Leading Notes

JOURNAL OF

THE NATIONAL

EARLY MUSIC

ASSOCIATION

Spring 1996

Single copy price: £2.50

Leading Notes

Editor: Ann Lewis
Issue 11
Spring 1996

Contents

Published twice a year by NEMA, and issued free to members.
Enquiries about membership or subscriptions, as well as submissions for publication, should be directed to:
8 Covent Garden, Cambridge CB1 2HR; Tel. (0223) 315681

ISSN 0960-6297

Registered Charity No. 297300

Produced for NEMA by Duane Lakin-Thomas
on a NeXTstation, using FrameMaker.
Set in Palatino, 9.5/12.

NATIONAL EARLY MUSIC ASSOCIATION

A YANK AT OXFORD

David Skinner, musicologist and co-director of the Cardinall's Musick, talks to Helen Garrison.

'I hope I'm not late' says David Skinner as he tips headlong into my office at the BBC, breathless, flinging down his bag and flopping into the nearest chair. Behind the mop of rain-soaked, sandy brown hair and slightly steamed glasses, there is a definite sparkle in the eye which has been put there, no doubt, by his previous meeting with colleague and co-director of the vocal ensemble the Cardinall's Musick, Andrew Carwood. Over an enthusiastic pasta lunch, these two young musicians have just planned a recording project with ASV that will take them well into the next century. As well as continuing with their award-winning series of music by Fayrfax, the Cardinall's Musick will soon begin the enormous task of recording the complete works of a major English composer. His identity at present remains a closely guarded secret, but the project will ensure that David Skinner and Andrew Carwood continue cutting discs for the next decade and beyond, which, at the ages of thirty-one and thirty respectively, is a comforting future for two men just beginning an undoubtedly illustrious career.

The Cardinall's Musick was officially founded in 1989. Their debut CD of music by John Sheppard, released in 1991, didn't exactly take the critics or the public by storm. This was followed by a series of recordings of works by Nicholas Ludford which, by contrast, won critical acclaim, putting the group firmly on the musical map. Now they are current holders of the *Gramophone* Early Music Award with the first release of their ongoing Fayrfax series. All this was being achieved while David Skinner, doing research for the choir and for his D.Phil. in tandem, was busy making one of the most important musicological discoveries in recent years.

This rapid rise to success and recognition both as a musicologist and choir director has left David Skinner somewhat dazed. Far from being arrogant or smug, however, he is convinced that his adult musical life has been fated from the start. That may well be true to some extent, but one earns fate, and there is no doubt that David laid the foundations well and truly before luck took a hand in his academic life.

Growing up in Fresno, California, David showed an interest in music from a young age, but only one friend shared his enthusiasm. The two boys would spend many happy hours with a tape machine in the school yard, listening to the complete works of J. S. Bach on cassettes obtained cheaply from a chain music store, The Wherehouse. When, a few years later, a tape of Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli* became entangled in the machine of his truck, David had to listen to it again and again for six months. He knew the piece so well that he could easily sing along with it, and it soon became apparent that he was quite a good counter tenor – a creature even more alien to the youths of California. An encounter with the touring King's Singers followed by a brief student trip to England convinced David that Britain was the right country for him. After obtaining a Masters degree at Edinburgh University he secured a Choral Scholarship at Christ Church, Oxford, where he found his spiritual home, and married the Baroque flautist Christine Garratt.

Here, life took an idyllic turn for him. Having had to search hitherto for nuggets of musical nourishment, suddenly he was thrown into a routine of rehearsals, Evensong, visits to the pub, socializing until very late with like-minded people, getting up late, cramming in some necessary study and tipping straight into chapel again – a routine well rehearsed by generations of Oxbridge choral scholars both male and female.

Skinner admits that his first priority in those days was to experience the Oxbridge choral scholar life. However, he had to justify being there so his chosen subject for research was a comparison of the Caius and Lambeth Choirbooks, two enormous volumes of music compiled in the 1520s and containing a large source of works by Fayrfax and Ludford, among others. 'At first, the study was simply a way of passing the time when choral duties and social life were lacking', David confesses, 'but meanwhile I was being exposed to Anglican liturgy, which was invaluable'.

The choir at Christ Church sings nine services a week and there is an intense pressure to sight-read perfectly first time through and maintain a high standard of vocal performance, whatever the state of the hangover. The inexperienced American, not having had the cathedral chorister background enjoyed by many of his colleagues, found all this a bit of a shock and had to work extremely hard to keep up musically. Sight singing was not second nature so he had to do his homework or be ridiculed by the other scholars. Soon the liturgy became a part of him and he surrounded himself with music.

Facsimiles of the Caius and Lambeth Choirbooks lay open on David's desk all the time and for four years he listened to nothing but music written between 1450 and 1550. His work may not have been proactive, but he was absorbing the repertory like a sponge. When editing John Taverner's *Missa Mater Christi*, for example, he worked during sermons in

chapel. The score remained in David's choir stall throughout, partly because of a superstition that Taverner might still influence those housed in his former place of work, and partly because the atmosphere lent itself to reconstructing a religious service. In 1990 Christ Church choir recorded the result, Andrew Carwood (at that time a lay clerk in the choir) reconstructed the liturgy and a new musical partnership was born.

A few years later, the newly founded Cardinall's Musick secured a contract to record the complete works of Nicholas Ludford with ASV, a relatively young company keen to uncover unknown repertory. At that time very little was known about the life of this enigmatic composer despite his music being readily available and admired. The choir was over half way through the recording project when David decided that perhaps it was time to do a bit of digging around to back up their musical endeavours.

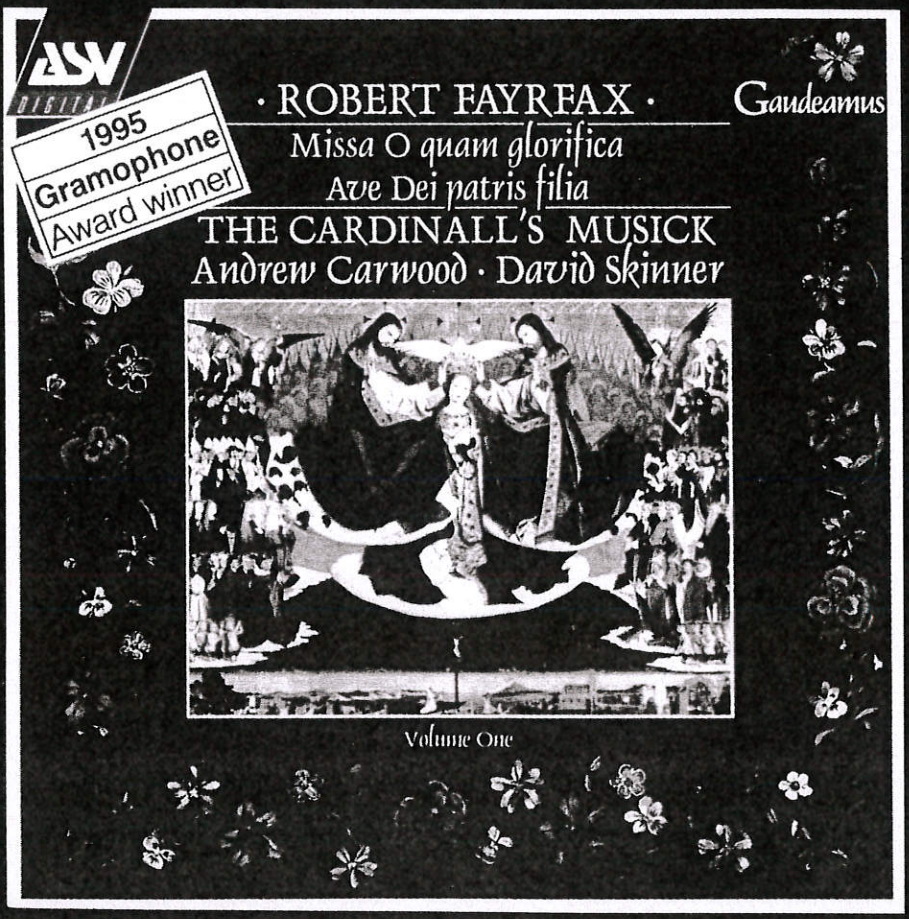
There followed the most extraordinary series of coincidences and luck which David is sure must have been guided by some external force. In 1992 Christine was playing in a concert in Westminster Abbey where she met a canon who took an interest in her husband's work and invited him to look at the archives which are housed there. On his first day riffling through the Abbey's records, David spotted Ludford's burial register. That afternoon he continued his search at the Westminster City Archives where he found Ludford's will. On wandering into the Public Records Office, he immediately found Ludford's employment certificate. It seems that Skinner only had to make an educated guess as to what he might find in a particular place, and there it was. Between the months of November

David Skinner (left) and Andrew Carwood, of Cardinall's Musick.

The 1995 Gramophone Awards

WINNER
EARLY MUSIC CATEGORY

Gaudeamus



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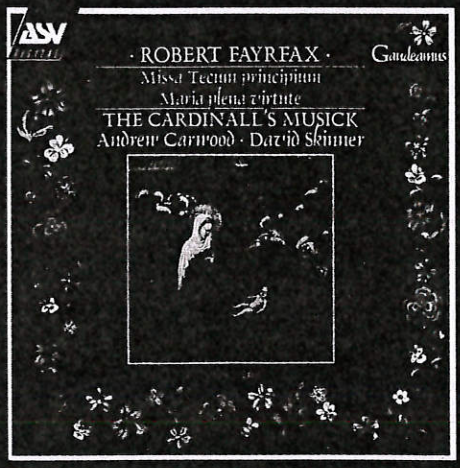

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1993 and January 1994, as well as these major documents, he uncovered signatures, pension certificates and accounts, and by the following August his discoveries were published in *Early Music*.

It must be emphasized that most of these documents were known to have existed by historians such as Fiona Kisbey and David Wulstan who had published information about John Sheppard but failed to mention that his will-register appears in the same volume as that of Ludford. As far back as 1898 the documents had been catalogued, but unless one knows where to look, how does one know where and what to find?

David's lucky charm even accompanied him on a radio collaboration with myself and Christopher Page recently broadcast on Radio 4. Visiting St Margaret's Church, Westminster, where Ludford is now known to be buried, it just so happened that I had employed the services of medieval historian Gervase Rosser, who, after a certain amount of pondering, pinpointed the exact spot where Ludford must have been laid to rest. The clues were in the architecture and traces of architectural features removed at the Reformation, linked with revealing quotes from the will, and a known connection with a particular part of the church. As we stood gazing down at the polished flag stone beneath us, marvelling at our new find, David was hopping excitedly from foot to foot. His restless enthusiasm is reminiscent of a schoolboy who has unexpectedly uncovered a stash of brightly gleaming conkers.

Most scholars would have been content to have discovered all this information in a life time, but David had not finished his D.Phil. by the time he went into print. Despite the fact that as much, if not more, was now known about Ludford than any other composer of the period, there was more to come, and of a much more significant nature.

One day Skinner was reading an article which showed the bass part of a work by Ludford. Suddenly he noticed that it was in the same hand as that of the Caius and Lambeth Choirbooks. The fragment was known to have come from Arundel College, which had not featured hitherto at all in the mystery of the books' origins. More digging in archives followed, and the story of the Caius and Lambeth Choirbooks unfolded before his eyes.

The connection between the books, the fragment and Arundel College is one Edward Higgins, a lawyer from Shropshire who retired to Arundel College as master in 1520. He was honoured with one of the ultimate golden handshakes of the day when he was appointed a non-resident canon at St Stephen's Chapel which now lies under the Houses of Parliament and where Ludford worked as a verger and organist. The Lambeth Choirbook was the working book at Arundel, the Caius Choirbook, a much grander volume, was a presentation copy given to St Stephen's Chapel. The unknown hand which wrote both books and the fragment may well have belonged to Humphrey Higgins, brother of Edward and a singer by profession. Everything soon fits into place, such as a previously unexplained inscription inside the cover of the Caius book which now obviously relates to Arundel. Now these two books, the biggest of their kind to survive from the reign of Henry VIII, are no longer a mystery thanks to David's keen eye and his tendency to leave things lying around open on his desk.

As a result of his latest discovery, the Cardinall's Musick now makes all its recordings in Arundel Chapel which has a splendid acoustic and few of those external noises which are the scourge of contemporary recording sessions. Like many of the current groups singing repertory originally written for men and boys, the Cardinall's Musick has women singing the soprano lines. 'I think it's closer to the original sound', David explains, 'because the boys would have been much older and more mature. Women add the extra musicality and strength to a repertory that is extremely hard. There was a boy at Christ Church last year who was very mature for his age, and he sounded more like one of the women in the Cardinall's Musick than a more conventional, breathy chorister. It was only when he sang low that he sounded more masculine.' In the early sixteenth century Christ Church may well have had an army of sixteen boy choristers like most contemporary cathedral choirs, but it was unusual. Most collegiate chapels had between four and seven choristers, closer to the numbers used today in mixed early music choirs.

Skinner usually scores the music of Ludford and Fayrfax for soprano, alto, two tenor lines and bass. 'I don't believe human nature has changed over the centuries and neither have the voices', he argues, 'only the accents have altered. I like to perform at a pitch that is suitable for everybody.' In other words he hasn't succumbed to the high pitch theory prevalent in Oxford in recent years. This would seem to follow on naturally from what had gone before, as most medieval repertory was scored for altos and tenors, the top line and lower bass lines arriving later. Push the pitch up too high and the bass line disappears while the sopranos soar into the stratosphere and develop nodes. With the pitch lower down, the full richness of the music blossoms.

Having immersed themselves in this kind of music for so long, the members of the Cardinall's Musick now find no difficulty switching into the appropriate style which can sometimes be quite alien to less-experienced singers. David Skinner is especially appreciative of his co-director who does the conducting. 'Andrew Carwood has great insight as to where the sign posts are now. Interpretation is far less painful than it used to be.' At first both Andrew and David sang with the choir, but now Andrew keeps solely to conducting and David produces the recordings. 'We

always have a good time at recording sessions and I think that's our secret. Andrew plays the nice guy at rehearsals, making everybody laugh and enjoy themselves, and I'm the nasty one who runs around criticizing tuning and tempo.' This is hard to believe of the charming man swivelling gleefully on the office chair in front of me, but there's no doubting his almost obsessive enthusiasm. 'I would love to record all the Ludford again in Arundel now that I know that's where it should be', he says wistfully. 'In Arundel Chapel one can really take the music by the scruff of the neck and shake it into life.'

Going over old ground is not on the agenda, though, while new projects push in on all sides. Skinner now wants to take up his forgotten skills as a classical guitarist and learn to play the lute. He has maintained his singing career with Christ Church and with another up-and-coming early music group, A Capella Portuguesa. The media are taking more and more of an interest in the Cardinall's Musick and broadcasts are now sprinkled through the yearly schedule. Before the forthcoming (as yet un-named) grand recording project gets under way, they will be completing the Fayrfax series, and there are planned releases of Merbecke in July and various other English composers of the period including William Cornysh. Apparently, David has discovered that the music formerly attributed to William Jnr may not have been written by the Cornysh we know and love, but by his father – William Cornysh Snr; another important find. 'I must admit it's hard to keep the discoveries going. I now feel that everything has to be new and major. I even have something else up my sleeve at the moment which I can't yet reveal,' he hints. I glance at him enquiringly, but am rewarded merely with an enigmatic grin. 'It's all out there somewhere', he concludes, and with a brief farewell, he picks up his bag and hurries back out into the world to find it. ❖

Helen Garrison is a producer on BBC Radio 4's Kaleidoscope, presenter of Radio 3's Music Restored, and a professional singer

THE ENGLISH CADENCE

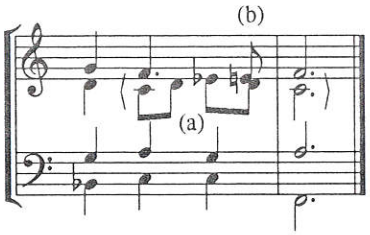
Jeremy Summerly

Jeremy Summerly is Head of Academic Studies at the Royal Academy of Music, London, and the conductor of Schola Cantorum of Oxford and the Oxford Camerata.

In choirs and places where they sing, the English cadence is both recognized and abused. However, outside the womb of the English choral tradition the term means little, and formal definitions are few and far between. *The New Grove*[1] has no entry under this title. Willi Apel's *Harvard Dictionary of Music*[2] and Percy Scholes's *Oxford Companion to Music,*[3] normally so helpful in this type of search, are similarly blank. Neither do earlier reference works give a definition: no mention is made of the English cadence in Jeffrey Pulver's *Dictionary of Old English Music,*[4] in Gustave Reese's *Music in the Renaissance,*[5] in any of the five editions of *Grove's Dictionary,*[6] nor (most surprisingly) in Edmund Fellowes's *English Cathedral Music.*[7]

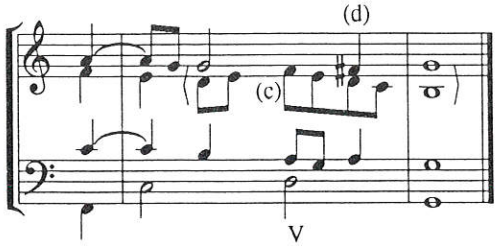
However, *The New Oxford Companion to Music*[8] includes the term in the article entitled 'Cadence', where reference is made to the 'striking dissonances' associated with the English cadence and where its 'persistent appearance' is noted 'in English seventeenth-century music by Purcell and his contemporaries'. An example of the English cadence is quoted without citation (see Ex. 1).

Example 1:



This does not entirely concur with the received definition of an English cadence. The English cadence melody is incomplete (a) and the false relation (b) is too close to the apex of the melody. Granted, the above certainly qualifies as a type of English cadence, but it does not represent the received archetype as in the following extract from Thomas Morley's *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (see Ex. 2).[9]

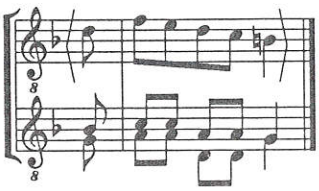
Example 2:



The English cadence comprises a decorated perfect cadence with two very specific features: one melodic, the other harmonic. The melody rises by step to the flattened seventh of the key and falls by step to the third of the key (c). Meanwhile, the dominant chord (V) is sounded simultaneously with the melodic flattened seventh, and at the point where the melody has fallen to the fifth degree another voice sounds the sharpened seventh (d). The English cadence creates its distinctive aural frissance by combining a plangent melodic arch with a harmonic false relation.

Given that the English cadence is an embellishment of a perfect cadence, its occurrence would not be expected in music before the Renaissance period. Indeed, one of the earliest examples of its use in England is in William Cornysh's delightful early sixteenth-century song 'Ah, Robin' where the English cadence is heard in the highest-sounding voice at the end of every complete statement of the round (see Ex. 3).

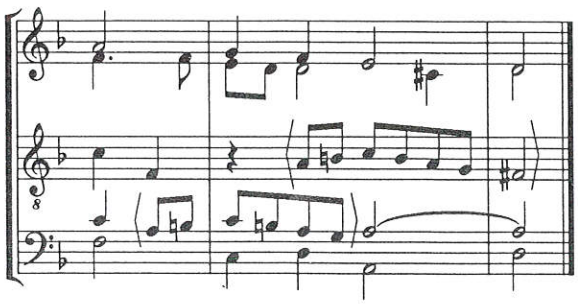
Example 3:



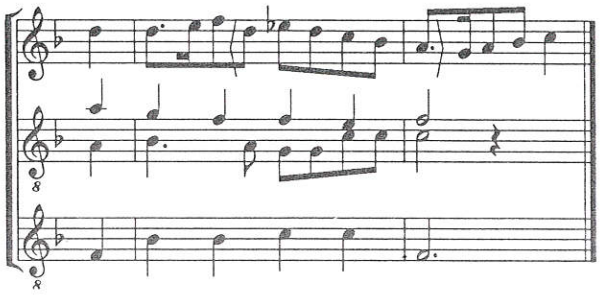
The distinctive melodic outline of the English cadence is the perfect musical punctuation mark for the bitter-sweet text of 'Ah, Robin'. Having said that, Cornysh's version of the English cadence does not fulfil all of the technical criteria required of the archetype. The apex of the melodic arch is *not* approached by step and does *not* give way to a false relation.

The English cadence had become a musical cliché by the end of the sixteenth century. In 1597 Thomas Morley discussed the use of the English cadence in his treatise *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music.* Morley describes the English cadence (although he does not use the term) as 'both naught and stale, like unto a garment of a strange fashion, which being put on for a day or two will please because of the novelty, but being worn threadbare will grow in contempt'.[10] Morley also criticizes use of the false relation (although again the term is not used) and denounces it as having been 'robbed out of the capcase of some old Organist' and 'in too much estimation heretofore amongst the very chiefest of our musicians'.[11] The 'chiefest musician' of the age was undoubtedly William Byrd to whom *A Plain and Easy Introduction* was dedicated, and Byrd evidently held the English cadence in high enough esteem to write a double English cadence towards the end of the *Nunc Dimit-*

tis of his Short Service (see Ex. 4).
Example 4:

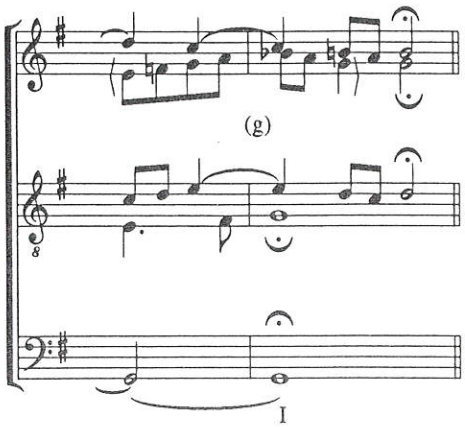


Presumably Morley also saw himself as one of England's 'chiefest musicians', but one who was perhaps above the law. Certainly Morley himself was capable of using the English cadence as, for example, in his madrigal 'Round around about a wood' published only three years after *A Plain and Easy Introduction* (see Ex. 5).
Example 5:

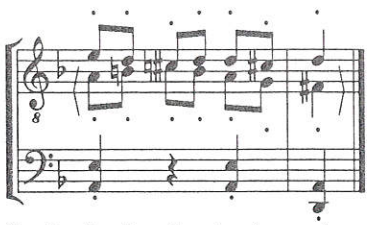


All of the features of the received definition of the English cadence are present in this example. Ironically it seems that Morley's diatribe against the English cadence went some way towards codifying its definition and thereby securing its future. The English cadence remained a stock-in-trade of English composers throughout the seventeenth century, as for example in the music of Thomas Tomkins whose Voluntary in D^{12} contains over twenty English cadences in well under two minutes. By the time of the Restoration the English cadence was as much in vogue as ever. Morley must have turned in his grave during the coronation service of King James II in April 1685 where Blow, Turner, Child and Purcell were, quite literally, writing English cadences for Britain. In particular, the twenty-five-year old Purcell was using the device in an almost virtuosic way; but Purcell was no slave to the received formula of the English cadence and each appearance of the gesture in his music is tempered by its context. The unjustly neglected coronation anthem 'I was glad' is a case in point. At the beginning of the final section of the anthem Purcell athletically sets the word 'Glory' three times, the final statement of which is overwhelmed by a truncated English cadence in the Tenor part (e) (see Ex. 6, next page).

The baton is passed quickly to the altos who begin the gesture only to find that the cadence never arrives and that their F is a simple modal alteration (f) rather than the apex of an English cadence. This example shows Purcell simultaneously doffing his cap to his musical elders while proving to them that anything they can do, he can do more inventively. The final cadence of 'I was glad' is similarly ingenious. Here Purcell seemingly achieves the impossible by placing the apex of the English cadence (g) above the tonic (I) rather than above the more usual dominant (see Ex. 7).
Example 7:



Not surprisingly, the English cadence has made reappearances in our own century, particularly in works of a deliberately retrospective nature. Written in 1926, Peter Warlock's *Capriol Suite*, although based on *French* Renaissance melodies, contains a wonderfully brash English cadence at the end of the basse-danse with the indication: ***fff*** stridently (see Ex. 8).
Example 8:



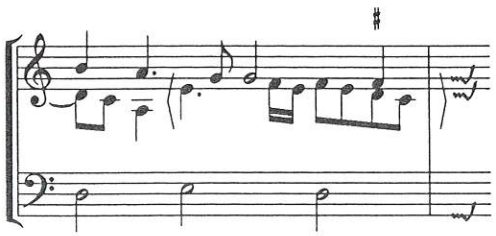
More reflectively, the chaste atmosphere of Herbert Howells's 'Gloucester' Service, written at the end of 1945, is nothing less than a fantasia on the English cadence melody. The months immediately following the ending of the Second World War were bound to elicit music that looked back on aspects of a specifically English heritage with a heartfelt mixture of pride and nostalgia. The English cadence melody is the basis of most of the thematic material in the 'Gloucester' Service, nowhere more meaningfully than at the words 'world without end' (see Ex. 9, next page).

The English cadence has survived the last five hundred years intact (although its name has only emerged in the last forty years) and its Englishness is rarely questioned in spite of the evidence to the contrary. Iberian composers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for instance, used the gesture as if it were their own, and in the latter part of the seventeenth century

the Spanish composer Juan Cabanilles became infatuated with it in his second Pasacalles[13] where a dozen English cadences appear in less than half a minute.[14]

However, the English cadence is no more Iberian than it is English. At root the gesture is French, and Peter Warlock's apparent miscalculation in the *Capriol Suite* is nothing of the sort, although it seems unlikely that Warlock himself was aware of that fact. The earliest examples of the use of the so-called English cadence can be traced back to the emergence of a distinctively French rather than Franco-Flemish School of composers at the very beginning of the sixteenth century. Along with Josquin, Compère, and Pierre de la Rue, one of the finest composers of this national school was Antoine Brumel. His *Missa Et ecce terrae motus* (the 'Earthquake Mass') has received much attention recently, most obviously because it is written for twelve independent voices, an apparently unique experiment of its time. The originality and subsequent influence of this Mass is further enhanced by the inclusion of an 'English cadence' towards the end of the second section of the Gloria (see Ex. 10).

Example 10:



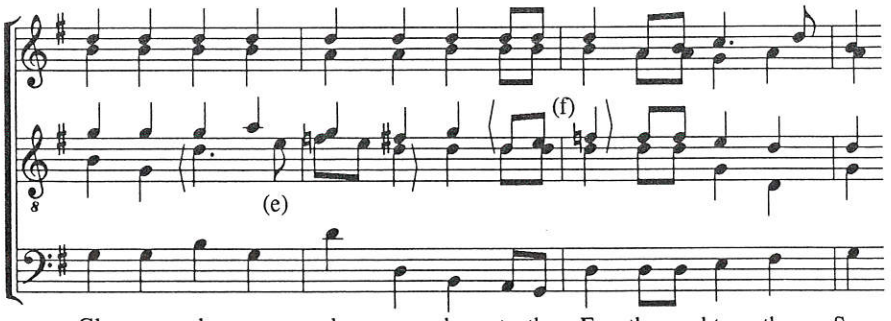
Ultimately, the nomenclature of the English cadence is justified because no other nation has used the gesture so consistently over such a long period of time. However, while it is always wise for the English to remember the Norman invasion of 1066 when assessing their cultural roots, English musicians would be similarly well advised to be aware of the fact that their national cadence was originally served with a strong garlic dressing. ❖

Many of the ideas in this article began life in a series of five BBC Radio 3 programmes commissioned as part of the 1995 'Fairest Isle' celebrations; the series was first broadcast on 6–10 February and repeated on 4–8 September. The English Cadence was written and presented by Jeremy Summerly and produced by Antony Pitts, with contributions from John Byron, David Trendell, Jonathan Freeman-Attwood and Geoffrey Smith.

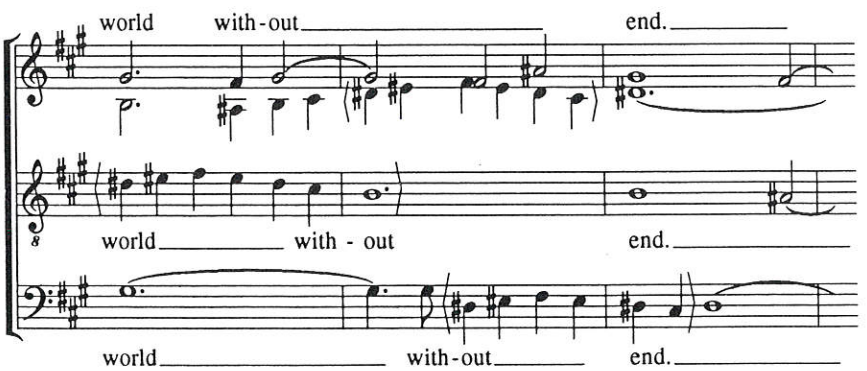
Footnotes

1 London, 1980.
2 2nd edition London, 1970.
3 10th edition London, 1970.
4 London, 1923.
5 2nd edition New York, 1959.
6 1st edition 1879–89; 2nd edition 1904–10; 3rd edition 1927–8; 4th edition 1940; 5th edition 1951 (supplement 1960).
7 5th edition London, 1969.
8 Oxford, 1983.
9 London, 1597, p. 154; Morley ascribes this example to John Taverner.
10 *Ibid.*, p. 154.
11 *Ibid.*, p. 164.
12 *Thomas Tomkins Keyboard Music*, ed. S. Tuttle, Musica Britannica 5 (London, 1955), No. 30.
13 *J. B. Cabanilles: Opera omnia II*, ed. H. Anglès (Barcelona, 1933), 40–7.
14 *Ibid.*, bars 20–31.

Example 6:



Example 9:



A PURCELLIAN NOTE

Michael Graubart

The author is a composer, conductor and Senior Lecturer in Academic Studies at the Royal Northern College of Music. He was Director of Music of Morley College in London for many years.

Dido's recitative, 'Thy hand, Belinda', is one of those pieces of such compressed intensity that the change of a single note can radically affect the character of the whole. Some scholarly editions print, some performers sing, A♭, some A♮, on 'shades me' at the beginning of bar three.

The placing of accidentals in seventeenth-century manuscripts, and the notes to which they are intended to apply, are sometimes ambiguous. The figuring of the continuo part is no help: the absence of a flat at the beginning of bar three is invalidated as evidence for A♮ in the vocal line by the absence of a flat in the continuo figures at the end of the bar; *somewhere* in the bar a flat in the continuo figuring is missing – but where?

To compound the problem, the earliest surviving score (and probable source for later manuscripts) of *Dido and Aeneas*, the Tenbury manuscript, dates from the second half of the eighteenth century, and though, as Ellen Harris says in the Preface to the 1987 Eulenburg/O.U.P. edition, it 'preserves a late seventeenth-century notational style, indicating that it was copied from a much earlier source now lost', the very different conventions of accidental-placement obtaining in the copyist's lifetime may well have influenced their reading of the original source.

The argument in favour of A♭ essentially rests on the descending chromatic scale implicit in the vocal line, an argument strengthened by the relationship of this chromatic descent to the ground bass of the succeeding lament, 'When I am laid in earth'. This chromatic line is shown as 'Middleground' in the Example. ('Middleground' and 'Background' are used for purposes of identification, in a generally descriptive way. They are not intended to have strict Schenkerian connotations.)

As is indicated by the smaller note-heads in bar three, an A♮ at the beginning of this bar would create a hitch in the chromatic proceedings. But the argument from the inevitability and logic of the chromatic 'Middleground' descent is somewhat weakened by the absence of an F♯ around bars five and six, as well, perhaps, as by the anticipation of bar six's F♮ at the end of bar four (where the F is an important harmony note).

What the line marked 'Background', taken in conjunction with the continuo line, makes clear – and the vertical alignment of the bars in the two systems of the example is intended to bring this out – is the underlying form, simple and symmetrical in essence but subtle and complex in realization, of the whole recitative.

Its nine bars consist of two similarly structured five-bar phrases. Each is a I–IV–V imperfect cadence of four bars, extended to five by a Phrygian reiteration of the progression to the dominant. The first cadences on the dominant of C minor (how appropriate, too, to the words 'let me rest' is the imperfect dominant resting-place, which none the less is an unstable version of the tonic of the preceding music and anticipation of the final tonic of 'When I am laid in earth' and the sublime diatonic resolution of the chromatic falling lines in the chorus 'With drooping wings'); the second, a fourth lower, cadences on the dominant of G minor to lead into 'When I am laid in earth'.

As if to compensate by elision for the expansion by varied reiteration at the ends of the phrases, the last bar of the first phrase is also the first bar of the second. This double function of bar five (it is parallel both to bar one and to bar nine) is emphasized by the radical change of harmony in the middle of bar five. At the same time this continues the faster local harmonic rhythm of bar four (two harmonic roots per bar, as compared with one held for two bars and then one for a bar) across the junction of the two phrases, maintaining momentum through the caesura and unifying the whole recitative. That Purcell was very sensitive to this substratum of motion is shown by bar six, where the slowing of harmonic pulse to one chord per bar is smoothed over by the continuo's retention of two minims (in place of bar two's tied semibreve) despite the static harmony, the continuo's surface rhythm only slowing to a semibreve in bar seven.

There are motivic aspects of both the parallelism and the developing variations between the phrases, too. The clearest lies in the rhythms at the beginnings and ends of bars two and six; but the syncopated figure of the first half of bar four is both paralleled in bar eight and anticipated at the end of bar seven, so that the beginning of bar eight sounds both like a development of bar seven and a restoration of the parallelism to its equivalent in the first phrase, bar four.

The parallelism between the two overlapping phrases, and specifically between bars three and seven, strongly supports the A♮'s in bar three. Admittendly, strict parallelism would dictate A♮ at the end of bar two, also – or, possibly, E♭ in bar six; but in neither of these places is there any ambiguity in the notated accidentals; and the elision in bar five, which causes a compression of the text in bar six as compared with bar two, enforces a local elision in bar six whereby the fourth beat of bar six is rhythically the equivalent of the fourth beat of bar two, but melodically the equivalent of the *third* beat of bar two.

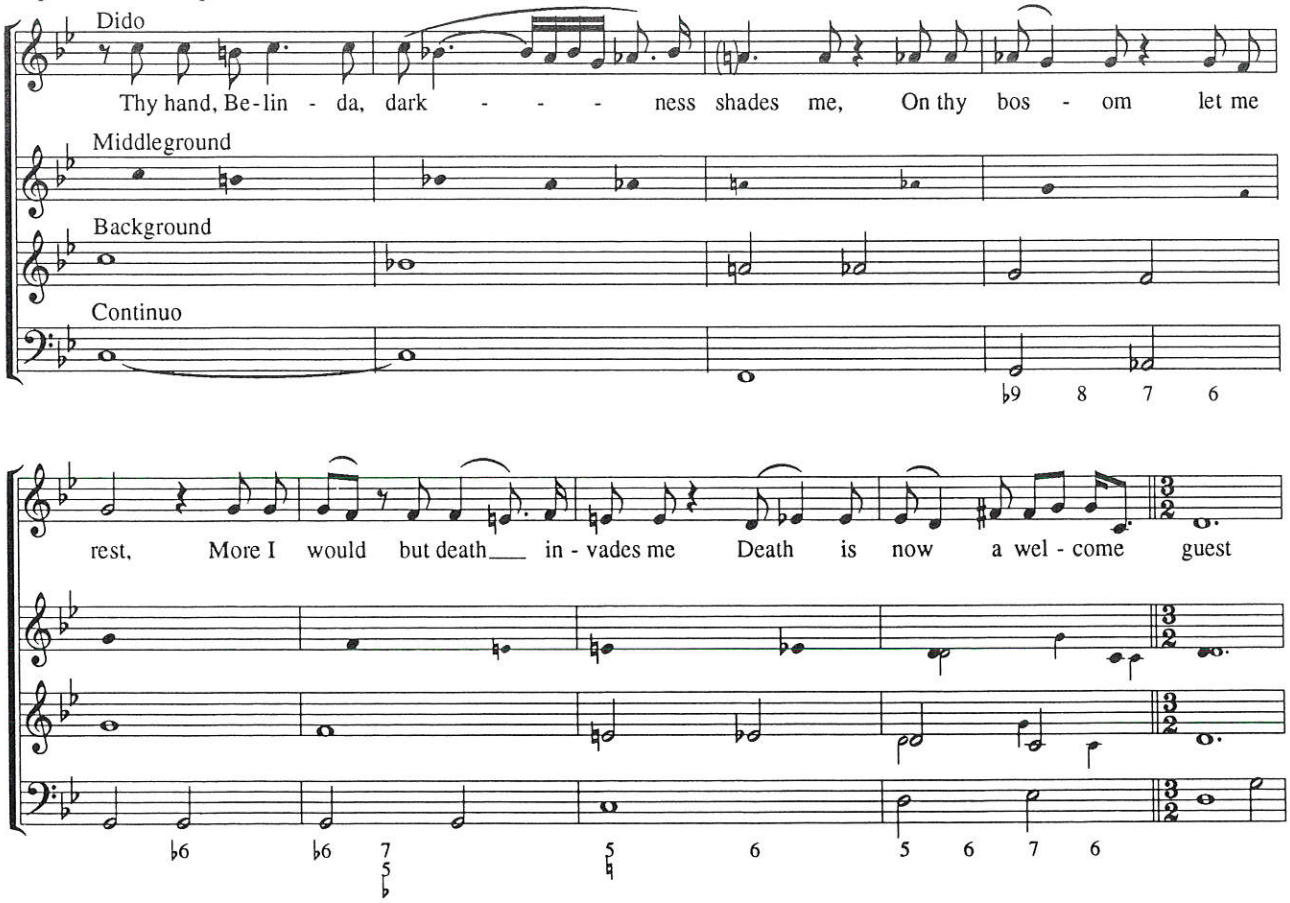
What are the expressive implications of the two readings of 'shades me' in bar three? At the end of the day, *they* are the purpose of all the agonizing about the pitch of these notes, and the decision must have important consequences for the way the singer accentuates and colours all the notes of this recitative.

In both readings, the flattening of the A on the fourth beat of bar two is a poignant expression of 'darkness'. If A♭ is chosen for 'shades me', prolonging the already flattened A, the metric position and duration of 'shades' demands, however, that the accentual and colouristic stress on the fourth beat of bar two be lightened in favour of that on the first beat of bar three – i.e., on the less emotive word 'shades'; the overall consequence of the emphasis on the uninterrupted chromatic descent is the mimetic representation of Dido's sinking into death, at the expense of local, and idiomatic, expressivity.

If – as I suggest is supported by the preceding structural analysis – A♮ is chosen for 'shades me' the descent into death is still there. But it is no longer an uninterrupted one. Dido, after all, does not actually die till the end of the following lament, and realistically dying is not a mechanically rectilinear process. It is the A♮ of bar three that the singer must keep in mind as the goal and resolution of the C–B♭ motion in bar two, allowing her to give full intensity and colouristic weight to the A♭ at the end of bar two as a further darkening (after B♮ had already been flattened to B♭) – a madrigalian image of 'darkness', deviating expressively from expectation.

The parallelism between the two phrases has important consequences for bars six and seven, too. In bar six, 'death' – the other powerfully emotive word in the recitative – initially comes on the F♮, the parallel note to the B♭ of bar two that had already been heard as a flattening of the B♮ of bar one. But it is not till the next sentence that 'Death' achieves its full significance as the subject and the first word of a complete, short, strong statement. It is by making the fourth beat of bar six parallel to the *third* beat of bar two as far as the pitches are concerned, retaining E♮ right through to the beginning of bar seven, and thus allowing the singer to lighten 'death invades me', that Purcell allows the E♭, intensified even more by being preceded by a whole-tone depression to the D♮ appoggiatura, to achieve its full expressive potential at the moment when 'Death' becomes the focal, accented word.

In the end, conductors and singers will have to make up their own minds. Does A♮–A♭–A♮–A♭ in bars two and three break up the linear descent into darkness and death so illogicaly that Purcell could not have intended it? Is, on the other hand, the premature A♭ in bar two (the A♮ in bar three having been from the outset envisaged as the goal of the line) a powerful image of darkness, and is the twisting back of the line to A♮, only to fall once more to A♭ at the end of bar three, a psychologically true analogue to the uncertain struggle between life and death? I, at any rate, believe that the underlying formal logic of the two parallel phrases, realized in the foreground by a complex, subtle and expressive web of motivic developments and variations, favours the A♮'s at the beginning of bar three. ❖



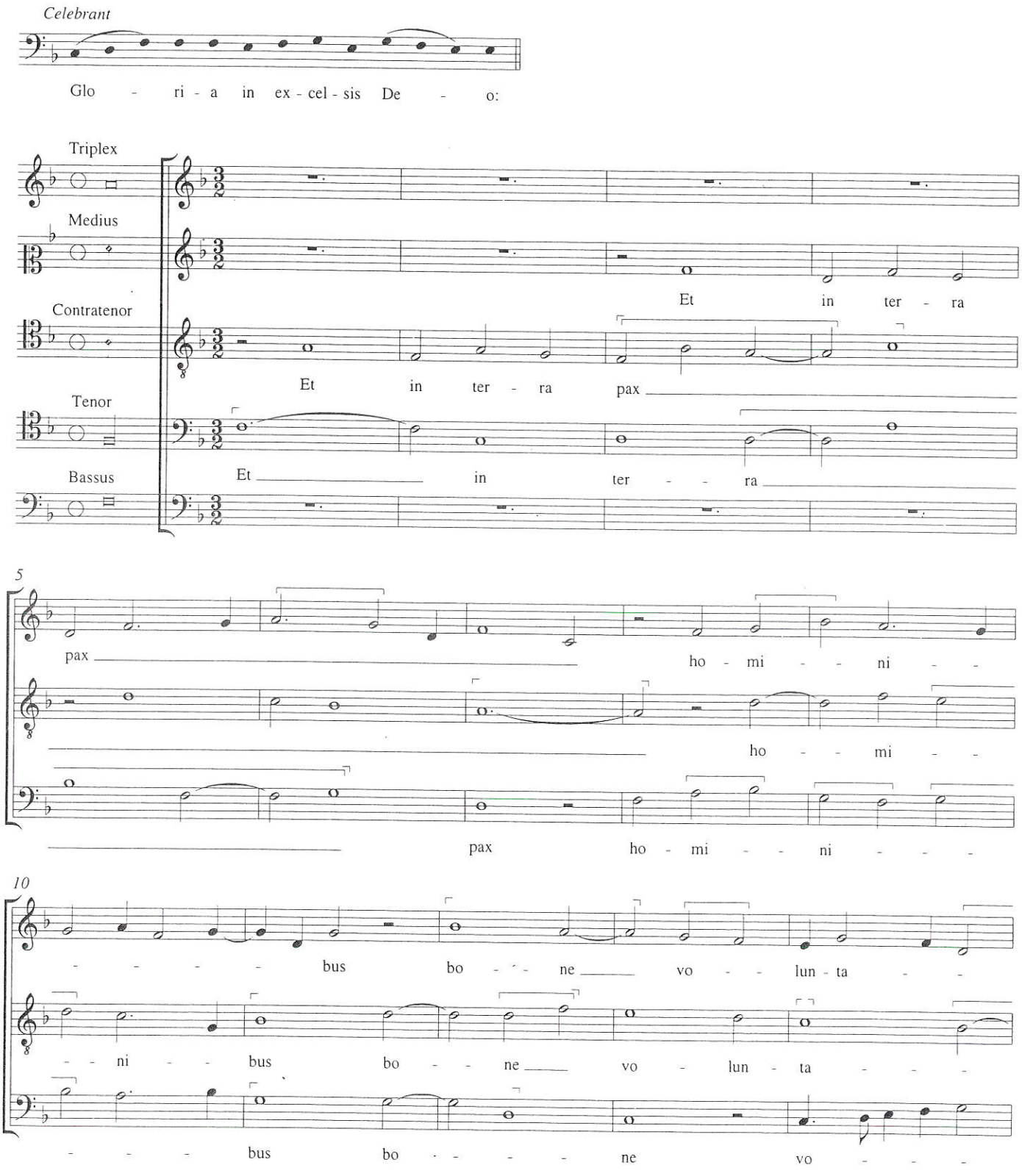
Musical insert

The opening of the Gloria from Robert Fayrfax's *Missa Tecum principium*. This work is copied into both the Caius and the Lambeth Choirbooks, the only collegiate manuscripts of their type to have survived from the reign of Henry VIII. The books were produced in Arundel, West Sussex, and the latter was probably used as a working choirbook at Arundel College, where Fayrfax's Mass would have been performed by five to eight singing-men and four to six boys. *Missa Tecum principium* is thought to be Fayrfax's most mature Mass setting. The work is appropriate to Christmas time and set in a contemplative style throughout, culminating in what is perhaps the most inspired Agnus Dei in the repertory.

Missa Tecum principium

Edited by David Skinner

ROBERT FAYRFAX
(1464-1521)



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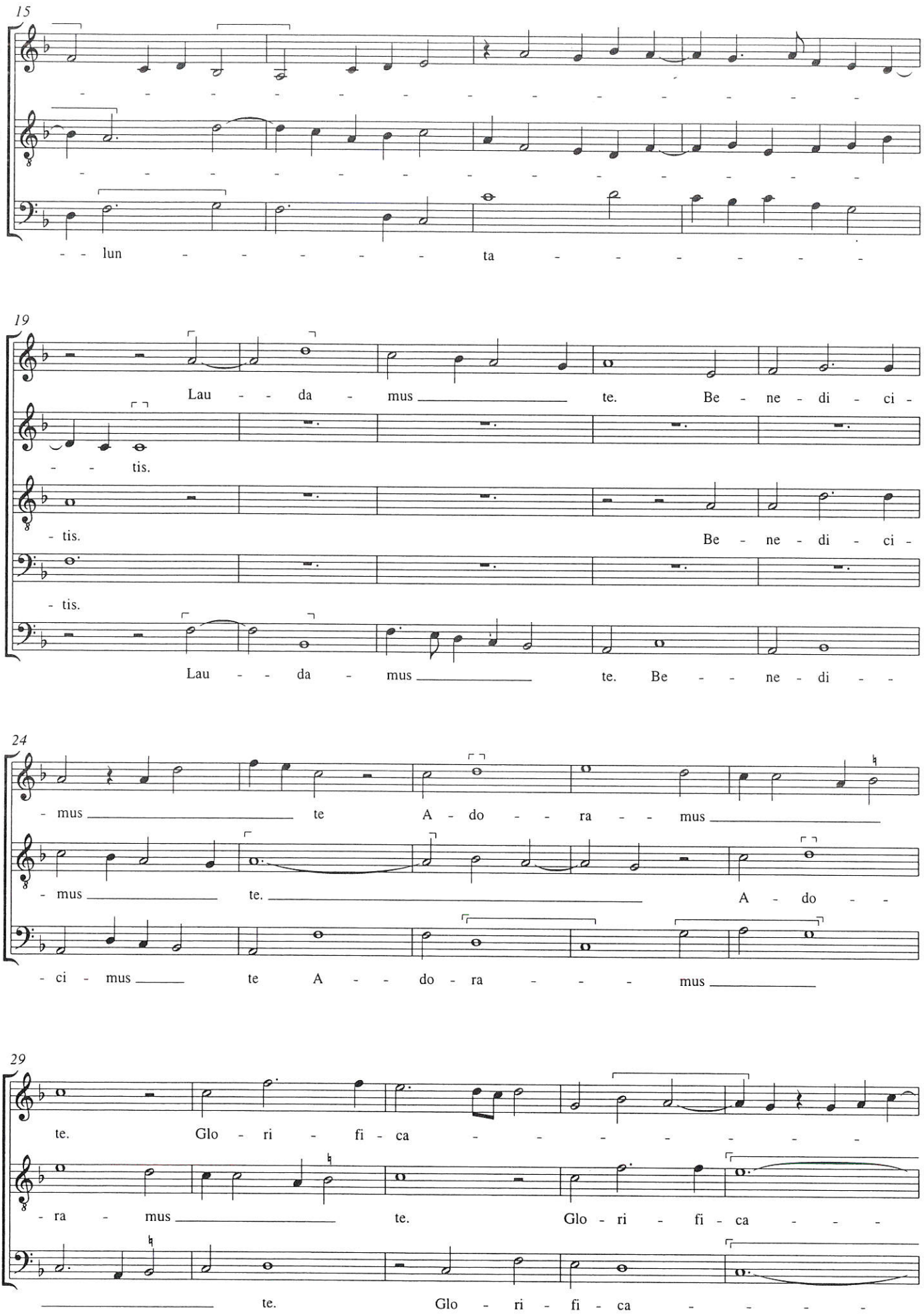
P. O. Box 243, Oxford, England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24
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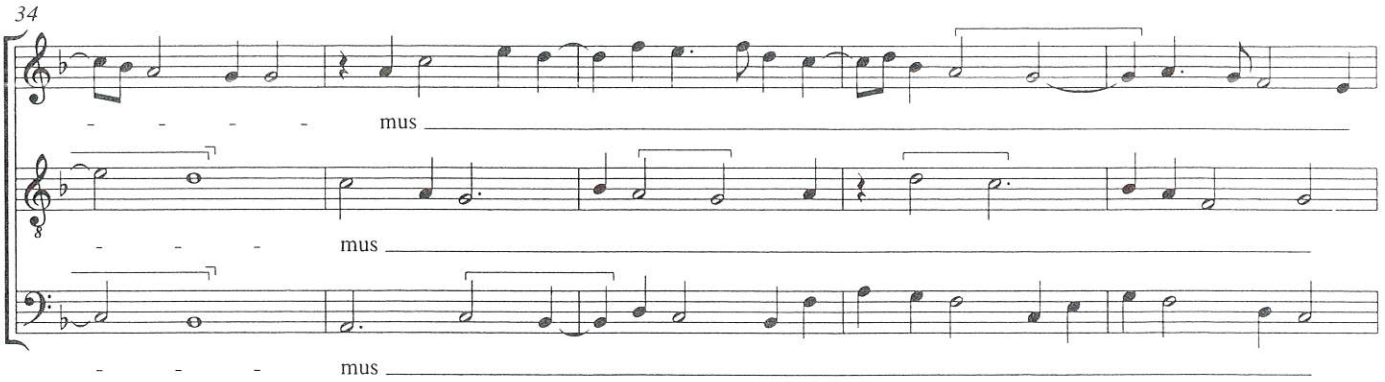
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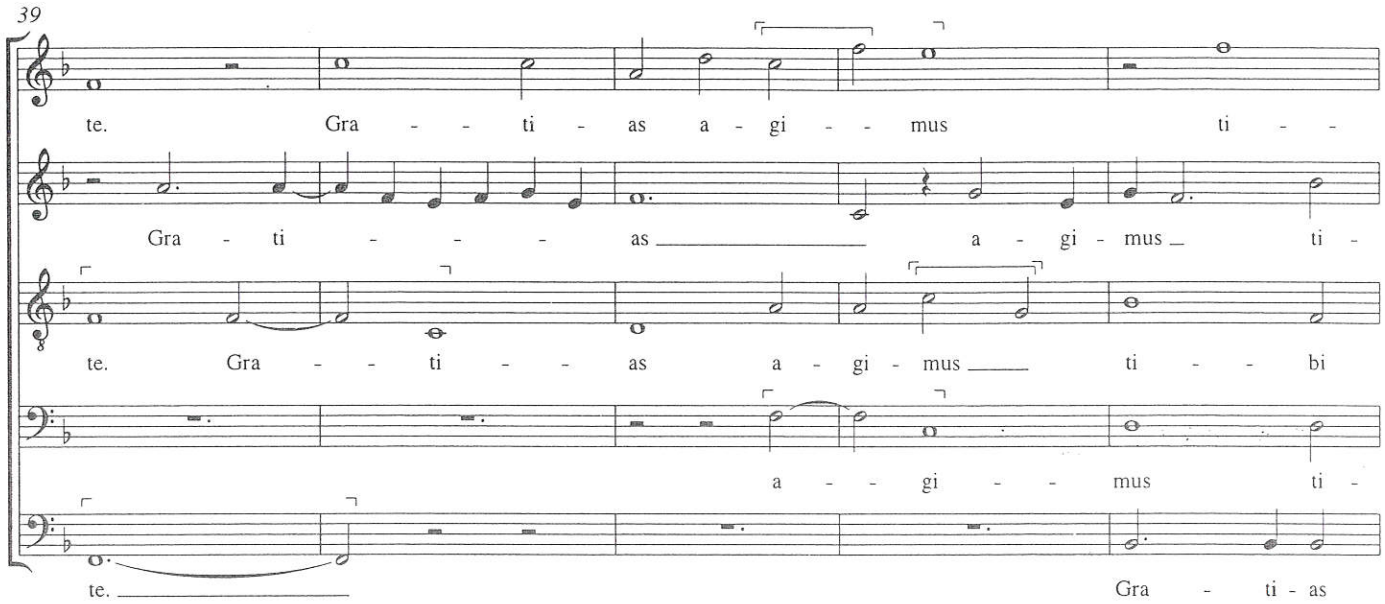
39
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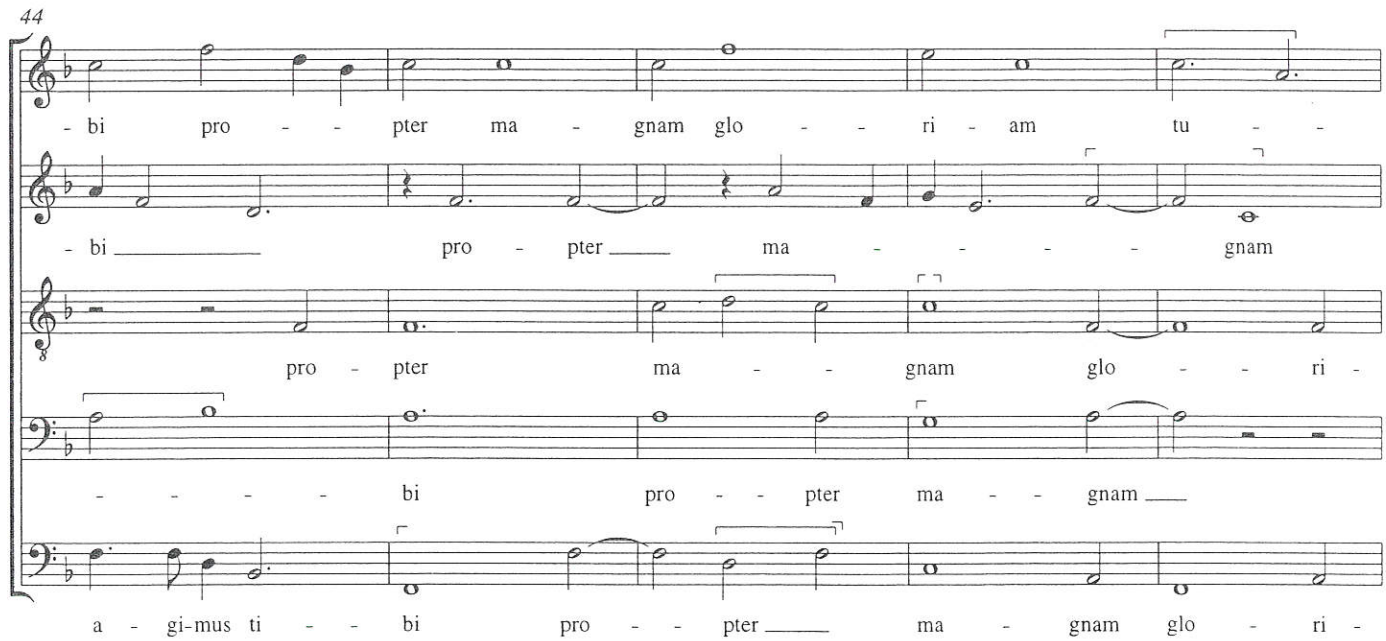
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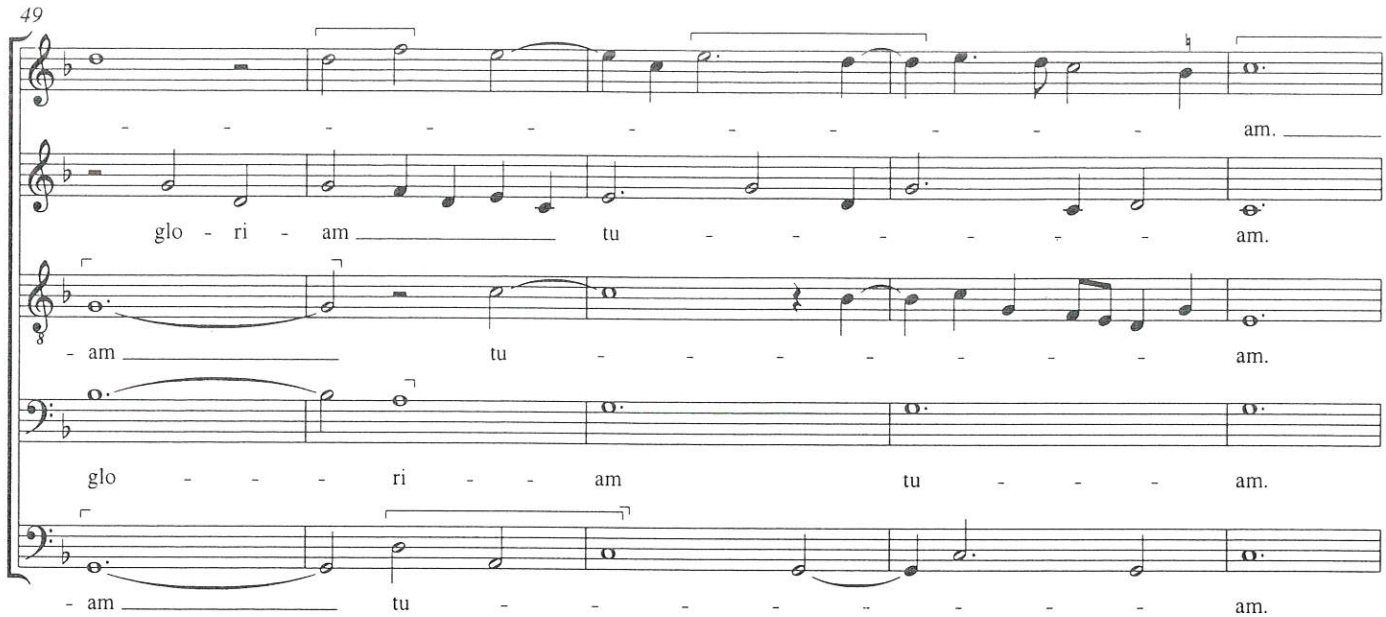
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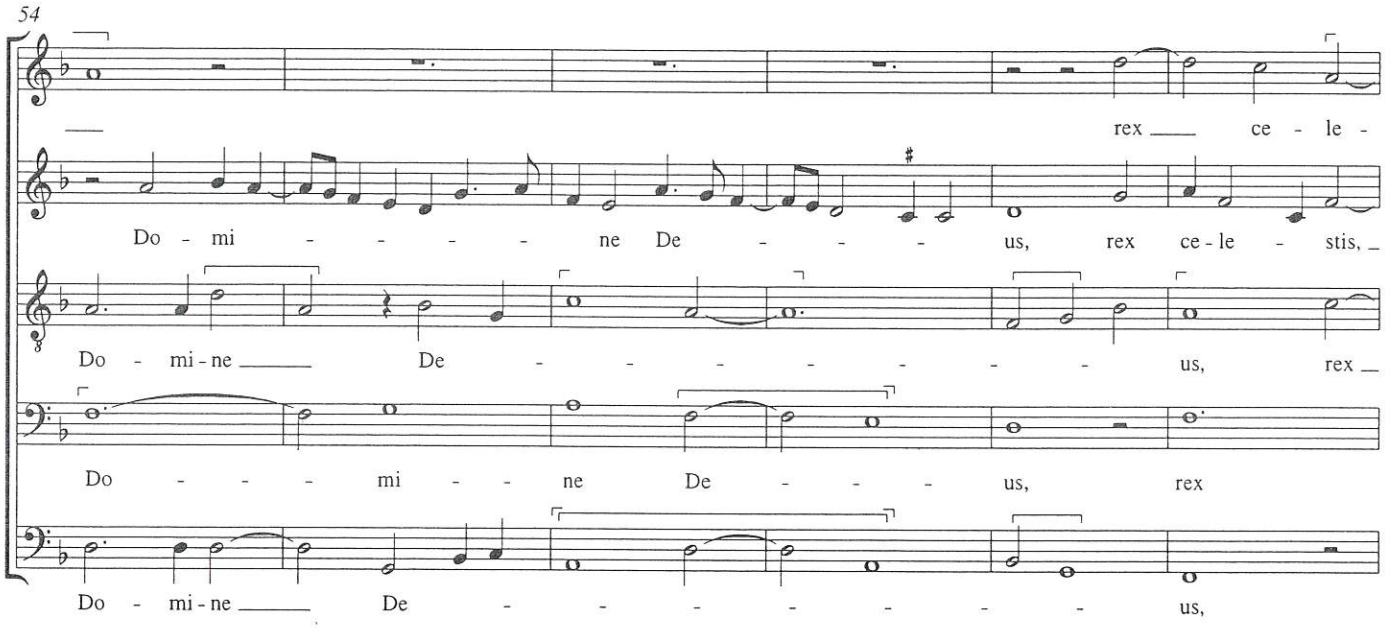
54
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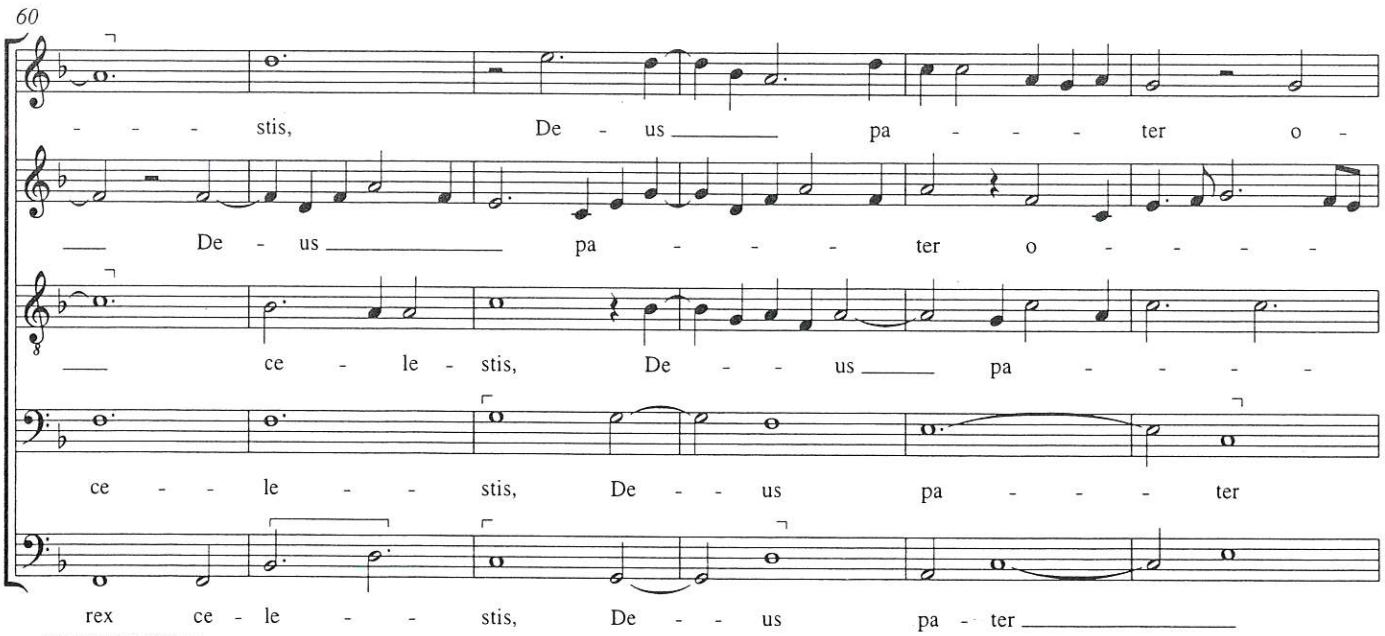
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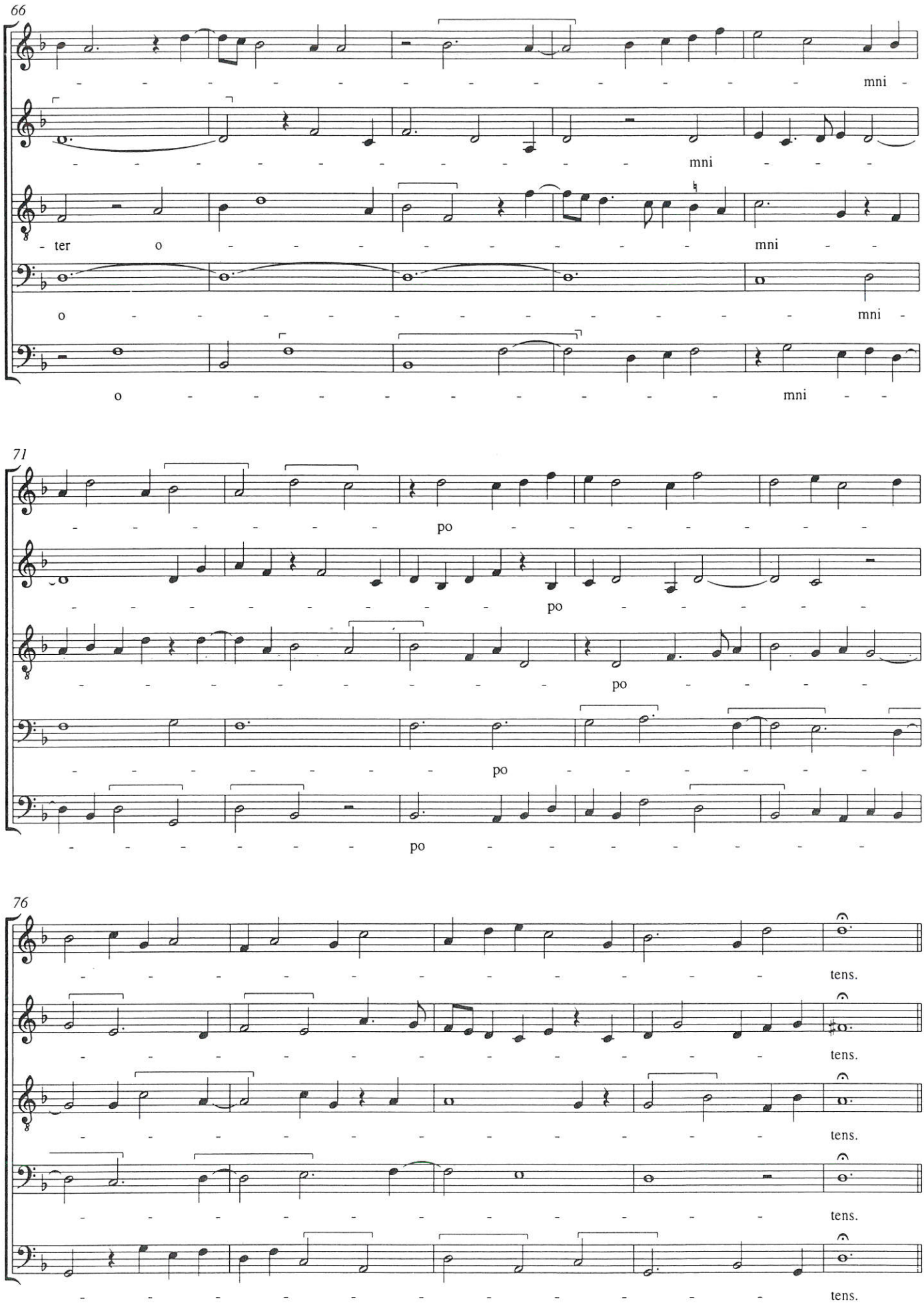
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PURCELL IN PERFORMANCE: II

DAVID WULSTAN

The author is Research Professor at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. He has wide interests, including the rhythm of medieval song (on which he is completing a book) and the history of tonality (the subject of another forthcoming book).

At the end of the first part of this article I promised to discuss the matter of bowing in Purcell's string parts. Amongst others, this will be the main topic of this second part. It concerns not only the performance of Purcell's music, for the almost universal style of string playing now current (and in recent times hideously followed by many singers) means that early music is heard as though from a poor radio set receiving a distant short-wave broadcast. The distressing bulging and fading on almost every note means that there is no continuity to the melody: not only is the syntax of its sentences destroyed, but its very words are chopped up like the letters of a blackmail demand. As an occasional conceit and in a monodic context, the *messa di voce* is sometimes stylish, but insistently applied to the contrapuntal textures of a composer like Purcell, this practice is intolerable.

According to Robin Stowell, with whom I discussed the matter recently, this all stems from an article by Sol Babitz as long ago as 1957,[1] and I think that he is right. That it should take so long to exert an influence, and that it should be so uncritically believed, is not particularly remarkable in the history of this kind of phenomenon.[2] The Babitz article depends heavily on some curious passages in Geminiani[3] which are used to interpret remarks in other theorists and to promote the *messa di voce* from an occasional ornament to a constant penance. It is, however, another argument which betrays Babitz as the fount of this particular tainted stream, for I have heard it from players. It is this: that with the Baroque violin and its bow it was 'natural' to play in a crescendo–diminuendo fashion (for which Babitz uses the abbreviation D.A. – a *canard* in itself). Granting the unwarranted assumption that such a technique is indeed 'natural' (which in any event it is not) if this really were to be taken as a serious argument, then it must also be stated that the left hand 'naturally' plays out of tune, doubtless a relief to many incompetent players, but hardly to their audience.

The absurdity of this proposition is nowhere better pointed up than by Babitz (p. 51) where he talks of the contrast between the 'quite different' methods of tone production in respect of the viol and violin. 'The grip with which the viol bow was held militated against the violinistic crescendo–diminuendo bowing possible only with constant index finger pressure and release. The viol's comparatively bland strokes...'.[4] If this were true, it would at least spare us the bubblegum style in Purcell's Fantazias. Alas, this is not so, for modern violists heroically overcome these technical difficulties and deliver the bulges with an insouciant constancy.

Simpson, in *The Division Viol*,[5] says 'we play Loud or Soft, according to our fancy, or the humour of the Musick. Again this Loud or Soft is sometime express'd in one and the same note, as when we make it Soft at the *beginning*, and then (as it were) swell or grow louder towards the *middle* or *ending*.' The operative word here is 'sometime'. There is no evidence, here or in any other treatise, that the *messa di voce* was anything other than an occasional ornament. Although Geminiani marks it explicitly only once in *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (Example XVIII, the sign for it being conspicuously absent in the twelve 'Compositions' at the end of the book),[6] it is specified for long notes in section B of his discussion of Example I, where he says for 'all long Notes the Sound should be begun soft, and gradually swelled till the Middle and from thence gradually softened towards the End'. In common with North,[7] Tosi also implies that it may be used on long notes, and indicates it for another particular context, the rising chromatic semitone; but his recommendation that this grace be used 'sparingly' is reiterated and reinforced by Galliard in his translation of Tosi, 'for', as he says, 'the finest Grace too often repeated becomes tiresome'.[8]

In regard to this and other relevant remarks of Geminiani, Boyden[9] rightly says that some of them are 'difficult to understand' or 'puzzling'. Indeed, they are rather more than that. Taken at face value, a few seem to be at variance with Baroque practice, as for instance Geminiani's treatment of the appoggiatura: in his discussion at Example XVIII he says that the player should 'swell the Sound by Degrees'. Here, the sign and its commentary would clearly imply that the appoggiatura should begin softly and arrive at the note of resolution loudly. This is hardly the 'leaning' on the note implied by theorists such as Marpurg,[10] who describes the appoggiatura as being a little louder than the main note, to which it should be gently slurred, a procedure which agrees with Quantz.[11]

None the less, Geminiani's 'Compositions' do not support this deviant notion of the appoggiatura with any consistency, for it is frequently the note before the appoggiatura which is marked with the 'swelling' sign, particularly, as we should expect, the preparation on to a suspension. When the sign comes on the appoggiatura itself, it is more than probable that this represents an inaccuracy on Geminiani's part, and the

discussion at Example XVIII is a comparable instance of muddled thinking. Thus the 'swelling' which he correctly associates with the appoggiatura in general, pertains nevertheless to its first half or so (and indeed, especially where the notes are comparatively short, to part of the previous note); the second part of the appoggiatura note, however, should properly diminish in volume, a subtlety which he fails to mark. This omission is doubtless connected with a comment in the preface to his *Rules for Playing in a True Taste* (1748), where he mentions that he will dispense with the correlative sign for diminishing after that for the swell, on the grounds that it would unduly clutter the page.[12] There is manifest confusion, therefore, in what Geminiani says and illustrates: he fails properly to notate the *messa di voce* in those instances when it may be implied (on long notes, and on the appoggiatura) and in connection with the latter is especially misleading in the use of the sign for the 'swelling'. If this were not enough, elsewhere Geminiani says that the 'swelling of the sound' should go with most bowed notes at an ordinary speed ('the Minim, crotchet-quaver and Semiquaver both in slow and quick time' – Example XX), which is contradictory, to say the least.

Leopold Mozart holds the key to this puzzle, in that he says that 'every note, even the strongest attack, has a small, albeit barely audible softness at the beginning of the stroke; for it would not otherwise be a note, merely an unpleasant and unintelligible noise. This same softness must also be heard at the end of each stroke.'[13] Despite Babitz taking this and similar statements as support for what he calls the 'D.A. tone' it is reasonably obvious that what both Mozart and Geminiani[14] are getting at is a smooth inception to a bow stroke, not a scratchy one (as North says, 'clear, without rubb');[15] similarly the ending. So Geminiani's 'swelling of the sound' recommended for most notes simply means a well-mannered bow stroke, whereas in particular instances it might denote a palpable crescendo, and in specific contexts such as long notes and appoggiaturas, it might mean the *messa di voce*. Geminiani does not intentionally contradict Simpson; and there is no reason why Purcell should be caught up in a wholesale misinterpretation of Baroque idiom.

If the gradation of volume in relation to the appoggiatura and its adjacent notes were subtle, then it would be understandable that some confusion might arise as to the precise placing of the crescendo and diminuendo in such contexts. It may have been a lack of finesse on the part of some players, however, which gave rise to the famous argument about the 'fifths' in Corelli's Op. 2 No. 3. Here, there appear to be consecutives between treble and bass interrupted only by a rest in the bass. In a reply to Zoni who questioned the passage, Corelli pointed out petulantly that he had merely inserted a rest instead of a dot 'wishing the note to be detached and dying away'. If dotted notes were substituted in the passage, there would be a series of $\frac{4}{2}$ suspensions each moving to a $\frac{5}{3}$ (an unusual resolution); Corelli prevents the conventionally (and maybe exaggeratedly) loud appoggiatura being sounded by removing it.

Leopold Mozart also bears witness to the appoggiatura being loud, the 'softer tone falling on the melody note'.[16] Here, however, he says that the first note of the pair should be accented gently, the tone growing rapidly towards the middle of the appoggiatura, then fading on to the principal note, being careful to avoid an after-pressure of the bow. This passage again makes clear a context in which the *messa di voce* was legitimately used, a figure which by implication was not promiscuously employed elsewhere;[17] and it also emphasizes that the question of a smooth bow stroke – with gentle inception and with no after-pressure – was an important, but different, consideration.

Another misconception, which may or may not stem from misinterpretations contained in the same article by Babitz, also bedevils so-called 'early music' bowing. This concerns off-the-string bowing, which, as Peter Allsop observed to me, was a rarity in seventeenth-century technique, though it was perhaps more common in Germany than elsewhere.[18] The result of this mistakenly over-articulated style of bowing is to dissect the music as a criminal might hack up a murder victim to escape identification. At the very least, this converts the string continuo into a discontinuo part (particularly unbearable in a long ground bass piece); and Purcell's canzona movements, which rely on a sense of line (and on the ambiguity as to where the beat lies) to carry his musical logic forward, are mutilated by this practice, sometimes beyond recognition. Coupled with the distressing bulging mentioned in previous paragraphs, and which serves to achieve a similar loss of musical logic, a composer such as Purcell, whose musical argument is by no means simple, is particularly badly served by such misprision, even though it does not so much harm the music of composers whose technique was less subtle.

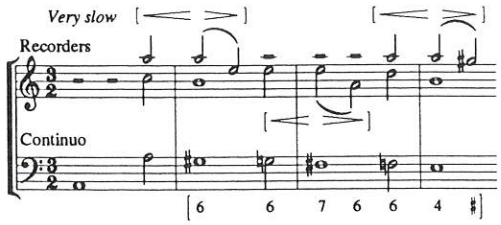
These questions of bowing form an object lesson in the folly of faddishness: they also underline the caution which is needed in confronting treatises. The old Archiv recording of the Purcell Fantazias by the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis (August Wenzinger and others) may have imperfections, but it does sound as though the players understood Purcell and, even more ironically, his Englishness: similarly, the Argo discs of the trio sonatas (Neville Marriner and others), despite their lacking some of the trappings of 'authenticity', have its spirit in abundance. In these older recordings, made before the mistaken fads of bowing had become the new orthodoxy, there is a sense of line which does not defeat the underlying logical syntax of Purcell's astonishing contrapuntal skill, and there are variations of technique that serve to point up the eclecticism of

his musical language: more recent performances and recordings are the equivalent of a landscape painted by numbers. All this stems from a late and fervent conversion to a doctrine that is based on a faulty exegesis, if not downright misreading, of the texts. A bygone recipe book, if followed blindly, will result in severe indigestion at the very least: many conventions associated with the writing of such works, and the implications of what might at first seem self-explanatory phrases, are not shared by more modern cookery books; and even the latter can produce vastly different results when conscientiously followed.

Turning to a more specific question, one particular aspect of Purcell's style requires some thought: it involves a slurred falling two-note figure, sometimes conjunct, elsewhere disjunct. Although treating them in the same way in performance, Mozart,[19] unlike Marpurg and others, differentiates between an appoggiatura proper (resolution by step) and a retardation (*figura retardationis*) where the ornamental note moves by leap on to the chord of resolution. The importance of the appoggiatura and retardation in Purcell's trio sonatas needs no emphasis: a characteristic use of these figures is a particular mark of his style. It is therefore vital that the syntax of these ornaments, an accented appoggiatura or retardation fading on to an unaccented resolution, should be properly observed: a reverse pattern of accentuation, which makes nonsense of the progression, is another disease of recent times which needs an urgent antidote. As far as the rhythm of the retardation goes, it is reasonably obvious that in most cases Purcell intended a gentle version of the 'Scotch snap' rhythm, one which in certain contexts seems to apply to descending two-note slurred figures in general. It is well known that in the anthem 'My heart is inditing' the choral parts have this Scotch snap rhythm written out, whereas the string parts in the same passages appear as equal notes, with slurs.[20] Couperin's keyboard equivalent[21] would have a dot over the second note to indicate inequality, but Purcell's notation was ambiguous: only the context determines whether the slur is to be interpreted literally, or as having an additional rhythmic significance.

We have to deal with three merging but separate issues here: the retardation, the question of dynamics and the Scotch snap rhythm. As to the latter, the table of ornaments in the posthumous *Lessons* shows the 'forefall', a falling appoggiatura, rendered in Scotch snap form, as is the rising equivalent, the 'backfall' (both are represented by slanting lines, angled in the direction of the implied ornamental figure). Such a usage is not confined to Purcell, being found from Frescobaldi to Marpurg. The problem is knowing when this sharp rhythm should be preferred to a straight rendering of the notes. The recorder parts at the opening of 'In vain the am'rous flute' from the 1692 St Cecilia Ode, for instance, seem to require the retardations to be played as written (see Ex. 1). Yet, whatever the rhythm, the ornamental first note[22] must be louder than its resolution, for this is the logic of the appoggiatura, and *mutatis mutandis*, the retardation.

Example 1:



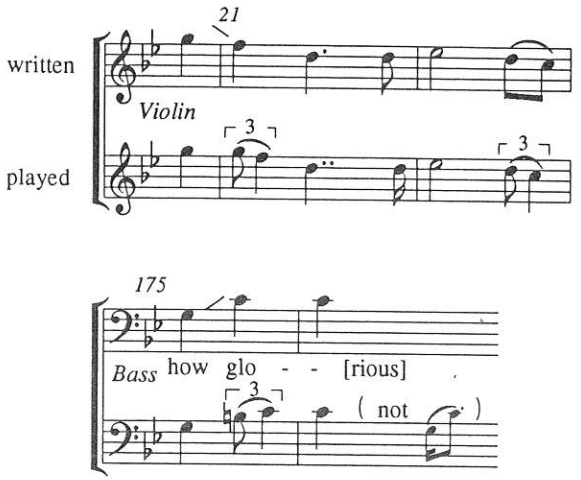
As to the source from which Purcell borrowed the retardation, this is problematic. The figure is not particularly common, even in late Baroque music: Bach uses it occasionally, but it became a cliché in operatic recitative in the so-called 'telescoped' broken cadence (not used by Purcell). Over the dominant–tonic continuo (or *stromentato*) progression, the voice proceeded in the opposite direction, tonic–dominant, resulting in a tonic note being heard over a dominant chord, as at the end of 'And suddenly, there was with the angel' from Handel's *Messiah*. As to early Baroque music, the retardation is characteristic of Monteverdi, of whose works at least some were familiar to Purcell. That the pieces he is known to have copied do not contain this figure proves little, but it does seem unlikely *a priori* that Monteverdi was Purcell's source. The genre in which Purcell most consistently uses the retardation is perhaps the ground bass pieces. In a composer like Corelli, such an observation might help to narrow the field, for his works are surprisingly genre-specific in that traits found for instance in the Op. 5 violin music are not necessarily carried into the trio sonatas or vice versa; and stylistic specificity is observable in the styles of many composers and in many genres (such as organ music).

None the less, unlike Corelli, but in common with Handel, Purcell often took a piece from one medium and arranged it for another: so it is difficult to say whether or not the instrumental music (such as the Chacony in G minor) borrowed the retardation from a vocal source or that the usage in 'When I am laid in earth' is a reflection of a primarily instrumental technique. The appearance of the notation in 'My heart is inditing' (the string parts being written out in straight slurred quavers, but the Scotch snap rhythm being indicated in the vocal parts) seems to suggest that instrumentalists might understand the signs differently from vocalists (for whom the usual meaning of the slur had to do with underlay); but the problem has several facets.

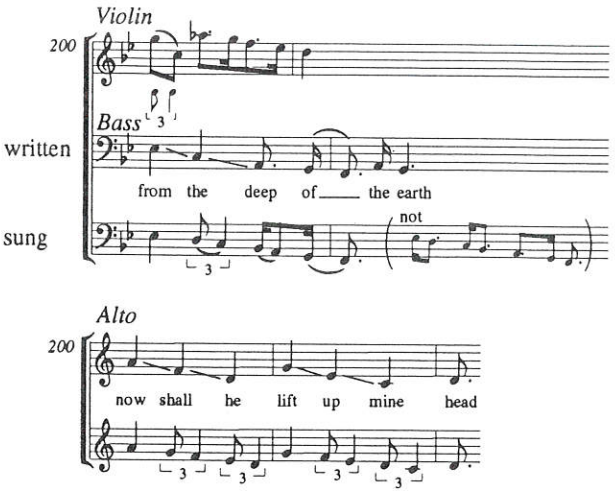
What look like the primarily keyboard signs for the 'forefall' and 'backfall' occur sporadically in Purcell's vocal music (though the keyboard signs for trills do not occur, and in some sources a curlew-shaped symbol, whose centre is enclosed by a triangle of dots, stands for this ornament). The forefall and backfall

symbols are found, for example, in the autograph version of 'It is a good thing to give thanks';[23] but 'In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust',[24] also in an autograph version, the backfalls are written in straight quavers for the violin, and as a Scotch snap for the voice. In this latter anthem there are slurred retardations and the like (straight quavers) for the strings: there is more than a suspicion that these were played in a sharper rhythm.[25] At bar 200, the bass solo has what look like backfall signs: the editor has interpreted these retrospectively,[26] which makes little sense. Either they must be interpreted retrospectively as a pattern of (off-beat) passing-notes, as on the third beat, or (considerably more likely) as on-beat, prospective dissonances in Scotch snap rhythm.[27] At the same time, the first violin should doubtless have the same rhythm at the first beat of this bar (see Ex. 2).

Example 2:



(a) and (b) 'It is a good thing to give thanks'

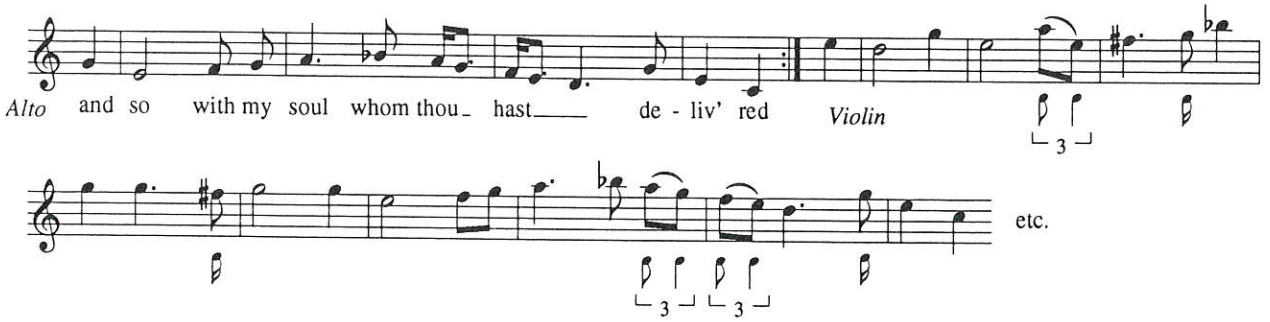


(c) 'In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust', and (d) 'The Lord is my light'

These autograph anthems, all of roughly the same date as 'My heart is inditing', show considerably variable notation on the part of the composer. To these may be added the autograph 'Unto thee will I cry' and 'I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord' of similar date which, however, have both the string and the voice parts exhibiting the Scotch snap rhythm.[28] A final curiosity is that alone of all the pieces mentioned, the Scotch snap and retardation idiom of 'My heart is inditing' is in a 2/2 passage (though not unique, this is very rare), but in 3/4 in the others.

If we take this last observation as a clue (bearing in mind that many of the instrumental instances of the Scotch snap and retardation occur in chaconnes and the like, in 3/4), it is plausible that ground bass pieces of this type were the source from which Purcell borrowed this idiom, and that in such contexts the slur often indicated a sharp rhythm. I know of no likely precedent, though in a sonata quoted by Michael Tilmouth[29] there seems to be a more than a hint of the figure in question: but here the passage is in duple time. Granted that several Italian passages were quoted with lavish approval by Purcell, and that certain of their idioms became a characteristic of Purcell's style,[30] it is at least possible the penchant for a 3/4 ground and its allied figures stems from some such source.

(e) [below] 'In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust'



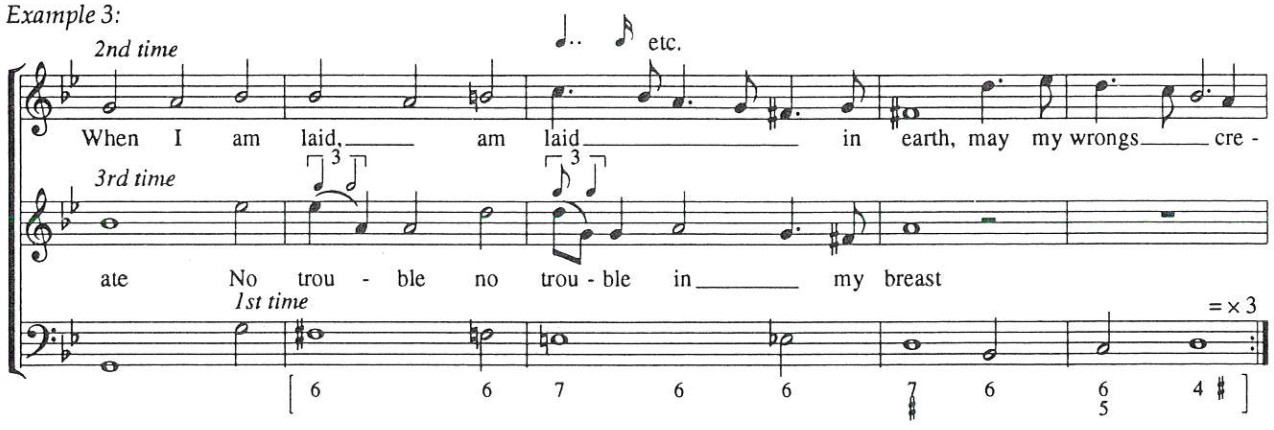
Yet the vocal usage of the Scotch snap seems to have been an outgrowth of other influences, perhaps of the backfall. The clue to this is in the use of the slanted signs, coupled with the time signature of the section in 'My heart is inditing'.[31] This then merged with Purcell's favoured retardation, and although this idiom may have been associated with the instrumental ground bass, it clearly had another, vocal, source (maybe, after all, stemming from Purcell's knowledge of Monteverdi): this is suggested by the many passages where the retardation is slow moving, as in the first version of the Funeral sentences.[32] It is this plainer rhythm that is implied by the slow notes of 'In vain the am'rous flute'.

There would not be much purpose in labouring this apparently minute point were it not that the figures discussed are highly characteristic of Purcell, and were taken up by Blow: they frequently pose important performance questions because of the inconsistent, even contradictory, way they were written. With this in mind, the preceding discussion may be summed up by saying that in string parts in 3/4, especially ground bass pieces, it is important to consider that slurs over two falling notes might indicate a version of the Scotch snap rhythm, whether the figure be a retardation, appoggiatura or the like. Where arpeggio-note[33] or passing-note figures are mixed in the same passage, these should be played in the same way, i.e. the first note accented and not too short, the second softer. In vocal music this rhythm must also be considered on occasion, as for instance in 'When I am laid in earth' from *Dido and Aeneas*: this, despite being in slower note-values, is a triple-time ground bass piece containing retardations, some of which span 'pathetic' intervals (see Ex. 3, below).

Having discussed some aspects of Purcell's vocal and choral music, it is important to touch on the subject of pitch. This is often assumed to be at a consistent level, but the most cursory glance at Purcell's repertory shows that this cannot be so. Several anthems are found in keys a tone apart in different sources.[34] A comparison of the voice ranges and tessituras of the Service in B♭ (which one modern edition reasonably transposes to C) with the *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* in G minor[35] (which is too high up a tone, but too low in the written key) and with the *Te Deum* in D (which is certainly not too low as written) shows that at least three pitch levels were current in Purcell's time. So far as church pitch is concerned, there is plenty of evidence to show that such organs as had survived the depredations of Cromwell had to be brought down from the high pitch of Tomkins and his precursors. Hopkins and Rimbault[36] mention two Oxford organs (by Dallam for New College proposed in 1661 and Harris for Magdalen repaired in 1690) which were required to be pitched a semitone lower than previously, whereas the Father Smith organ of 1697 at St Paul's had to be lowered in the nineteenth century, when it was still a semitone sharp.[37] There can be little doubt that organ pitches varied from place to place (to this day, Lichfield Cathedral organ maintains the late nineteenth-century pitch, nearly a semitone higher than ours) and that other standards were also in use.[38] In the light of this diversity, it is important to look at the vocal ranges and arrive at a rational pitch level. To assume that it was exactly the same as ours is statistically improbable, and savours of the musical equivalent of the doctrine of the Jehovah's Witness; none the less, to settle on A'=415 as a universal Purcell pitch is almost as perverse.

The question of pitch is bound up with that of the identity of certain voices. Those who take the written pitch of the sources literally, especially those of earlier music, are often obliged to argue that the alto (countertenor) parts were really intended for a high tenor, an assumption which has little to commend it. Indeed, composers such as Purcell employed two types of countertenor, or alto, voice: instead of the uniform compass used in the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English choirs, Purcell's Cantoris countertenor parts are notably higher than the Decani parts, especially in verse passages;[39] but nowhere is the lower countertenor part described as a 'high tenor'. One of the major problems with Purcell's alto parts nowadays is that singers cannot afford the luxury of performing Purcell, or even music of this period, exclusively; and the technique required for music of this tessitura is very different from, even contrary to,

Example 3:



that employed in other styles; so unsatisfactory compromises have to made. This is true of other voices, too: despite attempts to rid ourselves of the legacy of nineteenth- century operatic technique, it lingers on in various ways, and has even become resurgent in 'early music' singing. It should be unnecessary to say that the low-jaw pharyngeal production, with its attendant vowel distortion[40] and the inability to sing passage-work quickly and lightly, is inimical to the music of Purcell. But it still persists, attended by the kind of bellowing alluded to in the opening paragraph of the first part of this article, but which would have been derided at the time (Pepys speaks of a singer who sang 'so loud that people did laugh at him').

Still, too, there is a rearguard action being fought over wobble; the most hilarious results are where the performer interrupts his or her constant judder with an attempt at a trill, which of course is indistinguishable from the surrounding gelatinous texture. Again, unless carefully weighed, the documentary evidence bearing on the subject can be a recipe for disaster. It is true that, in common with the *messa di voce*, there is little doubt that vibrato was used as an ornament; but how and when is another matter. Its use discreetly and occasionally is one thing; but Simpson's description of it as being executed 'so softly and nicely that it makes no variation of Tone'[41] is hardly a justification for capricious wavering. To give Tosi (or rather, Galliard) the last word, 'the finest Grace too often repeated becomes tiresome'. ❖

Footnotes

1 'Differences Between 18th Century and Modern Violin Bowing', *The Score*, 19 (1957), 34–55.

2 A parallel instance may be seen in farmers, who are notorious for their distrust of newfangled breeds and techniques, but then adhere to them against all odds once they have become a fad.

3 See Francesco Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (1751), facs. edn ed. and intro. by David D. Boyden (London [1952]), viii.

4 Babitz goes on to quote the 'mock eulogium' to the viol dubiously attributed by Hawkins to Purcell.

5 1667, p.10, §15.

6 See note 12.

7 See note 15.

8 E. Galliard, *Observations on the Florid Song* (London, 1742, ^{2}1743), p. 28; see also pl. I, p. 38 and pl. III.

9 Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin*, 8.

10 *Anleitung zum Clavierspielen* (Berlin, ^{2}1726), 48.

11 *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (Berlin, 1752), VIII, iii.

12 This does not mean, however, that in *The Art of Playing on the Violin* the sign for the 'swelling' automatically implies a subsequent diminishing: this would make nonsense of what he says at Example XVII (7th and 8th) to the effect that the two elements (swelling and softening the sound) *'may* be used after each other' (my italics). Only on long notes found in the Compositions may this omission be assumed with safety, according with what he says in section B, Example I.

13 Leopold Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule* (Augsberg, 1756), trans. Edith Knocker, *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing by Leopold Mozart* (Oxford, 1951), Ch. 5, §3. I have modified the translation very slightly.

14 And indeed Tartini (1760), quoted by Babitz, 'Differences between 18th century and modern violin bowing', 38, who says that the sound should emerge 'like a breath and not like a blow on the strings'.

15 *Roger North on Music*, ed. John Wilson (London, 1959), 164, a propos the *messa di voce*, again, on a 'long note'.

16 *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*, Ch. 9, §8.

17 Even as late as 1797, Vincenzo Manfredini qualifies his enthusiasm for the *messa di voce* by saying that it should be used only on long notes such as a breve, semibreve or a minim – see his *Regole Armoniche* (Venice, 1797), 66.

18 As he pointed out to me, Manelli was one of the first to advocate this technique, but only on comparatively slow notes, as in his Sonate à 3 (1682). Dr Allsop also points out that we know almost nothing of violin technique in seventeenth-century Italy, since only the most elementary treatises survive. Moreover, the use of the lower half of the bow, especially in regard to off-the-string bowing, belongs to the twentieth century, not to the seventeenth century. Geminiani (*The Art of Playing on the Violin*, Example XX) shows that the bow should not be lifted off the string for semiquavers. Tartini, prescribing how to practise staccato, mentions the first upper part of the bow, then the middle. There is no mention of the lower half, nor of lifting the bow off the string. See *A Letter from the late Signor Tartini* [1760] trans. Dr Burney (London, 1779, ^{R}New York, 1967). It should be mentioned that Tartini's exercises are just that: in advocating various practice routines (e.g. the crescendo–diminuendo and the notorious off-string staccato semiquavers, there is no reason, *pace* Babitz and others, to suppose that such technical exercises were to be transplanted willy-nilly into concert playing. What horn players do when they are warming up should not be assumed to threaten the succeeding performance.

19 *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*, Ch. 9, §7.

20 See pp. 80–3 of vol. 17 of the Purcell Society edition, where not all of the figures in question are retardations. There are comparable passages elsewhere in the works for voices and strings.

21 See the table of ornaments in *Pièces de Clavecin* (Paris, 1713), though this notation is found only in the first few books of the *Pièces*.

22 In Purcell, the first note of such a pair is often the principal note, the second being a passing note: equally, the two notes are sometimes arpeggio notes, both being part of a simple chord. As in the section from 'My heart is inditing' instanced earlier, however, the context (that such figures answer to appoggiaturas and retardations in the same passage) plainly indicates that these are to be performed in the same way.

23 Purcell Society edition vol. 14: see violin 1, bar 21 (backfall), bass solo, bar 175 (forefall – not necessarily disjunct, as given in the edition: a disjunct falling Scotch snap rhythm is written out in the alto part at bar 237). See Ex. 2 (a) and (b).

24 *Ibid.*: see Ex. 2 (e).

25 See violin 1, bars 19–20 and 34; viola, bar 34.

26 'Retrospective' ornamental notes include passing-notes and returning-notes, off beat. 'Prospective' subsumes dissonances such as the (on-beat) appoggiatura which have to do with the harmonic logic of the next note (expressed by the comparatively late figured bass sign \), whereas retrospective dissonances derive from that of the previous note (emphasized by the sign _).

27 See Ex. 2 (c). At bars 200–1 of the Purcell Society edition of 'The Lord is my light', the signs are correctly interpreted, as at Ex. 2 (d). The suggestions for rhythmic alteration in this particular volume are peculiarly arbitrary.

28 Another instance is bars 175–6 of 'My beloved spake' (Purcell Society edition vol. 13): here, unusually, there are no slurs in the violin part.

29 'The Technique and Forms of Purcell's Sonatas', *Music and Letters*, 40 (1959), 109-21. See the example on p.120, said to be by Colista, but actually by Lonati, where the characteristic $\frac{6}{3}$ is evident. Lonati's works (often misattributed to Colista) were quoted by Purcell in his revision to Playford's *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick* (1694), 123–4. See Peter Allsop, 'Problems of Ascription in the Roman Simfonia of the late Seventeenth Century: Colista and Lonati', *Music Review*, 50 (1989), 34–44.

30 The Italianate 'Elegancies in Counterpoint Musick' quoted in Playford (see Purcell Society edition vol. 31, p. 114), especially the 'Third and Fourth together' might all come from Purcell's sonatas.

31 In any case, in vocal music the slur concerned matters of underlay, so could not be used in quite the same way as the comparable string slur.

32 See the Purcell Society edition vol. 13, p.6 bars 32 (compare bars 30 and 34). The figure on p.67, bar 62, was retained in the second version, but that of bars 30ff was not.

33 B♭–F♯ over a D bass is often to be regarded as an arpeggio-note figure, since the three notes form a favourite dominant appoggiatura chord in Purcell (perhaps descended from Tomkins: it is sometimes resolved on to a dominant $\frac{5}{3}$, but as often as not is left as an elliptical progression, moving directly to the tonic). As a rule, the rhythm of 'pathetic' intervals, e.g. B♭–F♯ used melodically, is very likely to have been that of the 'Scotch snap'.

34 For example, the Worcester MS A.3.10 versions of 'Thy way, O God' and 'Blessed is the man' diverge in this manner.

35 It may be that the G minor Service is by Daniel rather than Henry as Bruce Wood suggests (and in any case the Gloria for the *Nunc Dimittis* – that of the *Magnificat* repeated – was replaced in at least one source by a canonic setting by Roseingrave). If so, then this Service doubtless reflects the pitch of the Magdalen College organ at Oxford. None the less, many of Henry's organ anthems such as 'O God, thou art my God' and 'O God, thou hast cast us out' require a similar pitch, so the question of authorship is hardly crucial to the matter in this instance.

36 *The Organ, its History and Construction* (London, 1877), 190.

37 *Ibid.*, 547: see also the reference at the foot of p.190 to another Smith organ which had to be lowered by a tone in 1819.

38 See also, Dominic Gwynne 'Organ Pitch in Seventeenth Century England', *Journal of the British Institute of Organ Studies*, 9 (1985), 65–78, though his conclusions as to pitch levels, especially those of earlier organs, are sometimes contentious.

39 The 'high countertenor' rose to a still higher compass; but as with the extreme bass compasses inspired by Gostling, the high alto parts were characteristic of a particular singer, in this case, Howell.

40 Tosi's remarks on this and other bad mannerisms (see Galliard, *Observations on the Florid Song*, 25–30) are instructive.

41 *The Division Viol*, 11.

Diana Poulton (1903–1995): an appreciation

Born on 18 April 1903 in Storrington, Sussex, Diana Poulton studied at the Slade School of Fine Art from 1919 to 1923. Diana's mother had become acquainted with Arnold Dolmetsch and his wife, Mabel, and regularly attended Dolmetsch's London concerts at the Hall of the Artworkers' Guild. Diana's first lute was purchased in the shop of Robert Morley, the harp maker. Her mother, who was interested in the lute and its music, showed Diana how to read tablature. She met Tom, her future husband, at the Slade and he also gave her great encouragement. (In due course she taught him to play.) After acquiring some facility on the lute Diana approached Arnold Dolmetsch for lessons, studying with him from 1922 for several years. Rudolph Dolmetsch encouraged Diana to research into the technique and art of lute playing and in the British Library she discovered lute sources by Adrian Le Roy, Thomas Robinson and Besardus's 'Necessary Observations' in *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*, all earlier than Thomas Mace's *Musick's Monument* (1676) on which Dolmetsch had based his technique. All of Diana's earlier work on lute sources were copied by hand.

Provincial concerts with Rudolph and Millicent Dolmetsch were followed by a BBC broadcast in 1926, initiated by Julian Herbage. In total Diana did some four hundred broadcasts, bringing lute music to those who had never heard it before. She was one of the first professional English lutenists this century. Experiments were made which showed that available string materials (including fishing line, surgical gut and gut prepared by string makers for tennis racquets) were unreliable. The fact that all broadcasting was live and required very tightly timetabled travelling schedules to reach the different centres between concerts, and the immense labour of hand-copying from lute manuscripts and books, demonstrate that this was a most single-minded and dedicated achievement.

In 1927 the singer John Goss, and Peter Warlock, arranged for Diana to record a number of lute songs with 'His Master's Voice', during which programme preparation Diana first encountered the songs of John Dowland – and first heard the *Lachrimae Pavan* when Warlock played it on the piano! From 1927 she often performed at the Haslemere Festival, in 1934 meeting Suzanne Bloch, who was to become a lifelong friend, and with whom Diana performed lute duets from the Jane Pickering Lute Manuscript in the next year's Festival programme.

Diana's numerous broadcasts, concerts and recitals formed part of a career encompassing ground-breaking research and teaching. The Lute Society was founded in 1956, electing Diana as chairperson, and subsequently (in 1973) as President. The Royal College of Music had appointed Diana as its first Professor of Lute and conferred on her the Hon. R.C.M. in recognition of her work. The history of lute technique and the music of John Dowland were principal interests and Diana also had a great love of Spanish music. Her book on John Dowland, in conjunction with her edition, with Basil Lam, of Dowland's solo lute music; her book, *A Tutor for the Renaissance Lute*; and various articles, reflect the breadth and depth of her scholarship, as did her teaching and performing. In all she undertook she would accept nothing less than the most exacting standards.

On a more personal note, her teaching clearly demonstrated her humanity in her kindness and generosity of spirit. Diana willingly shared her resources of instruments, books and music.

During her lifetime, the lute has proceeded from being a curiosity to a recognized instrument in its own right, to which process Diana has made a unique and unrivalled contribution. Her immense achievement stands as a challenge to present and future scholars, performers and teachers alike.

Latterly, Diana had moved back from London to Heyshott, Sussex, where she was lovingly cared for by her daughter and son-in-law, Celia and Douglas Clayton. After a stroke, Diana passed away on 15 December 1995. She will be greatly missed.

CRISTA BENSKIN

REVIEWS

Music in the German Renaissance: Sources, Styles, and Contexts. Ed. John Kmetz. Cambridge University Press, 1994. xvii + 289 pp. ISBN 0521 44045 9, price £45.

Some of the best-known English-language histories of music treat the German-speaking realm of Europe almost as a backwater during the Renaissance. While their emphasis on the Low Countries, on France, Burgundy, England and Italy, is understandable, it is unfortunate that it should have been at the expense of countries such as Austria and Germany whose contribution to Renaissance music was also significant. That situation has now begun to alter, thanks in particular to the work of Reinhard Strohm, and the title of this volume bears witness to the changing emphasis.

The first of its three sections, 'Sources', opens with two essays about the relationship between manuscripts and their contents. Lorenz Welker's is a study of three chansons in German manuscripts, two with dubious ascriptions to Dufay, the third anonymous but here convincingly attributed to him. By considering their style and transmission together, Welker demonstrates the importance of manuscript evidence in evaluating questions of authenticity. Jessie Anne Owens's essay is a reassessment of the well-known autograph of Isaac's setting of a sequence for St Catherine. On the basis of the relationship between the work's musical structure and the various changes to its source, Owens persuasively argues for the presence in the autograph of several stages in the compositional process, including possibly the very earliest – a conclusion bound to stimulate further debate about Renaissance compositional method. The other three essays in this section are concerned primarily with the business of collecting. Tom Ward's study of Johannes Klein, a man whose career was based at German universities and whose books of music and music theory were, like his texts on grammar, theology and other subjects, probably acquired for practical use as a teacher, illustrates the importance of viewing musical materials in context. So too does Iain Fenlon's skilful reconstruction of the library of Heinrich Glarean, a major theorist whose contribution to musical thought can only be fully appreciated in the context of his wide-ranging intellectual interests. Finally Martin Morrell documents the remarkable collection of Georg Knoff, a patrician of Danzig whose discerning enthusiasm for the Italian madrigal (among other genres) played a significant part in its northward dissemination.

Part II, 'Styles', comprises just four essays, three of them by native German speakers. Martin Just's takes as its subject the *Choralbearbeitung* (a polyphonic setting in which a chant's liturgical function is retained) as exemplified in the antiphons of the Glogau manuscript. He suggests that their careful projection of the chant may reflect the strength of religious ties felt by musicians in the German-speaking area, and that some of the settings may even have been used for didactic purposes. In the next essay Adelyn Peck Leverett provides a historical context for an early example of a *Missa brevis*. Viewing the work as a composite cycle which embraces both Italian and 'Austrian' elements, she sees its 'core movements' as providing a forerunner to the Milanese *Missae breves* thought to have been composed by Gaffurius. The other two essays in this section are concerned with different aspects of the same secular genre, the polyphonic tenor lied: Martin Staehelin's with the difficult subject of its origins and early history in the fifteenth century, Ludwig Finscher's with the problematic question of its relationship to the madrigal at the end of the sixteenth. Staehelin sees the tenor lied as growing directly out of a monophonic tradition in which improvisation played an important role, while Finscher focuses on Lassus as the key figure responsible for its eventual transformation. Both view the genre in the context of its social and literary traditions.

Two of the five essays which make up the final section of the book, 'Contexts', are wide-ranging surveys. Keith Polk examines the the role of German players abroad, the reasons for their pre-eminence among instrumentalists, and some of the effects of their high standing on both repertory and performance practice. And Robert Lindell, in a re-evaluation of music's place at the imperial court of Rudolf II, dispels the notion that the emperor did not live up to his distinguished musical legacy, showing him instead to have been a committed and informed patron in his own right. The other three essays are more narrowly focused and full of surprise. Andrew Wathey turns up several Vitry motet texts in German humanist manuscripts where, divorced from their music, they mainly serve a moralizing purpose. John Kmetz documents with remarkable precision the instruction given by an itinerant music teacher to the thirteen-year-old son of a Basle lawyer, proving that as part of his instruction the boy actually assisted his teacher in the preparation and copying of a surviving set of partbooks. And Stanley Boorman, in a fascinating study of the relationship between printing method and local performance practice in the Salzburg liturgy, shows how the problems of single-impression music printing were solved some fifteen years earlier than previously realized.

This is a fine collection of some of the best and most stimulating scholarship in the field. It focuses attention on a somewhat neglected area of Renaissance music and in doing so emphasises the need for sustained further investigation. Given its often interdisciplinary character and its limited use of technical jargon, this book should appeal widely.

PETER WRIGHT

Guglielmo Ebreo: On the Practice or Art of Dancing. Ed. Barbara Sparti. Oxford University Press, 1993. xvi + 269 pp. ISBN 0198 16233 2, price £14.95.

English students wishing to study the early history of dance are usually faced with the problem of working with sources that are not only in a foreign language, but also in a very archaic version of that language. Peggy Forsyth and I tried in a modest way to help them with our translation of Cornazano's *The Art of Dancing* (London: Dance Books, 1981). Now, Oxford University Press has published Barbara Sparti's translation of Guglielmo Ebreo's *On the Practice or Art of Dancing*. There are seven versions of the Guglielmo treatises in various European libraries, in addition to the Giovanni Ambrosio and Giorgio manuscripts which are related, and the Domenico and Cornazano treatises which complement them. Sparti has chosen to translate the Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, copy, completed in 1463. I was disappointed that she had not chosen either the Sienna or the Giorgio copies which are the most complete, containing all the theoretical material, together with a much larger collection of dances. I realize that they do not contain any music, but the music could have been taken from the Paris manuscripts. In the event, Sparti has, in fact, added extracts from the Giovanni Ambrosio copy, including several additional rules, exercises and choreographies, together with music for four of these choreographies and Guglielmo/Ambrosio's autobiography.

This shows Guglielmo to have been dancing master to the noble courts of Milan, Naples, Pesaro and Urbino in the second half of the fifteenth century, not only teaching such illustrious patrons as Alessandro and Ippolita Sforza, Federico of Montefeltro and Isabella d'Este, but also choreographing and dancing in the many *intermedii* and theatrical performances presented at these courts to mark special occasions such as betrothals, weddings, victories, visits by foreign dignitaries, etc.

The translation is, as one would expect, scholarly, and O.U.P. are to be congratulated on publishing the original Italian transcript alongside it, so that comparisons may be made. We all know that there are differences of opinion on interpretation. Sparti's translation does, I believe, help to clarify some of these points, and if there is still some doubt, the Italian text alongside is easily checked. I was relieved to see that she had made no attempt to translate the step names. No need, therefore, to be constantly referring to the beginning of the book, as in Julia Sutton's otherwise excellent translation of Caroso.

Purely for the translation, therefore, this book would be a splendid addition to anyone's library, but it is made even more valuable by the mass of additional information given by Sparti on the life of Guglielmo, which helps to set him in his time and context. Much research has been done in recent years on

the fifteenth-century dancing masters, and the findings have been published in numerous journals, mainly Italian; but unless one knows of, and has access to, all of these publications individually, the information is not easy to accumulate. In 1987 the city of Pesaro (Guglielmo's home town), together with the city of Tel-Aviv, held a conference on the life and work of this Jewish dancing master, and the publication of papers presented on that occasion went some way to collating this research. Since then, however, even more discoveries have been made and Sparti herself states that she had to rewrite her introduction several times to incorporate these. In spite of this, however, she has the humility to admit that she does not have answers to all the questions which still arise in the research of this period.

In her introduction, Sparti discusses the circumstances in which the various Guglielmo treatises may have been written, and also the place of dancing in fifteenth-century Italian society. She paints a rich canvas of grand festivals, sumptuous banquets, jousts and carnivals, in all of which dancing played a role, either in social dances for two or three noble ladies and gentlemen, or in the theatrical *intermedii* which were often masked, magnificently costumed, and involved large numbers of dancers. At the same time, however, we find that dance was not such a major feature in these festivities, and that the dancing master was not quite the honoured family retainer that we all like to imagine!

Possibly one of the most useful sections to potential choreographers is the glossary of dance terms. In a very detailed survey, Sparti collates references from all the sources which can throw a light on the most frequently used terms. She makes no attempt, however, to dogmatize on how to interpret them, and readers are left free to experiment with their own construction. Another excellent addition is her chapter of biographical notes on some of the principal characters referred to by Guglielmo. This reads like Debrett of fifteenth-century Italian nobility and will help the reader to identify and establish the links between these scions of princely houses.

The chapter on the interpretation of the music is very detailed. The fifteenth-century dancing masters composed both basse-danse and balli. For the most part they give no music for the basse-danse, though Cornazano gives *tenore* for three basse-danse which he calls 'best and more often used than all the others'. They do, however, give music for approximately twenty balli, and Sparti discusses this in some detail, setting out the four *misure* – bassa danza, quadernaria, saltarello and piva – and offering solutions to the mensuration of these four *misure*. She also suggests possible interpretations of the mensural signs which are given for some of the dances and clues to the proportional changes in tempi required by many of the balli. This chapter is invaluable to those of us trying to find our way through the minefield of re-creating the dance music. Later in the book, Sparti gives her transcription of the balli *tenore*, together with a reproduction of the original manuscript, and notes on all the variants both in music and step sequences to be found in the other sources. She also provides an abbreviated version of the choreography but, although she includes a key to the abbreviations used, I think a reader with little knowledge of the dances of this period would find it difficult to understand how to align the steps to the music. I would have preferred to see the step code written underneath the musical transcript bar by bar, so that it was apparent exactly how the music and steps relate to each other. It may be that Sparti felt this would be committing herself too much to a specific rendition. On the other hand, she is already doing this with her transcription of the music, and the alternatives discussed in her notes enable readers to introduce variations if they wish. Whilst I commend her desire not to influence readers, I fear that anyone writing a book of this kind has to be prepared to show their head above the parapet at some point. This is, however, a very small criticism and should not discourage prospective readers. The work must certainly be compulsory reading to students of dance history and an essential addition to the library of all music and dance establishments.

MADELEINE INGLEHEARN

The Cambridge Companion to the Recorder. Edited by John Mansfield Thomson, assistant editor Anthony Rowland-Jones. Cambridge University Press, 1995. xxiii + 225 pp. ISBN 0521 35269 X (hb), price £37.50; 0521 35816 7 (pb), price £13.95.

This informative compilation of essays on the recorder, its repertory and approaches to performance, combines history, technical information, background and basic repertory with some surprising (but no less welcome) forays into the friendship between George Bernard Shaw and Arnold Dolmetsch, and a chapter on facsimiles and editing and their implications for performance.

Howard Mayer Brown's posthumous contribution begins by charting the history of the instrument and the appearances of treatises and tutors, an inevitable signal of popular and establishment success. Then, in a useful commentary on the ambiguity surrounding the recorder's repertory, Anthony Rowland-Jones nevertheless claims that recorders 'sound right' playing a pavane for courtly dancing – an assertion he bases on literary and iconographical sources as much as on his own musical taste. Rowland-Jones continues to dominate the discussion and meeting-point of history and repertory in a further chapter on the Baroque recorder sonata, pointing out that almost all the music designated for solo recorder was written during the fifty years between

1690 and 1740. He makes the important point that the sonata was regarded as a serious form of music.

Adrienne Simpson then guides us through the role of the recorder in orchestral music from Monteverdi's *Orfeo* to Benjamin Britten. She welcomingly comments on the assumption that recorders fell out of fashion because they were too quiet, pointing out that the recorder actually carries rather better than the Baroque flute, so that its decline may have been considered more to do with lack of nuance and dynamic flexibility. Even this, I must say, has never sounded totally convincing to me, since dynamic flexibility and nuance are perfectly possible with the recorder, and as anyone who has played a trio sonata with a Baroque flute knows, the recorder is always the louder.

The chapter on the eighteenth-century recorder concerto by David Lasocki and Anthony Rowland-Jones describes the English recorder concerto as represented by Baston and Woodcock. Although these are not the most exciting pieces of music either to play or to hear, they are at least there for those who are obsessed with the concept that only a 'concerto' can be called a real piece of music. Lasocki's account of methods for the recorder from 1500 to the present day cautionarily warns that 'recorder instructions of the past can give us only a small idea of what the recorder was like in a few scattered places at arbitrary times'. Take note, purists.

After an engagingly attractive account by the book's editor, John Mansfield Thomson, of the friendship between Shaw and Dolmetsch, Clifford Bartlett encourages amateurs and young professionals to find inspiration in the use of facsimiles for playing. But he is not snobbish about facsimiles, and is helpful about what constitutes a good modern edition. However, like Rowland-Jones in his chapter on the Baroque recorder sonata, he claims that we need (a) to play in the manner of the time when the music was written, and (b) to understand what the composer was trying to say. On this issue I would urge readers towards Nicholas Kenyon's edited collection of essays *Authenticity and Early Music*, in which many of the truisms carried by the early music movement – including these – are taken up and challenged.

The most provocative remarks come in two distillations from Eve O'Kelly's excellent book on the recorder in the twentieth century. She tackles many of the myths about the instrument, and she also has the courage to put two penetrating and potentially uncomfortable questions: 'With the strong growth recently in professional playing and teaching, are we now at the peak of the redevelopment of the recorder, or is there further to go?' With the recorder now being replaced by the synthesizer in schools, and the amateur movement having lost momentum, she comments: 'In the early years of the century everyone was of necessity a pioneer. Today the "frontier spirit" has gone, but has it been replaced by any other sustaining force?'

It seems to me that we now have a mass of excavated repertory, both that designated specifically for recorder and also repertory which can easily and rewardingly be played on recorders. We are not short of facts, we are not short of clichés about composers' intentions, and we are not short of guidance to ornamentation and stylistic options in the past. But we are seriously short of provoking and stimulating thought about the instrument, what it can do and what we want it to do, and we still have a gap between the passion and enthusiasm of a large part of the amateur movement and some of the satisfactions and pleasures achievable in playing. It may be to do with lack of ambition, but I suspect it is much more to do with a climate in which, as Eve O'Kelly points out, a peak of enthusiasm was reached and not really sustained. Some of this is due to the relatively marginal place of the recorder in the professional world and the contempt in which it is held by other musicians. But part of it is also due to a snobbish attitude within the profession which makes young people want only to shine as soloists (or languish as soloists manqué) rather than be able to commit themselves to a passion for music which spreads more widely and generously. It will not be easy to effect a turn-around in this attitude.

Meanwhile, let me warmly recommend this book to professional and amateur musicians, educators and readers, as a stimulating, useful, practical historical guide. The book is beautifully produced; an impressive collection of old and new illustrations, assembled by the book's assistant editor Anthony Rowland-Jones, is accompanied by informative and generous captions.

MICHELENE WANDOR

LETTERS

Dear Madam,

I was particularly interested in Poppy Holden's illuminating interview with Richard Burnett from Finchcocks in the Autumn 1995 issue of *Leading Notes*, having heard him talk and play on various fortepianos in Nassington Church as part of the 1995 Suffolk Villages Festival. His programme did include 'a trite little Schubert dance' (is 'trite' quite the right word?), maybe played 'for the hundredth time this season' (p. 2) on a Viennese-action fortepiano. And it certainly had 'emotional expressiveness', as well as 'a special freshness and lilting beauty' which would be hard to achieve on a weightier modern concert grand. In fact the sound was a revelation. One felt much closer to the music, and to the genius of the composer.

I listened recently to a fine recording (Philips 480 840-2) on a modern piano of Schubert's Impromptus, played by Alfred Brendel. I am sure Richard Burnett would be too modest to regard himself in the same class as Brendel as a pianist and interpreter, but I was nevertheless left considering whether the Impromptus would have sounded even more wonderful played with the skill and insight of Brendel on the 'right' instrument. Is this ideal, however, only in my imagination, unattainable?

In the past Jörg Demus and Paul Badura-Skoda recorded Schubert on original instruments, and today players such as Malcolm Bilson and Melvyn Tan are accustoming us to the character of the fortepiano and its balance with other instruments. Peter Katin has recently recorded (Athene ATH CD5) the Schubert Impromptus on a Clementi square piano from 1832 (not on a Viennese fortepiano). It is a lyrical and committed performance; but if I had to choose between the Brendel and the Katin recordings for my desert-island disc I would choose the Brendel. I am somewhat confused in admitting this. The plummy sound is 'not right' in the Brendel performance, but the interpretation has considerable musicianly perception, warmth and authority. I feel that experiencing it helps me towards a deeper understanding of the music.

Of course great music is open to many different and valid interpretations. In a different age, in a different environment of musical performance, and with audiences brought up with many different sounds and kinds of music since Schubert's time, some interpretations will bear little relation to 'the intentions of the composer'. *Pace* Quantz, does this matter? I understand that Alfred Brendel has said that he preferred to perform on a modern piano, particularly because of what he feels is the inadequacy of the high notes of early fortepianos. Instrument makers have, after all, striven to overcome such weaknesses by technical advance, even if the original sounds that Schubert knew, and which he had in mind when writing his music, have been lost in the process. But does this mean that the technical imperfections of early fortepianos stand in the way of an interpretation of Schubert's Impromptus as profound as Brendel's?

Was my judgement at fault in reacting so differently to the Burnett occasion, and to experiencing the Katin and Brendel interpretations? Perhaps Schubert did not intend his Impromptus to be profound.

ANTHONY ROWLAND-JONES, Grantchester

Dear Madam,

I think your readers would like to know that the nineteenth- to twentieth-century viola da gamba players to whom J. R. Catch refers in terms of a tradition or independent revival (*Leading Notes*, 5/2 (Autumn 1995)) were perpetuating a false image of the instrument, which persisted until the 1950s. The late Thurston Dart coined a very apt name for them: 'cellambists'. That is to say that they played without frets, employed overhand (cello) bowing and ignored authentic styles of interpretation, as revealed with documentary evidence by Arnold Dolmetsch in his epoch-making book, *The Interpretation of Music of the 17th and 18th Centuries* (Novello 1915). (Now available in paperback, together with Appendix of musical illustrations. Particulars from Dolmetsch Editions, 112 Birch Road, Headley Down, Hants GU35 8BW.)

Notable 'cellambists' not mentioned by Dr Catch, who maintained the mongrel cult through the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century (when they had occasion to know better) included August Tolbecque, Leewven Boomkamp (virtuoso in 'Musica Antiqua'), Ambrose Gauntlet (cello professor supreme), Edith Lake, Francesca Palmer, and Eva Heinitz (until her conversion by Nathalie Dolmetsch) – all of them fine artists in their own way, but sadly failing to represent genuine gamba technique as it was concurrently being taught by Arnold Dolmetsch and his disciples from 1880 onwards. 'Cellambism' has no right to be regarded as an authentic revival, any more than occasional amateur 'tootling' on antique recorders from glass cases brought about the vast modern recorder revival!

When Arnold Dolmetsch settled in London in 1883, ignorance about the true viols was such that those who were even aware of them still believed that treble viols should be held under the chin like the viola d'amore, with which small viols were often confused, thus disregarding the meaning of the Italian words 'da gamba'.

Writing as one first taught the viol by Arnold Dolmetsch eighty years ago, may I recommend to anyone not wishing to follow his precepts today that they study those of his principal mentor, Christopher Simpson. They might start by looking at the well-known engraving of the master, adopt his bow hold, and read what he has to say about essential wrist action! (See Christopher Simpson, *The Division-Viol* (London, 1659, rev. 2/1665/R1965 as *The Division-Viol*.)

CARL DOLMETSCH, Haslemere