

The Soundscape of the Imperial Diet in the Age of Emperor Maximilian I*

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Imperial Diets as a Subject for Musicology

The image of pre-modern music is strongly influenced by the idea of topographically defined spaces. This also applies to research on early modern soundscapes in the field of musicology. When investigating the sound of late medieval Bruges or the soundscapes in Counter-Reformation Bavaria, we assume that the topographical space is a central aspect for creating meaning (Strohm, 1990; Fisher, 2004). The author of this text is by no means an exception, since his dissertation was on the music at the Augsburg Imperial Diets (or *Reichstage*) of the 16th century. Restricting the viewpoint to Augsburg seemed a sensible means for limiting the research subject. However, when looking at the ephemeral sound of the *Reichstag* in the 16th century, it becomes clear that topographical spaces are by no means the only categories for mapping soundscapes of the past.

A 16th-century Imperial Diet was a state of emergency, sometimes lasting months, during which the tectonics of courtly and urban life changed fundamentally, and with it, also the tectonics of musical life (Aulinger, 1980; Kohler, 1987). Generally speaking, Imperial Diets were gatherings of all the estates of the Holy Roman Empire (Moraw, 1980) at which the emperor (or king), the electors, princes and counts, cardinals, bishops, abbots, and the envoys of the imperial cities discussed important political questions like taxation or the wars against France or the Ottoman Empire. Before the 17th century, when the *Immerwährende Reichstag* met in Regensburg (Meixner, 2008), meetings were held in various cities of the Empire, for example in Nuremberg, Regensburg, or Speyer. The princes travelled to an Imperial Diet accompanied by numerous servants, among them secretaries, artists, and often musicians (Aulinger, 1987). There are no exact numbers of how many singers and instrumentalists visited an average *Reichstag*. Judging from the extant sources, however, it is possible to assume that it was a considerable number. The higher the rank of

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a dignitary was inside the imperial hierarchy, the bigger was his musical entourage. This can be illustrated by records from the Bavarian court about the preparations for the Diet in 1594. When Duke Wilhelm V decided to cancel his trip to Regensburg and sent his son instead, the court sent only half of the initially planned number of musicians (Kelber, forthcoming). Meetings of the imperial estates shaped the politics of the Holy Roman Empire as early as the Middle Ages. The term *Reichstag* was first used in connection with the Diet in 1495 in Worms and thus was not established until the reign of Maximilian I (Moraw, 1995). Under his leadership, around 13 Diets were held in various cities. Augsburg and the city of Worms, where Maximilian's first Imperial Diet as Roman king was held in 1495, stand out as particularly frequent meeting places of this period (Kelber, 2018, p. 31).

In various fields and disciplines, recent scholarship has outlined that sound and music must be considered important tools for creating meaning in the context of political events (Missfelder, 2012; Morat, 2010; Leopold, 2011; Voigt, 2008). Thus, this chapter is concerned with more than charting the soundscape of the Imperial Diet under Emperor Maximilian I, since it is probably self-evident that the Imperial Diet is a prime example of a "Soundscape of Power" (Heidrich, 2010). The main goal is to examine the structural interweaving of various elements of this soundscape and to reveal mechanisms of how power was represented and possibly also exercised through sound. To this end, four vital elements of the *Reichstag* will be discussed. In a first step, imperial entries – a practice that is generally assigned to the sphere of ceremonial – will be juxtaposed with dance, which many scholars tend to place in the realm of a political event's festive framework (Kelber, 2018, pp. 15–16). After that, the sound design of enfeoffment ceremonies shall be examined together with that of the many tournaments held during the Imperial Diets of the first two decades of the 16th century. The aim is to draw a picture of the *Reichstag* as a complex soundscape of power, shaped by topographical locations as well as by ephemeral mechanisms determined by traditions and rituals.

Entries and Dance

The entries of an emperor, king, or an important prince were ceremonial highlights of every Imperial Diet (Johanek & Lampen, 2009). Due to the presence and active participation of numerous imperial princes, these processions were particularly glamorous in the context of a *Reichstag* (Aulinger, 1980, pp. 193–199). The entry ceremony, which was also called *Adventus*, united various traditions, each of which had its own "dimension of meaning" (Rudolph, 2011, p. 80). Ideas of processions in Greek and Roman antiquity mingled with the image of the biblical entry of Christ into Jerusalem. Furthermore, the processions

of newly elected popes in Rome were an important model for many local entry practices (Kantorowicz, 1944).

Late medieval and early modern entries were resounding events. Gun salutes, the ringing of bells, the playing of trumpeters and minstrels, and the singing of the clergy were natural components of these elaborate celebrations (Kelber, 2018, pp. 84–100). Dieter Mertens speaks of the “obligatory noise” without which no prince could appear anywhere in a suitable manner (Mertens, 1998, p. 47). The historian thus emphasizes the sheer loudness of these events. In the case of the entry of an emperor or a king, the ritual meant nothing less than his assumption of power, and the sound of bells and trumpets served, among other things, to legitimize this legal act. However, the splendour of sound was by no means limited to volume during entry ceremonies. Minstrels and singers sounded music on roadsides during the processions, which often lasted several hours. Music was not a mere accompaniment; it served “to structure time” as well as “to elaborate content” (Bölling, 2009, p. 248). Entries in the context of an Imperial Diet involved many different groups of people. In addition to the secular and ecclesiastical dignitaries and their entourages, the official representatives of the hosting city were involved. Several thousand people marched in long processions through narrow streets. Not only the Empire but also the host city “presented itself as a community” (Schweers, 2009, p. 39). This sprawling self-portrayal has led the historian Gerrit Jasper Schenk to characterize imperial entries as a form of theatre (Schenk, 2003, p. 40).

Around 1500, we discover a great variety of festive and ceremonial cultures throughout Europe. Fuelled by the popularity of Francesco Petrarca’s *Trionfi*, in Italy there was a quite elaborate culture for glamorous processions as early as the 15th century (Cummings, 1992). While the traditions in Rome, the *joyeuses entrées* in the Netherlands, or the magnificent *entrées solennelles* in France have already been studied with regard to music (Tammen, 2008; Chartrou, 1928; Fenlon, 2004), this aspect has been largely neglected so far for the ceremonial of the Holy Roman Empire (Bölling, 2009). The reason for this deficit is presumably not only a lack of scholarly interest or the absence of sources. It is probably also due to the rather sober appearance of the Empire’s ceremonial – especially in contrast to other regions of the continent. Typical elements of the *joyeuses entrées* such as fireworks or *tableaux vivants* are only documented towards the middle of the 16th century. Thus, scholars hoping for reports of imperial processions that approach the splendour of festivals in other parts of Europe are likely to be disappointed. However, the lack of “artistic” splendour certainly does not mean that the imperial ceremonial was not characterized by a remarkable richness of acoustic expressions.

Entries in the age of Maximilian were usually divided into two main parts. During the first secular part of the procession the emperor was welcomed outside the city by princes and local dignitaries and then led into the town in a large procession. This part was acous-

tically shaped by the playing of the emperor's trumpeters and those of the imperial princes, as well as gun salutes, bell ringing, and the cheering of the people at the roadside. The second (ecclesiastical) section of the ceremonial, in which the dignitary was led to the main church for a concluding service by the urban clergy, was additionally accompanied by the singing of liturgical music, for which each diocese had its own regime. The trumpeters of the imperial princes were distributed throughout the procession, while the imperial court music, which always provided the largest number of musicians, usually rode in close proximity to their lord (Kelber, 2018, pp. 84–100).

Item am 25. tag aprilis, was am sonntag acht tag nach oster, gen der nacht umb sibem, reit ein der römisch kaiser Friedrich. Man rit im entgegen bis für sant Servaci, dann er kam von Saltzburg her, [...]. [A]lso het man ain kostlichen weiten himel [Baldachin] gemacht, darinn das reich gemalt, mit vergulden standen. Den himel trugen ob dem kaiser vier von räten, [...]. [A]m ersten raiten vil grafen, ritter und edel, darnach 14 trummeter, die pliesen; darnach des kaisers sun, hertzog Maximilian, [...] (Hegel, 1892, pp. 237–238).

Item: on 25 April, which was a Sunday eight days after Easter, at about seven o'clock in the evening, the Roman emperor Frederick rode in. One rode to meet him in front of St. Servatius, because he came from the direction of Salzburg. [...] For this occasion, a beautiful canopy was made with golden carrying rods, in which the imperial eagle was worked in. This canopy was carried above the emperor by four members of the city council. [...] First rode many counts, knights, and nobles, behind them 14 trumpeters playing their instruments. Then [came] the emperor's son, Duke Maximilian, [...].¹

This description of the entry of Emperor Frederick III and his son Maximilian into Augsburg in the context of a *Hoftag* gathering in 1473 already shows the pattern that would characterize the chronicles of the Imperial Diets for decades to come, not only in Augsburg but throughout the Empire. The Augsburg patrician Hektor Müllich here describes 14 trumpeters riding directly in front of Archduke Maximilian. The mention of the number and the direct proximity of the musicians to their employer can even be found in texts that are otherwise rather sparse with descriptions of acoustic impressions. Although a ruler's procession was certainly a soundscape co-created by numerous actors, the emphasis on the acoustic dominance of the emperor in many contemporary accounts is quite clear. After all, the emperor took possession of the Reichstag's venue for the duration of the event, a process I have called "klangliche Inbesitznahme" or "acoustic appropriation" (Kelber, 2018, p. 209). It seems, however, to be less about the actual volume of the performance and more

¹ Unless indicated otherwise, the translations in this chapter are by the author.



Fig. 1: Anonymous, *Augsburger Tanzbild*, c. 1500.

about a symbolic (numerical) superiority, for the playing of the trumpeters and the drumming of the timpanists must have been rather difficult to hear amid the roar of the salutes and the ringing of bells.

The courtly life of the late Middle Ages and the early modern period was shaped by banquets and balls. Maximilian and his court celebrated frequently and lavishly. Furthermore, these festivities were also extensively documented in the emperor's representational writings (Fink, 1992). Augsburg was one of his favourite cities and one may assume that he knew the local dance hall very well. One important documentation of the local dancing culture is the so-called *Augsburger Tanzbild* from the time around 1500 (Fig. 1). It shows citizens at some form of processional dance. The dancers, whose names are explicitly given in the picture, can almost all be situated in the Augsburg upper class (Kelber, 2019). The composition of the society framing the dance is less clear-cut. Some scholars think they can identify Bianca Maria Sforza, Maximilian's wife, and her entourage on the tribune at the right edge of the picture (Habich, 1911). Indeed, the queen was present in Augsburg in

1500 for the Imperial Diet, which makes this assumption at least plausible. For the topic at hand, however, the picture is more significant as a document of the symbolic importance of dancing in the time of Maximilian. Although it only hints at actual contemporary dance practices, it gives us an idea of the processional character of a *basse danse*, the dominant dance in Europe at that time. Festivals like that embodied the idea of “to see and to be seen” – and, to a certain extent, the idea of “to hear and to be heard”.

Physical distance played an important role in all pre-modern festive cultures. In courtly life, a person’s rank was expressed by their distance from the highest-ranking personality (Kelber, 2018, p. 125): The closer a duke, bishop, or patrician rode to an emperor during a procession, the higher was his position in the hierarchy of the Empire (Schenk, 2003, p. 306; Rudolph, 2011, p. 105). Dancing was one of the most intense forms of physical proximity in public, indeed, the touching of hands could establish a special form of connection between political actors. A particularly vivid example of the focus on order and hierarchy can be found in Andreas Zayner’s chronicle of the Imperial Diet of Cologne in 1505. He describes a magnificent banquet at the meeting of the estates, which was immediately followed by a ball.

Item zu dem banket sind ob 1000 essen geben und ganz zierlich zugericht und sein gesessen bey zwey stunden. Und and kgl. Mt. tafel ist gesessen die H[erzo]gin. von Lunenburg an ir B[ischo]f von Trier K[ur]f[ürst], darnach ain G[rä]fin von Waldeck, an sie H[erzo]g Fridrich von Sachsen, zu der linken seiten ain G[rä]fin von Nassau, ist ain L[and]g[rä]fin von Hessen, an sy Pf[alz]g[raf] Philips K[ur]f[ürst], an in ain G[rä]fin von Hanau, ist ain M[ark]g[rä]fin von Baden, an sy M[ark]g[raf] Joachim K[ur]f[ürst] etc. Dargegen uber M[ark]g[raf] Fridrich, H[erzö]g[e] von Brauensweig, Wirtenberg, Hessen, und alwegen ain frau zwischen in.

Den ersten tanz hat ir k[öni]g[lich] M[ajes]t[ät] mit der H[erzo]gin von Lunenburg, den andern der B[ischo]f von Trier mit der von Nassau, den dritten tanz M[ark]g[raf] Joachim mit der G[rä]fin. von Hanau, den vierden H[erzo]g. Fridrich von Sachsen, und hat solche banket gewert drey or gen tag (Heil, 2008, p. 1202).

Item: about 1,000 meals were served at the banquet and were arranged very nicely, and they sat for two hours. And at the king’s table sat the Duchess of Lüneburg, next to her the Bishop and Elector of Trier; then a Countess of Waldeck, next to her Duke Frederick of Saxony; on the left side a Countess of Nassau, who is a Landgravine of Hesse, next to her Elector Philip (of the Palatinate); next to him a Countess of Hanau, who is a Margravine of Baden, next to her, Elector Joachim (of Brandenburg), etc. Opposite, Margrave Friedrich, the Dukes of Brunswick, Württemberg, Hesse, and always a woman between them.

The first dance was danced by the king with the Duchess of Lüneburg, the second by the

Bishop of Trier with the [Countess] of Nassau, the third by Margrave Joachim with the Countess of Hanau, the fourth by Duke Friedrich of Saxony. And the banquet lasted until five o'clock in the morning.

Detailed lists of dance couples and their order that can be found throughout the chronicles of the 16th century. This may seem obsessive at first glance, however, these lists underline the ceremonial character of courtly dancing. Since mixed-sex dancing enjoyed great popularity in late medieval and early modern Europe, dancing – unlike many other court rituals and ceremonies – required the involvement of women. Female courtiers thus became part of courtly representation and political action. Reports of dance festivities are often the only evidence of the presence of women in the context of important political events (Kelber, 2018, pp. 124–131). As can be seen from the cited chronicle from 1505, in which the women, unlike the men, are only mentioned by their title but not by name, the court ladies and burgesses were by no means self-determining actors on the stage of the dance hall. They were, on the contrary, mere instruments of political influence (McManus, 2002, p. 55). An anecdote from the Reichstag in 1518 seems instructive in this context: In a letter to his city council, a Regensburg envoy complains that it was easier (for a man) to get a hearing at the imperial court if he had pretty daughters than through diplomatic efforts (Gemeiner, 1824, p. 330, fn. 641).

The idea of *acoustic appropriation* (klangliche Inbesitznahme) can help to understand early modern dance culture. In 1504, Maximilian was again in Augsburg for a meeting that sought to settle the Bavarian succession dispute. This so-called *Schiedstag* (a meeting dealing with the resolution of a specific conflict) was marked by exuberant festivities. On 31 January 1504, it was not Maximilian himself but Duchess Kunigunde of Austria, Maximilian's sister and the wife of Bavarian Duke Albrecht IV, who had invited the guests to the city's dance hall. Numerous dignitaries present at the *Schiedstag* had accepted her invitation.

Item am Dornstag jn der nacht hatt er ain kostlich momerei gehapt, daby ist sein schwester die hertzogin und jr tochtren drei und etliche fürsten und vil vom adel gewesen uff dem tanzhuss, da ist m. h. king komen wol mit 70 personen bj den 40 spilleuten all in puren kleiden geklait und sunst by 30 person auch in purn clait geklait, darunder send 6 junckfrowen und frowen burgerin gewessen und haben ain buren tantz gehabt, darnach haben sie die puren claiden abgethon und ist der king selb jn gulden stuck geclait gewesen und die sechs frowen ouch in rot karmesin atlas mit gulden stuck verbrent kostlich geklait und haben uff welsch getantz und luten geschlagen und ander saitenspiel gesungen [...] (Klüpfel, 1846, p. 498).

Item: on Thursday night, he held a magnificent mummery. His sister the duchess, and three of her daughters and several princes and many of the nobility were in the dance hall. The king came with about 70 people, 40 of whom were minstrels, all dressed in peasant clothes, and the other 30 were also dressed in peasant clothes – including 6 young women and burgesses – who danced a peasant dance. They then took off their peasant dresses. The king himself wore a golden brocade and the six women were splendidly dressed in crimson atlas, which was also interwoven with golden brocade, and they danced in Italian, played the lute, and sang to other stringed instruments.

Maximilian, who apparently was quite eager to celebrate, arrived somewhat late. Nevertheless, he made a roaring entrance, for he was accompanied by around 70 people. If the chronicle of the envoy of the city of Ulm is correct, he entourage included a total of 40 minstrels, all dressed as peasants. The peasant dance that followed was probably quite frivolous by courtly standards – all legitimized by the masquerade (Schnitzer, 1999, pp. 186–189). For a brief moment, the rigid corset of courtly etiquette was stripped away, only to be underlined all the more clearly a short time later. Beneath their peasant clothing, Maximilian and his companions wore a most splendid wardrobe. The number of 40 minstrels mentioned by the Ulm chronicler may reflect a sound impression rather than an exact number. Nevertheless, the king's appearance at his sister's party must be described as noisy. Indeed, on that evening, he took acoustic control of the Augsburg dance house. To grasp the political dimension of Maximilian's entrance, the concept of acoustic appropriation becomes helpful. Acoustic dominance of a space was important not only during processions, but also during dance festivals. Thus, the intentional design of a soundscape was one of the key instruments in the toolbox of symbolic communication.²

Enfeoffments and Tournaments

Another main pillar of the imperial ceremonial was the festive bestowal of a fief by the emperor or king (Kelber, 2018, pp. 107–114). These enfeoffments, which were frequently framed by lavish festivities, were the highlights of many Imperial Diets. During the reign of Maximilian, numerous acts of investiture took place in the open air (these are referred to as flag-enfeoffments). At these, the emperor presented himself to the imperial public as the undisputed sovereign. A splendid and expensive ceremony also promised glory and attention to the recipient of a fief. There is extensive evidence of the sound design of enfeoffments in the late Middle Ages from both textual and pictorial sources (Kelber, 2018,

² For the concept of “symbolic communication”, see Stollberg-Rilinger, 2008.

p. 112). However, descriptions of enfeoffments in the age of Maximilian hardly mention more than the presence of musicians. A chronicle of the 1505 Imperial Diet in Cologne is a good example of the lack of detailed descriptions from that period. It merely documents the trumpeters' participation.

An dem tag umb drey or nach mittag ist kgl. Mt. auf das tanzhaus komen, mit im all. Ff. mit pfaffen, und turnierten ganz zierlich. Haben sich die Kff., nemlich [...], all in irn abit anton und sind zu dem stal [= Stuhl], der mit guldin tuchen bedeckt gewesen gangen. Hat sich kgl. Mt. auch anton, ain ksl. cron aufgehapt und im die Kff. all entgegen. Damit die trumater aufblasen, hat Mgf. Fridrich kgl. Mt. das zepter und swert vorgetragen, also hat sich kgl. Mt. niedergesetzt und die Kff. neben ir Mt., und die andern Ff. des Reichs sind nachainander gestanden und die kgl. Mt. den nachfolgenden Ff. gelihen (Heil, 2008, p. 120).

That day at three o'clock in the afternoon the king came to the dance hall, together with all the ecclesiastical and secular princes, who held a beautiful tournament. Then the electors put on their robes and went to the throne, which was covered with golden cloths. The king also put on [his robe] – he was wearing an imperial crown – and the electors all went to meet him. When the trumpeters blew, Margrave Frederick [of Brandenburg] carried his sceptre and sword ahead of the king. So, the king sat down [on the throne] and the electors sat next to their majesty, and the other princes of the Empire stood one behind the other and the king conferred the fief on the following princes.

From the second half of the 16th century, however, there are more elaborate reports of enfeoffments – at a time in which enfeoffments in the open air had already become an exception (Kelber, 2018, pp. 341–352). These allow some conclusions about the acoustic design of the rituals in the *aetas Maximiliana*. Figure 2 shows a woodcut from 1566 depicting a feudal ceremony at the Imperial Diet of Augsburg (Steinberg, 1934). The illustration was created as an addition to one of the extensive printed reports documenting the event (Francolin, 1566a). Enfeoffments had become a media event in the course of the century (Rudolph, 2011, pp. 308–324). They were documented extensively in books that list the participants and describe every chapter of the ritual.³ The printed image shows the Weinmarkt, the square between the Fugger palaces, and the now-demolished Tanzhaus as it probably appeared in Maximilian I's time.

3 For the 1566 enfeoffments, see Francolin, 1566 and 1567; Mameranus, 1566.



Fig. 2: Enfeoffment at the Weinmarkt in Augsburg.

A closer look at the picture and in the extant chronicles reveals that the imperial trumpeters were placed on the huge wooden throne that was built for the enfeoffments which took place during the Diet. This display of the court musicians on a balcony directly above the emperor is of great symbolic power and reminds us of ephemeral festive architecture in other parts of Europe. However, during an enfeoffment, an emperor's highly decorated throne – unlike other ephemeral festive structures – was not only important for a few minutes during an entry procession, but was the absolute centre of attention for several hours. First and foremost, the presence of the trumpeters in the immediate vicinity of the emperor was the sounding representation of secular and military power. As mentioned elsewhere, this special positioning of the imperial court musicians as an “audible crown” – because of its almost altar-like appearance – had a sacral component, underlining as well the sovereign's God-given power as a ruler (Kelber, 2018, p. 348). A prince who received a fief – in our 1566 example, the Saxon Elector August – had to take care to have an appropriate acoustic representation as well. For the Augsburg celebrations, the acoustic counterpart to the imperial court music was formed by no fewer than 25 mounted trumpeters, recruited from both the Elector's retinue and other imperial princes (Kelber, 2018, p. 349).

Enfeoffments were complicated ceremonies in which an elector or duke, accompanied by his entourage, circled an emperor's throne several times on horseback. The ritual was probably intended to resemble a military manoeuvre, with the trumpeters' signals playing an important coordinating role in the narrow streets of a city, filled with large numbers of people. From the almost protocol-like reports of 1566, it becomes clear that every part of the ceremony was accompanied by at least one signal or fanfare. For the citizens present, the acoustic interplay between the two parties must have been a special experience: The playing of the court trumpeters was here no longer just an abstract symbol of secular power, but a very concrete means of military communication that preceded the galloping of armed knights in the middle of the city. It certainly also had a warning function. In his German chronicle, the herald Nicolaus Mameranus implies an acoustic rivalry between the two groups of trumpeters with phrases such as “gegeneinander geblasen” (“blowing against each other”) (Mameranus, 1566, fol. R4r.), which he only resolves at the end where he writes: “Es haben auch die Kay. und Churf. Trommeter, in sollichem abzug, wie gebreüchlich, uberlaut und herrlich geblasen.” (“The imperial and electoral trumpeters have, as is customary, blown excessively and magnificently in this departure”) (Mameranus, 1566, fol. S2v.). Here an additional layer of meaning becomes apparent: The joint music-making of the two groups at the end of the enfeoffment represented something like a happy end. It was the symbol of the unity of the Empire and could be understood as the material embodiment of the state itself.

There was hardly a big Imperial Diet during the reign of Emperor Maximilian that took place without tournaments. The princes of the Empire and the enthusiastic tournament

fighter Maximilian competed against each other in various types of contests (Fink, 1992; Breiding, 2012). Tournaments were already accompanied by music in the Middle Ages. The surviving textual and pictorial sources – although the state of research is more than sparse – show a broad spectrum of tournament music, ranging from the playing of courtly trumpeters and army timpanists, to typical alta-ensembles and field music with flutes and drums. Sometimes the competitions were framed by scenic episodes, chants (so-called *Devisen*), and the playing of all kinds of minstrels. It was quite common for the combatants to appear in so-called “tournois à theme”, that is, dressed as historical figures. The theme of the tournament also influenced the musical design (Lindell, 1990).

One of the more frequently discussed tournaments in the history of the Imperial Diets under Maximilian was the duel between the Roman king and Claude de Vaudrey in 1495 (Cuspinian, 1540, p. 729). It was documented in a woodcut depiction in Maximilian’s semi-fictional autobiography *Freydal* in the early 16th century.⁴ From a mid-16th-century description written by Johann Jakob Fugger and published in the 17th century by Sigmund von Birken, the acoustic structuring of the tournament becomes very clear.

Am neunten tag/ kamen beyde Helden/ wolgerüst und neben der Lanze mit einem langen Küris-Schwert bewehret/ in die Schranken. Keiner redte kein wort mit dem andern/ und als die Trompeter zum dritten mal aufbliesen/ legten sie beyderseits ein/ und trafen wol auf einander/ doch daß die Lanzen an den Hernischen abglichschten. [...] Endlich begunte K. Maximilian mit einem Stoß/ ihme zum herzen zuraumen: da dann der fremde Ritter sich erhabe/ und zusagte/ daß er an des Überwinders Hof sich gefangen stellen wollte. Also ward wieder aufgeblasen/ und K. mit jedermans frohlocken in sein Einlager begleitet (Fugger & Birken, 1668, pp. 1376–1377).

On the ninth day, both heroes came into the barriers well-armed and carrying a long sword in addition to the lance. Neither spoke a word to the other. And when the trumpeters blew their trumpets for the third time, they put in on both sides and hit each other, but in such a way that the lances slipped off the armour. [...] Finally, King Maximilian began to strike him in the heart with a blow: but then the foreign knight rose up and promised that he would surrender to the victor’s court. So, the trumpets were blown again, and the king was escorted to his camp amid the cheers of all.

The staggered signals of the trumpeters – the actual fight did not begin until the third call – drew the public’s attention to the beginning and end of the tournament of Worms.

4 See, Maximilian I, *Freydal*, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum (KHM), Kunstammer, Inv.-Nr. KK 5073, table 39. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/748481>. Date of Access: 27.01.2024.

But they also had a legal function, since after all they indicated to the fighters the beginning and end of this utterly dangerous sporting contest. To a certain extent, they marked and legitimized the space in which one was allowed to inflict violence on one's opponent.

The symbolic languages of tournaments and enfeoffments were remarkably close to each other. The celebrations both served primarily as a display of military power, and the complex choreographies could have hardly worked without coordination through sound signals. However, sound was not only a means to structure the schedule of these events. In both enfeoffments and tournaments, elements of military practices were transferred visually and acoustically into the centre of a city, offering the audience the opportunity to immerse themselves into a world known to many only from legends and stories. Imperial Diets offered both tournaments and enfeoffments to a particularly large public. In a society where the legitimacy of power was based primarily on personal testimony, the physical presence of a large number of people during such events was of particular importance (Stollberg-Rilinger, 2008, p. 64).

The question of exactly what music was played as part of ceremonies and rituals in the period around 1500 remains largely unresolved. For the first half of the 16th century, there is hardly any evidence from the German-speaking world providing detailed information about the fanfares and the signals of the time. In recent years, Silke Wenzel has been able to reconstruct a few melodies from the second half of the 16th and the 17th century, which probably also allow conclusions to be drawn about what the playing of court trumpeters might have sounded like at the time of Emperor Maximilian (Wenzel, 2012; 2018).

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An Imperial Diet is arguably a prime example of a *soundscape of power*. However, it is not a soundscape in a traditional sense. The acoustic space of the *Reichstag* was necessarily ephemeral. It manifested itself at different times in different places. Although its acoustic manifestation was influenced by the geographical conditions at the respective venue, the decisive factor for the sonic shape of the *Reichstag* was the imperial ceremonial and trans-regional festive cultures. The contrasting analysis of the soundscapes of the Imperial Diet in this paper shows that entries, dances, enfeoffments, and tournaments shared a sounding symbolic grammar that structured these ceremonies and festivities, reflected and embodied hierarchies, and even served as an instrument for waging conflicts.

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- Fig. 1: Anonymous, *Augsburger Tanzbild*, c. 1500, oil on canvas, 95.5×119 cm, Augsburg, Maximilianmuseum, Inv.-Nr. 3821.
- Fig. 2: *Enfeoffment at the Weinmarkt in Augsburg*, woodcut, 1566, Universitätsbibliothek Salzburg, Druckgraphiken, G 67 III.

