serve to introduce the theme of competition that dominates the plot, at least until the two companies meet at Promontory Point in the end. We first see Chinese workers hauling the steam engine, pulled by a team of horses, up a hill for Central Pacific [21:07-22:49]; an intertitle then tells us Lincoln was assassinated in 1865. We then see Union Pacific crews, with ex-soldiers working peacefully side by side. This is when we first hear and see the workers singing “Drill, Ye Tarriers...”; it occurs before and after an Indian attack [23:28-23:32]. The song is mentioned in the intertitles each time it is performed (Fig. 1), inviting audiences to sing along as they view the sequence.²⁵ Each intertitle accounts for the action that follows and that is depicted in a long shot of the tracks and the workers (Fig. 2) and a close-up of the gesturing and shouting main

protagonists Casey (J. Farrell MacDonald) and Slattery (Francis Powers) (Fig. 3). The sequence plays an essential role in the film because it “encapsulates the film’s theme of cooperation and assimilation” (Kalinak 2007, 15). The words of “The lyrics allude to the hardships and deprivation of the workers’ life – ‘sure it’s work all day with no sugar in yer tay’ and offer a work ethic in response ‘Drill, ye Tarriers, drill ... An’work and shwe-a-at’” (Kalinak 2007, 33).

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 1-3: Workers sing as they drive the spikes in the rails and sleepers in *The Iron Horse* (John Ford 1924).

- 20 Though the two composers' aesthetic choices are, as we have seen, often quite different, the tune for "Drill, Ye Tarriers, Drill" is necessarily identical in both, since

they have to make do with the fact that “the sequence is actually edited to the rhythm of the song” (Kalinak 2007, 16). The workers are singing the tune when the first Cheyenne attack interrupts them [24:00]; they quickly exchange their pikes for guns and just as quickly resume both singing and drilling. Lanchbery’s music is content to make us imagine that we hear the workers singing; Caliendo’s score, on the other hand, clearly underlines the machine-like gestures of the humans by insisting loudly on the two-beat meter. Casey’s emphatic gestures make it look as if the character were actually conducting the chorus as well as giving orders to the workers under his charge. The 1997 score tends to turn the scene into a comic satire of individual pride, while the 2007 score offers a caricature of a factory worker.

- 21 The two-beat meter is common both to the train, as discussed below, and to the song of the workers in “Drill, Ye Tarriers”—it represents a matrix that brings together two traditional uses of popular ballads (marching and singing). In marches, it is the human body that is associated by “imitative music” with the visuals on screen; with songs, it is the human voice, but of course in both marching and singing, it is the synchrony of the sound with the visuals which is essential. The “Drill, Ye Tarriers, Drill” sequence offers both the marching rhythm transposed in the workers’ “drilling” and their singing in chorus. The shots of the workers in this scene create a sort of marching effect, thus transposing the rhythm of the music onto the visuals.²⁶ And yet, three separate frames are used to show the laying of the tracks. A long shot of the team and the track shows the workers setting the wooden crossbars all together in a row, first lifting them and then lowering them. The camera then cuts to a subsequent medium shot of the tracks that focuses our attention on the synchronicity of their hammering, before the actual nailing of the spikes into both rail and sleeper is shown in a final close-up of the spike. The singing metonymically represents the three stages, though we never actually see the head of the spike they are hitting away at. Rather, the three stages are depicted separately. They seem to be hitting the ground in order to beat the rhythm of the song, as though they were dancing or marching while standing still, rather than matching the nailing of spikes with the two-beat measure.
- 22 The displacement of “Drill, Ye Tarriers, Drill” onto the actual work mediates the transformation of the human world into an industrial one, as in Chaplin’s 1936 *Modern Times*,²⁷ with the workers’ bodies operating like synchronized cogs in the machinery of the railroad. Conversely however, in Ford’s film, as in Zola’s *La Bête Humaine* (1890), the train is anthropomorphised. This is one of the great achievements of train films, and in particular of *The Iron Horse* where both voice and work contribute to the symbolical significance of the train itself (Costa de Beauregard 2016).
- 23 Significantly, the two-beat rhythm of “Drill, ye Tarriers...” resonates with the two-beat “thump, thump” of the steam engine—an “imitative music” which is a particularly efficient and convincing orchestration of the imagined sound effect. The aural effect of the two-beat rhythm also becomes diegetic in sequences such as when the Pony Express Rider Dave Brandon catches up with the train as he is escaping from galloping Indians chasing him [48:50]; this is also the case in the two Cheyenne attacks on the train [23:28, 1:40:34]. The first time the “Drill, Ye Tarriers, Drill” is heard, the song is interrupted by the different sound of the first Cheyenne charge, but the rhythm remains a two-beat one with the galloping horses [23:28-24:50]; in the Pony Express sequence, we again hear the “tom-tom” of Indian music, which is also a two-beat rhythm [48:50-48:55]. The last attack of the train by Indians [1:40:34-1:54:58] is

dramatically significant, since it ends with Dave Brandon killing Deroux (the false Indian) [1:55:00]. In other words, the steam engine's dominant rhythm is used as a matrix to give overall impetus to the narrative.

- 24 To accompany the screen image in such sequences, Lanchbery creates a sense of unity in the film continuum by including changes in tempo, now accelerating now slowing down, without changing the two-beat rhythm. This continuity in rhythm and variation in tempo allows Lanchbery's classical Hollywood music to successfully express the epic significance of the film. Because sound both unifies and punctuates the onscreen continuum (Chion 47-49), Lanchbery's music for the film bridges the visual breaks from one moment of the building of the railroad to the next, using the imitation of the thump of the steam-engine and the melody in order to make it the central "character" in the narrative. On the other hand, Caliendo's music is also careful to synchronize his tempo with the film's visuals, and emphasizes this rhythmic dimension in his musical accompaniment for the "Drill, Ye Tarriers Drill" sung in English [23:28-24:57], between his earlier reconstruction of Chinese ethnic singing for workers when we see the Chinese hauling the steam-engine uphill with horses [21:07-22:49], and the reconstruction of Native-American ethnic sound (when the Cheyenne attack the workers [23:28]). Because music is not bound by real time and space but locates the world of the film in a symbolic time-space (Chion 47), it allows both composers great freedom in order to contribute aurally to Ford's visual expression of an epic narrative. If the 1997 score expresses the epic myth of national reconciliation with familiar musical tropes, the 2007 score relies on unfamiliar aural contrasts of modernist aesthetics to embody the uniqueness of the myth.

Erno Rapée's Score

- 25 The discovery in 2012 of Rapée's original score, formerly unknown to both Lanchbery and Caliendo, and its detailed analysis by Peter A. Graff, emphasizes what the scholar calls the essential "intermediality" of Ford's film (Graff 2014, 147). The various characters are underscored by Rapée's use of a single theme for each, which makes them identifiable for the audience, a feature that is also found in both modern scores. This makes the recognition of Deroux's two different identities particularly interesting. As a white man in his first talk with Marsh [33:34], the screen reads "The richest landowner in the Cheyenne country" and the camera cuts to Deroux in a fur coat and felt hat. In Lanchbery's score, we hear a different loud trumpet theme, expressing a violence consistent with the threat he represents as we see him keeping his right hand in his pocket and using his left hand instead. In Rapée's score, "two interchangeable themes exist for the Indians and both derive from the *Capitol Photoplay Series*: one from 'For Indian Gatherings, Uprisings, Dances and Festivals' (above quoted Indian theme 2) and the other from an as yet unidentified program" (Graff 146). In the modern scores, one theme is used to distinguish Deroux as the Indian chief, from the other theme used for his entrance as a white man. In Lanchbery's score, a specific music is used when Jesson, on behalf of Deroux, causes Dave's fall [1:03:31], expressing dramatic tension, which echoes the music heard during the murder scene. As for the last Cheyenne attack scene [1:40:34-1:54:58], it resorts to the Indian music heard before, as in Caliendo's own use of ethnic music, though crosscutting shows that during the same time, cattle is crossing a river to feed the workers, and an onrushing rescue train with men and rifles

is drawing nearer and nearer. Interestingly, despite the already heard Indian themes that are repeated by both modern composers, we are meant to visually identify the equally rescuing Pawnees, who had been introduced earlier [1:00:24], with the intertitle “Friendly Pawnee Indians are employed to guard the workers.”

- 26 The point here, according to Graff, is that Rapée himself does not use a different theme to distinguish between friendly Indians and dangerous ones,²⁸ either because the music needed to remain identifiably Indian or, quite simply, because “live musicians were unable to switch quickly enough to respond to the dramatic revelation and subsequent cross-cutting” (Graff 153). The music for Rapée is a signifier for the signified “Indian,” but John Ford’s visuals allow a complexification of this signified. Actually, there already existed examples of helpful Native American characters in silent cinema; by adopting Fenimore Cooper’s outlook, for example, Thomas H. Ince’s native characters were portrayed with a mixture of historical verisimilitude and elegiac tone (Aleiss 14-15).²⁹ This absence of differentiation between the friendly and the unfriendly types in Rapée’s score might reveal, despite the inscription of this difference within the diegesis, the change to the negative more dramatic stereotype which prevailed in later Westerns, as being more appropriate for the dichotomy of a moral world of good overcoming evil.³⁰

Conclusion

- 27 This article contended that the two modern composers were well aware of the mediation of music in the film’s editing, including two-beat aural motifs and the performance of songs. However, the naturalistic rhythm of the steam-engine blends with folk singing in Lanchbery’s classical Hollywood Western music, while Caliendo strives to construct the symbolic dimension of the 1924 film by giving it a non-narrative musical score which is appropriate to modern tastes today. This difference is highly significant if we remember that the film’s main theme is the myth of the above quoted Manifest Destiny, as shown by the symbolic figure of Lincoln and his dream of national unity in the opening sequences of the film, and a concluding shot of Lincoln’s statue as the film comes to its end. This national myth is expressed by both typical sounds from the industrial era, such as the steam engine’s beat, and by very different sounds (the folk songs) originating in a past tinged with nostalgia. The presence of such very different forms of expression in the film is characteristic of Ford’s conception of cinema. Because “many stylistic elements typical of Ford’s later Westerns find their roots in *The Iron Horse*” (Graff 2014, 155), the question of Lanchbery’s use of these stylistic models and of their partial deconstruction by Caliendo becomes even more significant. It might be suggested that the differing musical choices to accompany Ford’s film bear political implications in terms of the national myth, though this would require further research. What this article has argued is that music being independent from iconic representations, its effect upon our understanding of Ford’s film can be better understood by comparing the two different scores. In either case, both scores reflect the film’s own use of music, whether indirectly by Lanchbery (as it was transmitted by the music of Ford’s following Westerns) or directly (Caliendo’s score is grounded on a structural analysis of the film). To sum up, the differences between the two music scores, composed almost three-quarters of a century after the film’s release, depend on two different conceptions of film music. The 1997 composition caters to the

audience's expectations by relying on conventions established by Hollywood for a stereotyped Western music (Gorbman 2001, 177-196). The 2007 score uses experimental and modern music as well as ethnic music. Depending on the audience, the nondiegetic music could be felt as comfortably "real" because familiar, or, in the second case, could become obtrusive at times so that its unfamiliar ring might appear fascinatingly "true."

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NOTES

1. John Lanchbery's 1997 score has been analysed by Kathryn Kalinak who attended the film's screening with it in Pordenone in 1998 (Kalinak 2007, 32). In 1997, on the French TV channel ARTE, a color-toned, English copy of 134 minutes, with music composed and directed by John Lanchbery, which was performed by the City of Prague Philharmonic orchestra was programmed. I have been using this copy which I recorded at the time in VHS. The second accompaniment is a more recent score by music composer Christopher Caliendo (2007). The editor of the 2007 version is 20th Century Fox Home entertainment DVD and includes two copies in black and white : a 149 min Home copy, and a shorter international Export version 133 min. both with music by Christopher Caliendo (region 1 ; a region 2 copy was also issued by Eureka Entertainment DVD in 2011). See http://www.silentera.com/video/Iron_HorseHV.html, accessed 5 July 2014. All references between brackets refer to the VHS which I copied on a DVD.

2. *The Iron Horse*, (1924) silent, prod. Fox, dir. John Ford, sc. Charles Kenyon, m. Erno Rapée, Cast : George O'Brien (Dave Brandon), Madge Bellamy (Miriam Marsh), Charles Edward Bull (Abraham Lincoln), J. Farrell MacDonald (O'Casey), Francis Powers (Slattery), James Gordon (David Brandon Sr.), Fred Kohler (Deroux). John Lanchbery (1923-2003) is a British composer who took the Australian nationality late in life ; he is a conductor of music for ballets, in particular with Sadler's Well company, turned operas into ballets ; he also wrote music for British films in the 1960s and the scores for silent films. See *Times Online Obituary* (London) 28 February 2003. Christopher Caliendo is an American composer, guitarist, publisher, educator and recording

artist. He Composed for film and television see <https://www.christophercaliendo.com/biobac>. Accessed 26 August 2020.

3. *The Iron Horse* tells the story of the building of the transcontinental railroad, from 1862, by the Central Pacific and the Union Pacific. The film ends when the two railroads are united at Promontory Point (Utah). In parallel the romance between Davy and Miriam leads to their union the same day on the site. Both emblemize the national myth of Manifest Destiny. Two possible sources are Zane Grey, *The U.P. Trail* (1918), and Edwin L. Sabin, *Building the Pacific Railroad* (1919), among other novels about the railroad which were available to Ford for his script. Railroading novels had stock characters such as a fortune hunter going West, a beautiful unattached woman, and immigrant workers, largely Irish, which are found in Ford's film (Kalinak 2007, 26).

4. The most often quoted manuals are Edith Lang and George West's *Musical Accompaniment of Moving Pictures: A Practical Manual for Pianists and Organists* and George Beynon's *Musical Presentation of Motion Pictures* (Altman 10).

5. "Samuel L. 'Roxy' Rothapfel appointed Hungarian gold-medal-winning composer Erno Rapée as conductor of the Capitol Theater orchestra," a major Picture Palace in New York with a full orchestra (Altman 291). Ernő Rapée published two manuals, *Motion Picture Moods for Pianists and Organists* (1924) and *Encyclopaedia of Music for Pictures* (1925) (Altman 10). See also Rapée "Musical Accompaniment to the Feature Picture" (1925), reprinted in the collected volume *The Hollywood Film Music Reader* (2010).

6. The late rediscovery of what live accompaniment brings to screening by the expanding fashion of "ciné-concerts" in France and Italy in particular (screenings with live music performance) helps better understand this challenge. For example, Luc Besson's film *Le Grand Bleu* was scheduled to be screened with a live orchestra, directed by composer Eric Serra in Geneva (Switzerland) on 28 March 2020.

7. Peter A. Graff kindly wrote to me that he "located the Rapée score in the holdings of the State Library of Queensland (Brisbane, Australia)" in 2012 and was able to get the Pennsylvania State University Library to acquire a copy for their collection. Source: private correspondence 16 August 2020. If you are affiliated with Penn State University, you can search in the Classical Scores Musical Library linked from <https://guides.libraries.psu.edu/music/sheetmusic>.

8. "Ford also owned and maintained an extensive collection of commercial recordings, which included classics of eighteenth and nineteenth century art music, opera and original cast recordings of Broadway musicals; Irish, Welsh, Italian, and Mexican folk songs..." (Kalinak 2007, 22).

9. The two editions of Caliendo's version mentioned above do however show some cuts were made since one is slightly longer (149 min.) than the other (133 min.). This point is rather immaterial to the present discussion of genre and rhythm, but could of course be examined in another paper.

10. Scott Eyman gives an account of the shooting of the film which tells about the material difficulties encountered by the crew, the settling inside the train of the luckier members and the extremely cold weather, all of which shows much of the liveliness on the screen was also part of everyone's lives (Eyman 82-90). See also McBride 135-164.

11. If the songs in Ford's films may now seem typical, it was not at all obvious at the time to use "a Texas cowboy tune representing the forced migration of Okies to California during the Great Depression or a western dirge accompanying the progress of a stagecoach" (Kalinak 2007, 13). See also Gorbman 2001, 180.

12. Prior to his above quoted publications, "Rapée collaborated [17 programs] with William Axt on a project composing a series of 'moods' for Richmond-Robbins (later Robbins-Engel) *Capitol Photoplay Series*. The series contains approximately 100 programs for both small and full orchestras" (Graff 145).

13. Composer Robert Israel actually sang what he called an original tune for the audience at the SERCIA Nijmegen 2014 conference panel when this paper was presented. The information provided here comes from my notes then. For more information on Robert Israel and his work on silent film, in particular the silent film *Miss Mend*, see <https://www.robertisraelmusic.com>. Accessed November 2019
14. Contrary to the use of cue sheets by pianists and players of cinema organs, as well as live orchestras, a practice which can still be noted in some performances of music in “ciné-concerts” today. Both scores, John Lanchbery’s in 1997 (VHS personal copy) and Christopher Caliendo’s in 2007 (DVD), for John Ford’s *The Iron Horse* are entirely original. On organ players see Behlmer (Cooke 29-38) and note on Wurlitzer below.
15. The recurring references to the audience and film reception in this study are grounded on the assumption that reception is part of art performance. Regarding cinema in particular, an inter-subjective relation is created by the reconstitution of a “*fantasmatic* body which offers a support as well as a point of identification for the subject addressed by the film” (Doane 162). Thus, the subject’s competences are simultaneously visual and aural.
16. Examples of such archetypes can be found in Joseph Carl Breil’s *Dramatic Music for Motion Pictures Plays* (Altman 372-375).
17. Film music’s link to Wagner goes a long way back. In 1910, “*The Moving Picture World* was claiming that ‘just as Wagner fitted his music to the emotions, expressed by words in his operas [...] the same thing will be done with regard to the moving picture’” (Flinn 14-15). More generally, Arthur Farwell’s 1901 *American Indian Melodies* shows that composers of musical accompaniments to Westerns adapted pieces from the classical repertoire of European-American transcriptions for the piano.
18. One thinks of early silent era avant-garde films such as *Rhythmus* (Hans Richter, 1921).
19. Several of the film’s composers (Richard Hageman, Louis Gruenberg, John Leipold and Leo Shuken) are credited, while others are uncredited. Source : en.wikipedia-wiki-stagecoach, accessed 19 October 2020.
20. Useful information is found on www.flutopedia.com/ethnec_nat.htm For example “Ethnographic Flute Recordings of North America- Organized chronologically.” Examples include the wax cylinder recording *Mille-G 1895 17, Tribal Dance Song*, recording archived at The Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington DC. Accessed 19 August 2020.
21. The acknowledgement of Chinese workers in Ford’s film is problematic, since no particular music is heard in Lanchbery’s score when we see them ; Caliendo, on the other hand, felt it necessary to make us briefly hear some non-diegetic Chinese music then. Further discussion of the differing political implications of each score would be of interest.
22. This is a typical offscreen nondiegetic melody that appeals to our emotions though we do not pay any attention to it ; Gorbman calls this aural effect “unheard music,” meaning nondiegetic music that does not draw attention to itself (Gorbman 1987, 6). Thus, our attention and emotions are thought to be separate in this case, and the effect has been called “subliminal.”
23. For information on gesturing in silent Hollywood films, see Roberta E. Pearson (1992), and Nicholas Chare and Liz Watkins (2015).
24. This was already practiced by live musicians playing musical accompaniment on the Wurlitzer theatre organ. Wurlitzer is a US-American company started in 1853 by a German immigrant from Saxony. Importing stringed, woodwind and brass instruments, it started in 1880 to create band organs, and theater organs which were used in silent movie theaters. Like pianos, these could be used to make either music or sounds.
25. Singing along was encouraged when possible. It has remained as a means of making the public share with the action, as the sing along events of the late 1990s in London show. It was the fashion in Vienna in particular, as Anna K. Windisch and Claus Tieber (2015) have shown.

26. Rapée, despite his interest in classical music, restricted himself for *The Iron Horse* to “folk songs, Protestant hymns, and patriotic themes” in his arrangements of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” and “Tramp, Tramp, Tramp.” It is interesting to note that Rapée’s only original composition is the title song, which he published separately under the title “March of the Iron Horse” (Graff 2014, 146). The cover for the 1925 sheet music is published by Kalinak (2007, 130, Fig.4). This shows that the march was seen as a highly significant motif, suggesting that the rival companies were competing in the march forward.

27. Chaplin’s *Modern Times* takes up a theme already screened in 1932 by his close friend René Clair *À nous la liberté* (1931).

28. A difference which is nevertheless a reality in Westerns as Indians on the war path and Noble Savage (Gorbman 2001, 192).

29. For example, in Ince’s “*The Indian Massacre* (1912), civilization’s corrupt influence adversely affects the quiet, traditional life of an Indian village” (Aleiss 15, note 41).

30. This dichotomy was fully deconstructed in later Westerns such as Sam Peckinpah’s *Major Dundee* (1965).

ABSTRACTS

The musical accompaniment of silent films is still a relevant issue today, as the vogue of “ciné-concerts” proves. As far as John Ford’s *opus* is concerned, music is part of the director’s understanding of the essence of cinema. In *The Iron Horse*, he kept the accompaniment under control by using diegetic music with a song “Drill, Ye Tarriers...”, but also thanks to the rhythm of the film’s overall editing. Two music composers, John Lanchbery in 1997 and Christopher Caliendo in 2007, were faced with the necessity of rendering Ford’s aesthetic choices. Though the first composer used Classical Hollywood Western music, and the second one used modern music as well as ethnic music, the comparison shows that both took care to render diegetic rhythms such as the steam engine or the hammering of the workers, along with the rhythm of the whole film. The discovery in 2012 of Erno Rapée’s 1924 score brings these questions to the fore.

L’accompagnement musical des films muets est toujours d’actualité, comme en témoignent les nombreux ciné-concerts ces dernières années. Deux musiciens : John Lanchbery et Christopher Caliendo, ont chacun composé des accompagnements en 1997 et 2007 pour le film muet de John Ford *The Iron Horse* (1924). Une comparaison des deux partitions met en lumière des centres d’intérêt tels que, d’une part la musique dite de Western et sa déconstruction par une musique moderne, et, d’autre part, l’orchestration symphonique du rythme du montage et de rythmes diégétiques, tels que la locomotive à vapeur ou le martèlement des rails par les ouvriers. Or, la musique fut toujours au cœur du cinéma de John Ford, et il en garda autant que possible le contrôle, comme le montre l’utilisation diégétique de la mélodie “Drill, Ye Tarriers...” dans son film. Les deux compositeurs se sont donc efforcés de restituer un moment important de l’histoire du western, en proposant un accompagnement musical de ce film culte. La découverte en 2012 de la partition d’Erno Rapée datée de 1924 jette une nouvelle lumière sur le débat.

INDEX

Mots-clés: Cheval de Fer, accompagnement musical, film muet, musique, chansons, Western, musique moderne, ethnique, chemin de fer

Keywords: The Iron Horse, scoring, silent movie, music, songs, Western, modern music, ethnic, train, railroad

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