

For many years, historians have studied the role and meaning of the *Grand Tour* for the fashioning of aristocratic elite in countries such as Britain, France, and German lands. Thus, the interest in ruins of classical antiquity, painting, sculpture and architecture of the Italian Renaissance by foreign connoisseurs is well-documented. While his relevance to the cultural transfer is extensively discussed, we know far less about the role of music in the process of cultural transfer and in the emergence of an international canon of aesthetic appreciation, which was also posing a contrast between the internationalisation of cultural practices and the age of nationalism.

The analysis of numerous travel descriptions in Italy, during the long eighteenth century, will allow us to reconstruct the stereotypes linked to the perception of Italian music. Therefore, it will be possible to fill an important gap in the musical and historical scholarship, while at the same time adding a new interdisciplinary dimension to our understanding of the *Grand Tour*.

Moreover, such approach will enable us to provide documentation of reports on Italian musical life with several data, which would not have been otherwise bequeathed. Above all, the analysis of descriptive models elaborated in these accounts, as well as of their reflection on some similar works by Italian authors, seeks to address fundamental issues regarding the construction of Italian identity during the period preceding the political Unification.