

WILLIAM BYRD'S MOTET "TRISTITIA ET ANXIETAS" THROUGH ELIZABETHAN EYES:

PERFORMANCE PRACTICE BASED ON AN EXAMINATION

OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY SOURCES

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By considering sixteenth-century English chorister training, modern singers of Renaissance vocal music are informed of the practical and academic demands unique to Elizabethan musicians and audiences. Clauses in relevant choirmaster contracts provide an insight into pedagogical expectations of teachers and their choristers. Studies included plainchant, grammar, Latin, rhetoric, improvisation, poetry, morality, instrumental instruction on organ and viols, and composition. For those not associated with cathedrals and collegiate chapels, Thomas Morley outlined the educational sequence of his teacher's generation in his 1597 publication, *A plaine and easie introduction to practycall musicke*. Morley presented education as discourse between students and teacher, and covered the fundamentals of singing, improvisation, and composition.

With the digitization of and online access to Renaissance performing sources, present-day performers can readily examine the design of sixteenth-century manuscript and printed partbooks. Performance practice recommendations can be gleaned from the physical nature of the music that once equipped the Renaissance chorister with the visual means necessary for expression. Combined with principles of chorister training, this project suggests learned choices in pronunciation, tone, intonation, phrasing, pitch, text underlay, *musica ficta*, rhetoric, and expression for the *prima pars* of William Byrd's middle period motet, "Tristitia et anxietas."

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DIAMM	Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music
EEBO	Early English Books Online
JI	John Irving
M	Major
m	Minor
MA	Master
P	Perfect
PHI	Philomathes
POL	Polymathes
SB	Stratton Bull

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Today, most singers are unfamiliar with the humanistic disciplines that inextricably bound music and expression during the Renaissance era. Void of the spirit of the trivium and quadrivium, undergraduate training is built upon a sequence of individual, skill-based courses: music history and theory, class piano, private voice instruction and coaching, diction, vocal literature, and vocal pedagogy. Further, the demands placed on undergraduates surpass their sixteenth-century counterparts' with the addition of four centuries of music, spanning diverse eras and styles. The subsequent compartmentalization of instruction challenges students to create or contextualize relationships between analytical, historical, and performance-centric courses. Education, today, often leaves its singers with a myopic view of the arts, one that no longer resembles the interconnected musical world depicted on the title page of Thomas Morley's *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke*.

Previous research has yet to consider the relationship between Morley's treatise, sixteenth-century chorister training, original notation, and the performance of sixteenth-century motets. An article published in *Choral Journal* recognized the affect and authenticity that a partbook has on performance, but tepidly endorsed continued exploration because of challenges faced in preparation and rehearsal.<sup>1</sup> Anne Smith similarly commended investigation —“At the same time I am convinced that we will not get at the heart of the music if we do not approach it in the same way, from the individual parts, allowing their flowing together, their confluence to create the whole”—but too acknowledged the challenges facing modern

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Butcher and Donald Studebaker, “Choral Part-Books Then and Now,” *Choral Journal* (September 1985): 19-21.

performers who read from original notation.<sup>2</sup> To better understand partbook culture, one must consider the education of its earliest users. Jane Flynn clearly summarized relevant training methods in England.<sup>3</sup> Flynn provided a detailed account of chorister training and context as it existed in sixteenth-century England using primary sources, but did not explore the relationship between training, partbooks, and the performance practice of vocal music.

While research remains disparate and incomplete, a discussion of decipherable elements found in original sources provide contemporary performers with a case study and reproducible method with which to expunge anachronisms found in modern performances of sixteenth-century music. Used in conjunction with a modern transcription in partbook format, the systematic approach equips performers and audiences with the necessary tools for interpretation. William Byrd's motet—"Tristitia et anxietas"—specifically offers a trove of research and discovery. In addition to being accessible online for general reference, the motet exists in three editions from the 1580s: Dow and Baldwin manuscript partbooks, and the printed *Liber primus sacrarum cantionem quinque vocum*, a publication that Byrd closely regulated.<sup>4</sup> Thus, one motet from three different sixteenth-century sources elucidates variance due to the roles of composer, scribe, printer, collector, and performer.

Performance practice can be further explored through the use of a performing edition. The edition in Appendix E, findings in Chapter 4, and accompanying performance guide in Chapter 5 investigate idiosyncrasies found in the original sources available online. The performing edition and guide also illuminate elements added to or missing from modern

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<sup>2</sup> Anne Smith, *The Performance of 16th-Century Music: Learning from the Theorists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 18.

<sup>3</sup> John Morehen, ed., *English Choral Practice 1400-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 180-199.

<sup>4</sup> John Milsom, "Tallis, Byrd and the 'Incorrected Copy': Some Cautionary Notes for Editors of Early Music Printed from Moveable Type," *Music and Letters* 77 (1996): 348.

editions. The analysis deepens our understanding of the effect that modern notation has on historically informed performance (HIP) and explores the relationship between original notation and HIP.

Analyses of relevant sixteenth-century primary sources, including Thomas Morley's *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke*, a summary of chorister education records preserved in Tudor churches, the Dow and Baldwin partbooks, and *Liber primus sacrarum cantionem quinque vocum*, provides performance practice recommendations for "Tristitia et anxietas." A close reading of Morley's treatise and a review of sixteenth-century choral education methods reveal the manner in which sixteenth-century musicians interacted with the aforementioned partbooks. These interactions, which were inspired by partbooks' embedded symbols, yield once obvious musical interpretations. Symbols such as clefs, *custos*, mensuration signs, *signum congruentiae*, woodblock artwork, and calligraphy equipped the Renaissance chorister with the necessary visual means of expression. Additionally, descriptions of the partbook producers—Robert Dow, John Baldwin, Thomas East—and their publications offer evidence when making performance practice decisions. Combined, these separate elements solve questions of pronunciation, tone, intonation, phrasing, pitch, text underlay, *musica ficta*, rhetoric, and expression.

## CHAPTER 2

### SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH CHORISTER TRAINING

Centuries of dust and candle soot must be removed through a careful, restorative process in order to reveal the original beauty of Hans Holbein's decorative ceiling of the Chapel Royal at St. James's Palace—a ceiling that has reflected the finest polyphony since Tudor England. A similar undertaking, though figuratively, must be done to Elizabethan, Latin motets in order to inform modern performance of past aesthetic influences. Unlike today's music education curriculum, William Byrd and his contemporaries received training in grammar, Latin, rhetoric, plainchant, improvisation, memorization, poetry, morality, instrumental instruction on organ and viols, and composition.<sup>5</sup> Exploration of sixteenth-century chorister education considers how musicians likely interacted with polyphony in rehearsal and performance as a result of their training.

Chorister training during the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary I has been described as "practical":

The aim of choristers' education was not primarily musical; it was focused on the liturgy, the performance of which demonstrated practically the way to live a virtuous Christian life. In addition to musical skills, choristers learned to read and write English and Latin, and morals based on Christian teaching. . . . Choristers learned by participating in daily services (depending on the degree of solemnity): they read Scripture lessons, acted as crossbearers, censers, taperers and water bearers, and sang. Mostly they sang chant, and even those choristers whose musical skills were at a basic level could take part. While beginners sang chant, the more experienced choristers improvised on it in a variety of ways ranging from simple to complex. Likewise, choristers' lessons in the classroom were practical, and were designed to reinforce the knowledge and the expertise necessary for participating in the liturgy. They practiced their lessons as a

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<sup>5</sup> Refer to the summary of chorister education by Jane Flynn, "The Education of Choristers in England during the Sixteenth Century," in *English Choral Practice, 1400-1650*, ed. John Morehen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 180-199.



group, usually in one room, reciting and listening to others, and being corrected by the master.<sup>6</sup>

Although it is unlikely that the practical knowledge of burning incense as a censer contributed to informed musical decisions made by choristers when singing from chant notation, undoubtedly the above-listed responsibilities influenced the performance of polyphony.<sup>7</sup> As a chorister, William Byrd received this “practical” education, which inevitably revealed itself later in his life as a choirmaster and composer. The contracts of sixteenth-century choirmasters enumerated pedagogical expectations.

The first professional contract of William Byrd—choirmaster and organist at Lincoln Cathedral beginning in 1563—required him to “diligently instruct and teach the choristers . . . in knowledge of the art of music.”<sup>8</sup> Specifics of this clause can be found in the contract of a previous choirmaster and organist at Lincoln Cathedral from two appointments prior. The assignment of James Crowe included the following duties:

[D]uly and diligently to instruct chorister boys, both in the science of singing, viz. playnsonge, prykyd songe, faburdon, diskante, and counter, and also in playing the organs in the Cathedral, especially two or three of them, whose he or his deputy shall find fit, docile and suitable to be taught to play on the instruments, called clavycordes in future provided always the boys be taught in this science of organ-playing shall have and find the instruments called clavycordes at their own proper cost and expense.<sup>9</sup>

The two or three choristers who received instruction on keyboard instruments benefited from advanced study, but all choristers learned plainchant (playnsonge), notated mensural music (prykyd songe), improvised chant at fixed intervals (faburdon), improvised chant at non-fixed

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<sup>6</sup> Flynn, “The Education of Choristers,” 180-181.

<sup>7</sup> One could argue that the presence of incense elicits a physical response and therefore affects the “performance” of monophony and polyphony at Mass and Evensong.

<sup>8</sup> Watkins Shaw, “William Byrd of Lincoln,” *Music and Letters* 48 (1967): 52-53.

<sup>9</sup> David G.T. Harris, “Musical Education in Tudor Times (1485-1603),” *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 65th sess. (1938-39): 119.

intervals (diskant), and presumably learned counterpoint (counter). Flynn's summary and Craue's contract underscore the prevalence and importance of plainchant in the sequence of music education. Plainchant was the foundation of sixteenth-century music education and thus informed vocal technique.

Unfortunately, the Renaissance era has not yet received the same scholarly attention as the repertory and performance of medieval chant.<sup>10</sup> A solution is required in order to determine the necessary vocal technique because of (1) a dearth of primary source evidence; (2) divergence in local customs of Christendom; (3) homogeneity in approach by contemporary early music vocal ensembles; (4) a lack of interest in modern research, perhaps due to the polyphonic developments that occurred in the fifteenth through sixteenth centuries.<sup>11</sup> Timothy J. McGee surveyed theoretical medieval treatises from the seventh through fifteenth centuries, highlighting passages that discussed vocal technique and style.<sup>12</sup> His comprehensive method found commonalities of vocal technique within an oral tradition that varied by place and generation. Below are two relevant excerpts concerning the performance of plainchant that share some similarity to present-day interpretations:

“. . . [T]hey seem to have similar models for a good singing technique: clean articulation, flexibility of sound, expression, and a refined quality.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Richard Sherr, "The Performance of Chant in Renaissance and Its Interactions with Polyphony," In *Plainsong in the Age of Polyphony*, ed. Thomas Forrest Kelly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 178.; James Haar, "Monophony and the Unwritten Tradition," In *Performance Practice: Music before 1600*, ed. Howard Mayer Brown and Stanley Sadie (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan Press, 1989), 247.

<sup>11</sup> The oft-cited article by Mother Thomas More, "The Performance of Plainsong in the Latter Middle Ages and the Sixteenth Century," focused on rhythm and tempo.

<sup>12</sup> Timothy McGee, *The Sound of Medieval Song: Ornamentation and Vocal Style According to the Treatise* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 20.

<sup>13</sup> McGee, *The Sound of Medieval Song*, 20.

“The desire for clarity of tone, enunciation, and articulation are values common to both eras, as are the directions to keep a steady tempo and to express the text.”<sup>14</sup>

Two terms that deserve consideration are articulation and flexibility because of their drastic implications.

“Chant was clearly articulated, with individual notes and the first notes of ligatures separated from one another by a tiny silence. All notes within a ligature were unarticulated.”<sup>15</sup> The legato, Solesmes-style that dominated twentieth-century audio recordings of chant then is closer aligned with nineteenth-century *bel canto* technique, not with Medieval/Renaissance conventions. The degree of articulation and separation between non-ligated notes is more challenging to ascertain from manuscripts and accounts, but ought to guide the performance of plainchant and Renaissance polyphony. Polyphony via plainchant challenged another hallmark of *bel canto* technique, *appoggio*. Francesco Lamperti described *appoggio* as a relationship involving breath and sub-glottal pressure.<sup>16</sup> Necessary for nineteenth-century opera, it undermines the natural limitations of the human voice. “A monk once told me that in his monastery, every novice loses his voice within the first few months of singing the Divine Office. Only then does he learn to sing lightly and easily enough that his voice can sustain the extensive singing throughout the day.”<sup>17</sup> It would seem that the resonance afforded by *appoggio* is more appropriate for the likes of Rossini, Donizetti, or Bellini, not for the plainchant of anonymous or polyphony of Tallis or Byrd.

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<sup>14</sup> McGee, *The Sound of Medieval Song*, 118.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>16</sup> James A. Stark, *Bel Canto: A History of Vocal Pedagogy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 102.

<sup>17</sup> William P. Mahrt, “Chant,” in *A Performer’s Guide to Medieval Music*, ed. Ross W. Duffin (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2000), 16.

As plainchant guided vocal technique, it also informed intonation, phrasing, and composition. Stratton Bull, artistic director of *Cappella Pratensis*—a vocal ensemble that specializes in the performance of third generation, Franco-Flemish polyphony using facsimile editions—remarked in an interview: “Chant is a big part of what we do. It’s kind of the basic motor, just as it was in those days. Everybody sang chant all of the time, and when it was important, they sang polyphony. Polyphony is based on chant, and chant is what forms your whole way of singing.”<sup>18</sup> A cursory analysis of the *prima pars* of “*Aspice Domine de sede sancta tua*,” a five-voice motet in William Byrd’s *Liber primus sacrarum cantionem quinque vocum* (1589), confirms the foundational role of chant. Employing cantus-firmus technique, Byrd set the tenor voice with the unaltered chant in semibreves against four voices in pervasive imitation.<sup>19</sup> The first point of imitation is constructed using the first eight notes of the chant as building blocks. This understanding informs decisions of intonation and phrasing of the initial ascending minor 3rd interval and subsequent step-wise motion, in addition to the overall shape of the phrase based on the source plainchant that underpins the motet.

How do today’s choirmasters recreate an environment in which chant is the day-to-day diet of choristers, thereby influencing polyphony?<sup>20</sup> At its simplest, devise vocal warm-ups that address the shape and mechanism of chant. The following Robert Parsons-inspired vocalise (see Musical Example 2.1) sequentially trains the proper breath support and resonance needed to navigate the step-wise and intervallic characteristics found in chant. First supporting breath, then resonance, the exercise should ascend by half-steps, alternating the phrase between lip

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<sup>18</sup> Stratton Bull, Skype interview by author, March 16, 2016.

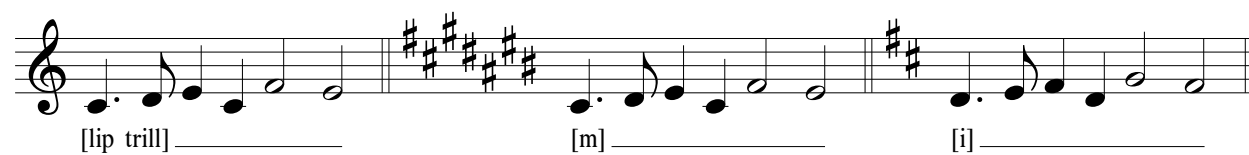
<sup>19</sup> See the first point of imitation in Appendix A.

<sup>20</sup> Plainchant has been introduced recently as a pedagogical device for choral ensembles by James Jordan, *Discovering Chant* (Chicago: GIA, Publications 2014).

trills, [m], and [i]. As the singer ascends and negotiates their *passaggio*, it may be helpful to remain on [i] or modify to an open [ɪ], as necessary, in order to maintain the principles ascribed to vocal technique influenced by plainchant: flexibility, clarity of tone, and articulation.

#### Musical Example 2.1

##### *Robert Parsons-inspired Vocalise*



Although less tangible, lessons on morality and virtue were an equally important component of chorister training. In addition to scriptural readings, moral education was taught through the performance of secular songs in choristers' plays.<sup>21</sup> Masters of choristers set moralistic text for solo voice and often viol or regal accompaniment.<sup>22</sup> One such setting included text by Richard Edwards, Master of the Choristers at the Chapel Royal, and music by Robert Parsons, who preceded William Byrd as Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. Parsons set the first two stanzas (see Table 2.1) of Edwards's four-stanza poem, *Fair words make fools fain*. The Edwardian text reads pointedly to a youthful chorister, specifically the lines - "when first my young desires began," "God guide thy way," and the proverb, "fair words make fools fain." The proverb however must be given its full context in order to be plainly understood; its message is encapsulated in the poem's final stanza (see Table 2.2).

<sup>21</sup> Flynn, "The Education of Choristers," 191.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

Table 2.1

*In youthly years* set by Robert (?) Parsons<sup>23</sup>

In youthly years, when first my young desires began  
To prick me forth to serve in court, a slender tall young man,  
My father's blessing then I asked upon my knee,  
Who, blessing me with trembling hands, these words 'gan say to me:  
My son, God guide thy way, and shield thee from mischance,  
And make thy just deserts in court, thy poor estate to advance.  
Yet when thou art become one of the courtly train,  
Think on this proverb, old, quoth he, that fair words make fools fain.

[This counsel gravely giv'n most strange appears to me,  
Till tract of time, with open eyes, had made me plainly see  
What subtle sleights are wrought, by painted rail's device,  
When hollow hearts, with friendly shoes, the simple to entice  
To think all gold that shines, to feed their fond desire,  
Whose shiv'ring cold is warm'd with smoke instead of flaming fire.  
Sith talk of tickle trust doth breed a hope most vain,  
This proverb true by proof I find, that fair words make fools fain.]

Table 2.2

Fourth Stanza of *Fair words make fools fain* by Richard Edwards<sup>24</sup>

Woe worth the time that words so slowly turn to deeds,  
Woe worth the time that fair sweet flowers are grown to rotten weeds,  
But thrice woe worth the time that truth away is fled,  
Wherein I see how simple hearts with words are vainly fed.  
Trust no fair words therefore where no deeds do ensue,  
Trust words as skillful falconers do trust hawks that never flew.  
Trust deeds, let words be words which never wrought me gain,  
Let my experience make you wise, and let words make fools fain.

Thus the proverb informs its youthful performers to the merit of actions (“trust deeds”) over the emptiness of words (“grown to rotten weeds”).

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<sup>23</sup> David Greer, *Songs from Manuscript Sources* (London: Stainer & Bell, 1979), 8-11.

<sup>24</sup> Ros King, *The Collected Works of Richard Edwards: Politics, Poetry and Performance in Sixteenth-Century England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 202.

The messages of songs embedded within the didactic, morality plays influenced the choristers who performed them. An education that seamlessly wove together music and morality likely resulted in a heightened understanding and sensitivity to text expression, rhetoric, and biblical stories. The performance of music then was a by-product of this unique spiritual and intellectual environment. It may be impossible to replicate an education steeped in morality, especially at public institutions, but the inclusion of poetry and texts in rehearsal as they relate to the repertoire informs and inspires modern choristers to contemplate interpretation and context.

Chorister training, including moralistic songs, remained largely unchanged for the first half of the sixteenth century throughout the revolving door of monarchs and subsequent strife of post-Reformation England. The longevity of Queen Elizabeth I's reign (1558-1603) during the second half of the century caused a shift away from practical education.<sup>25</sup> Because of the political, and therefore religious, stability encountered during Elizabeth's reign, chorister training transformed from practical to "academic":

Masters of choristers' indentures dating from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries place a greater emphasis on instruments than before, and are generally unspecific as regards vocal and improvisational skills, because liturgical music was no longer chant-based. It was now more important for choristers to be able to read music than to memorize 'plainsong'. . . . Choristers did not need to learn complex methods of improvising for performance during the liturgy; they needed to learn how to *write* music for the liturgy.<sup>26</sup>

Ironically, moralistic plays were later replaced by comedies and political satires intended as secular entertainment for both performer and audience.<sup>27</sup> The developments in training created

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<sup>25</sup> Flynn, "The Education of Choristers," 181.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 194.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 197-198.

musically well-rounded choristers who studied composition, instruments (organ and viols), and focused heavily on music literacy to accommodate the shift from plainchant to polyphonic motets.

By considering sixteenth-century chorister training and its focus on plainchant, grammar, Latin, rhetoric, improvisation, poetry, morality, instrumental instruction, and composition, modern performers of English Renaissance vocal music are informed of the practical and academic demands that influenced its original performers and listeners.



## CHAPTER 3

### *A PLAINE AND EASIE INTRODUCTION TO PRACTICALL MUSICKE*

#### 3.1 Introduction

For those who did not have the fortune, or misfortune (!), of receiving musical training as a chorister associated with a cathedral or chapel, Thomas Morley provided a self-help book of sorts to the Elizabethan citizen. In the prefatory material titled, “TO THE COURTEOUS READER,” Morley shared his intent for the publication, *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke* - “to further the studies of them who, being endued with good natural wits and well inclined to learn that divine art of music, are destitute of sufficient masters.”<sup>1</sup> For those without a proficient teacher, all one needed was intelligence and a willingness to embrace the past:

And although it be true that the Proportions have not such use in music in that form as they be now used but that the practice may be perfect without them, yet seeing they have been in common use with the musicians of former time it is necessary for us to know them if we mean to make profit of their work.<sup>2</sup>

Thus Thomas Morley beseeched his reader in the *Peroratio* of *A plaine and easie introduction*. Morley urged musicians in 1597 to learn earlier musical notation, even if contemporarily defunct, in order to perform music from an earlier period. This necessity may be even more relevant today as modern notation of Renaissance music loosely resembles its mensural origins. A close reading of Morley’s treatise examines notation, pitch, phrasing, cadences, mode, affect, compositional process, music education, relationship between student

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, ed. Alec Harman. 2nd ed (New York: Norton, 1973), 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 306-307.

and teacher, and expectations of musicians as they are relevant to the performance practice of sixteenth-century English motets, specifically William Byrd's "Tristitia et anxietas."

### 3.2 Thomas Morley

A contemporary of William Shakespeare and student of William Byrd, Thomas Morley (1557/8-1602) is well-known for his contributions to the English madrigal, continuation of Byrd's printing monopoly, and treatise, *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke*. Born northeast of London in Norwich, Morley was likely a chorister at Norwich Cathedral where his father was a verger.<sup>3</sup> In 1574, his name appeared on a list of choristers at St. Paul Cathedral in London.<sup>4</sup> He was master of choristers and organist at Norwich Cathedral in 1583 and appears to have returned to St. Paul's as organist after 1587.<sup>5</sup> He graduated from the University of Oxford in 1588 as a Bachelor of Music.<sup>6</sup> On July 24, 1592, Morley was sworn in as a Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal.<sup>7</sup> In 1598, he obtained the royal monopoly on music publishing previously held by Tallis and Byrd.<sup>8</sup>

### 3.3 Title Page - *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke*

Adorned with astronomers, geographers, historians, mathematicians, philosophers, and poets, the title page (see Figure 3.1) of Thomas Morley's 1597 instructional publication reveals

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<sup>3</sup> Tessa Murray, *Thomas Morley Elizabethan Music Publisher* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2014), 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 21-26.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

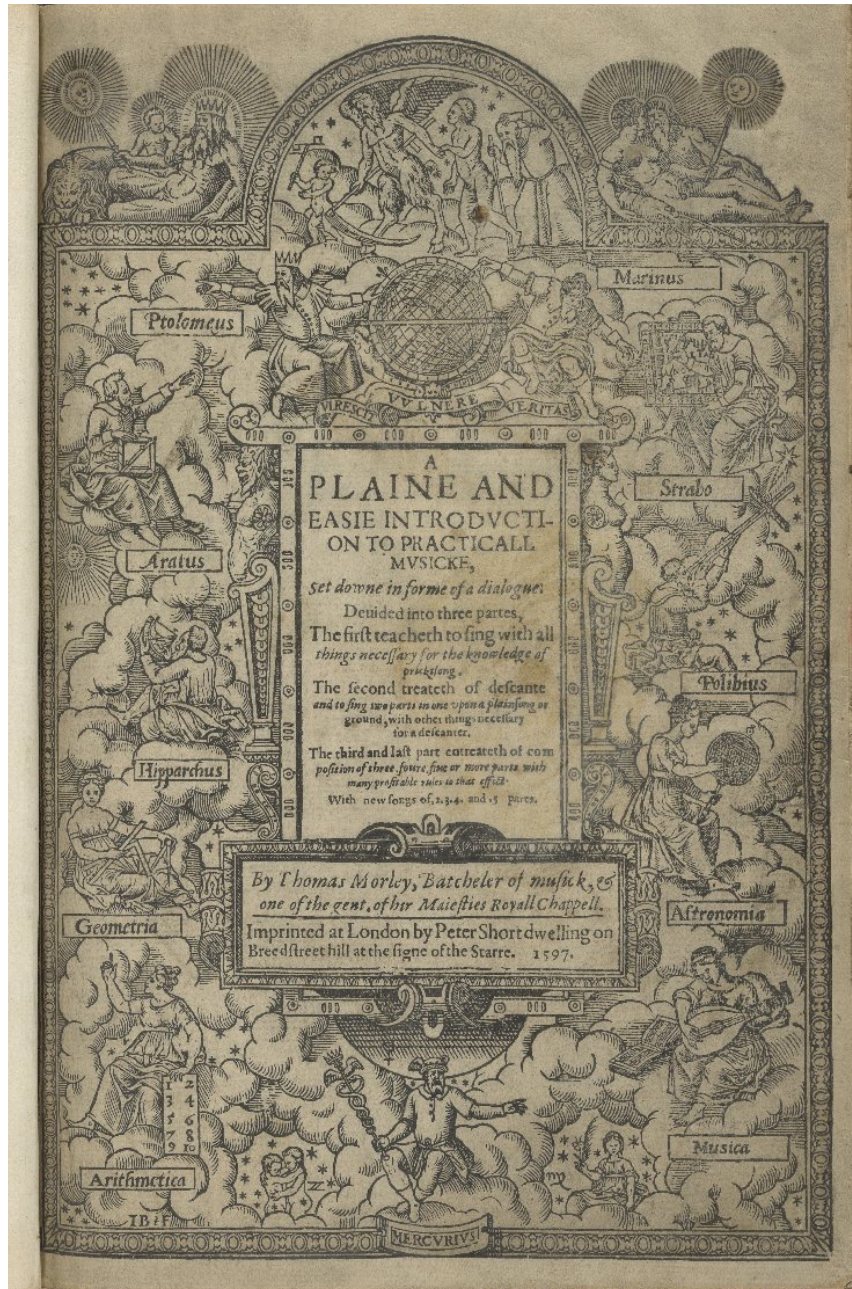
<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

the interdisciplinary world in which sixteenth-century musicians flourished.

Figure 3.1

Title page of Thomas Morley, *A plaine and easie introduction*<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9</sup> STC 18133 Copy 1, front endleaf 3r. Used by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

The woodcut features named characters (from clockwise, right): *Marinus*, *Strabo*, *Polibius*, *Astronomia*, *Musica*, *Mercurius*, *Arithmetica*, *Geometria*, *Hipparchus*, *Aratus*, and *Ptolomeus*.<sup>10</sup>

The two unnamed characters surrounding Mercury can be identified by their astrological symbols, Gemini and Virgo. The upper left and right quadrants are likely Jupiter and Ganymede, and Venus and Mars, respectively.<sup>11</sup> In addition to the figures of antiquity and personifications of the Quadrivium (arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy), the woodcut inscribes the latin motto—*VIRESCIT VULNERE VERITAS*—Truth strengthens by her wound.<sup>12</sup> What did these figures and motto represent to Morley and contemporary English musicians?

An inventory of musical books published in close proximity to Morley's treatise reveals the identical woodcut used as a title page to John Dowland, *The first booke of songes or ayres of fowre partes* (1597) and *The third and last booke of songs or aires* (1603), Philip Rosseter, *A booke of ayres* (1601), and Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins, *The whole booke of psalmes* (1605).<sup>13</sup> Non-musical publications that utilized the woodcut include those by theologians—Thomas Becon, Peter Martyr Vermigli, and Mathew Parker (Archbishop of Canterbury 1559-1575)—and poet Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1605).<sup>14</sup> The first

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<sup>10</sup> *Marinus of Neapolis* - Greek philosopher; *Strabo* - Greek geographer; *Polybius* - Greek historian; *Mercury* - Roman god; *Hipparchus* - Greek astronomer; *Aratus* - Greek poet; *Ptolemy* - Egyptian mathematician and scientist; and the Quadrivium: arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy personified as *Arithmetica*, *Musica*, *Geometria*, and *Astronomia*

<sup>11</sup> Anthony Parr, "Time and the Satyr," *Huntington Library Quarterly* Vol. 68, No. 3 (2005): 430.

<sup>12</sup> Trustees of the British Museum, "The Cosmographical Glasse," The British Museum, [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=1618193&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1618193&partId=1) (accessed May 23, 2016).

<sup>13</sup> Ronald B. McKerrow and Frederic S. Ferguson, *Title-page Borders used in England & Scotland 1485-1640* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), 92-93.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

usage, however, of this printed woodcut is found in Norwich-born William Cunningham's *The cosmographical glasse* (1559), writings on surveying and navigation.<sup>15</sup>

Engraved by the Englishman John Bettes the Elder, the woodcut signaled Cunningham's "intellectual allegiances and priorities."<sup>16</sup> What then does that say about Thomas Morley and his "allegiances" and "priorities?" What does a Greek astronomer, geographer, historian, mathematician, philosopher, and poet, Roman gods, astrological signs, a satyr—presumably a personification of Time with scythe—who is guiding man from infancy to adult to old age, and the female personifications of the Quadrivium say about Morley's intent and intended audience? The scene atop which depicts the satyr as a guide represents Morley's guarantee to his readers. In sixteenth century London, "the satyr is reinvented as the melancholy misfit whose discordant perspective on the world is a means to diagnosing social evils."<sup>17</sup> The satyr—in this case Morley who has diagnosed evils in Elizabethan music education—leads mankind regardless of age from ignorance to learnedness, amongst astronomers, geographers, historians, mathematicians, philosophers, and poets, and beneath the reign of Roman deities.

### 3.4 Prefatory Material - *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke*

Just as a title page signifies an author's milieu and serves as a first impression to its readers, the prefatory material reveals an author's devotion, intent, and impetus for publication. According to the prefatory material of Thomas Tallis and Williams Byrd's joint publication, *Cantiones, quae ab argumento sacrae vocantur* (1575), motets functioned as a

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<sup>15</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>16</sup> Parr, "Time and the Satyr," 430.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 454.

jewel in Queen Elizabeth I's diadem.<sup>18</sup> With far fewer nationalistic undertones (not including the royal woodcut with the motto, "Honi soit mal y pense," and royal cypher—ER—Elizabeth Regina<sup>19</sup>), Morley's preface to *A plaine and easie introduction* payed tribute to his teacher, outlined the purpose of his publication, and addressed his readers with a bold claim.<sup>20</sup> The prefatory material opened with a dedication to his teacher, William Byrd, in flowery Elizabethan prose: "to signify unto the world my thankful mind, and also to notify unto yourself in some sort the entire love and unfeigned affection which I bear unto you."<sup>21</sup> The association to Byrd, both as a teacher of and prefatory dedication to, allows Morley's treatise to function as a reference for the performance of Byrd's vocal music.

In the dedication to Byrd, Morley inspires his readers with words resembling a musician's creed: "be stirred up to enter into contemplation and searching of more than earthly things."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Read Monson's translation in Philip Brett and Craig Monson, eds., *The Byrd Edition* Vol. 1 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1977), xxvi.

<sup>19</sup> Honi soit mal y pense - Shame on him who thinks evil of it

<sup>20</sup> To the most excellent musician, Master William Byrd, one of the Gentlemen of Her Majesty's Chapel. There be two whose benefits to us can never be requited: God, and our parents; the one for that He gave us a reasonable soul, the other for that of them we have our being. To these the prince and (as Cicero termeth him) the God of the Philosophers added our masters, as those by whose directions the faculties of the reasonable soul be stirred up to enter into contemplation and searching of more than earthly things, whereby we obtain a second being, more to be wished and much more durable than that which any man since the world's creation hath received of his parents, causing us live in the minds of the virtuous, as it were, deified to the posterity. The consideration of this hath moved me to publish these labours of mine under your name, both to signify unto the world my thankful mind, and also to notify unto yourself in some sort the entire love and unfeigned affection which I bear unto you. And seeing we live in those days wherein envy reigneth, and that it is necessary for him as both with judgment may correct it, and with authority defend him from the rash censures of such as think they gain great praise in condemning others, accept (I pray you) of this book, both that you may exercise your deep skill in censuring of what shall be amiss, as also defend what is in it truly spoken, as that which sometime proceeded from yourself. So shall your approbation cause me think the better of it, of many insulting Momists, who think nothing true but what they do themselves. And as those verses were not esteemed Homer's which Aristarchus had not approved, so will I not avouch for mine that which by your censure shall be condemned. And so I rest, In all love and affection to you most addicted, Thomas Morley.

<sup>21</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 3.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

The prefatory address “TO THE COURTEOUS READER,” that follows provided a guarantee that reads like a claim from a late-night infomercial: “and this much I may boldly affirm, that any of but mean capacity so that they can but truly sing their tunings, which we commonly call the six notes, or Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, may, without any other help saving this book, perfectly learn to sing, make descant, and set parts well and formally together.”<sup>23</sup> True or not, Morley’s affirmation underscores the importance of the hexachord in the musical thinking of the English Renaissance. Following the instructional sequence described within the text, the reader can sing, improvise, and compose music. The only prerequisite was the capability to sing a hexachord.

The prefatory material signaled an educational and institutional shift away from the church and to the chamber. Concurrent with the propagation of the English madrigal, *A plaine and easie introduction* also acted as an educational reform. On behalf of England, it codified a sequence to improve decomposing musical standards compared to those on the continent. “I have taken upon me to set out that in our vulgar tongue which of all other things hath been in writing least known to our countrymen, and most in practice.”<sup>24</sup> Encouraged by his learned colleagues and friends, the publication represented a culmination of a life’s work spanning from his own education as a chorister to continental theorists’ works that he studied as a professional choirmaster and composer.<sup>25</sup>

### 3.5 Overview - *A plaine and easie introduction to practycall musicke*

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<sup>23</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 6.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

The treatise is organized in three main parts as a dialogue between teacher (*Master*, presumably Morley) and students (two brothers, *Philomathes* and *Polymathes*). Originally,

Morley sequenced his instructional manual as follows:

1. The First Part - "Teaching to Sing"
2. The Second Part - "Treating of Descant"
3. The Third Part - "Treating of Composing or Setting of Songs"
4. *Peroratio*<sup>26</sup>
5. Five 3-voice, 4-voice, and 5-voice sacred and secular works in table-book format<sup>27</sup>
6. The Annotations<sup>28</sup>
7. Two 4-voice sacred works in table-book format<sup>29</sup>
8. Works Cited<sup>30</sup>

As expected, Part I - "Teaching to Sing" yields necessary insight to the performance of vocal works by Morley and his contemporaries, including William Byrd. Part III - "Treating of Composing or Setting of Songs" is also particularly relevant as it exposes the layers of the compositional process. Its demystification of composing provides the reader with unprecedented access to the creative act. The knowledge equips them with interpretive and informed options. It is worth noting that *Philomathes's* initial desire to study music was not born from the pursuit of the quadrivium. Rather, it was motivated by embarrassment! After supper one evening, partbooks were brought to the dinner table for entertainment. When *Philomathes* was unable to read music from the partbook, he sought instruction from *Master Gnorimus*.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Summary

<sup>27</sup> "Eheu, sustulerunt Dominum meum," "Ard'ogn'hora," "Perche tormi il cor mio," "O amica mea," and "O sleep, fond fancy"

<sup>28</sup> The Annotations were intended by Morley for learned musicians.

<sup>29</sup> "Domine fac meum" and "Agnus Dei" *Mass* movement

<sup>30</sup> Works Cited acted as a bibliography of authors whom Morley cited, and includes Glarean, Boethius, Josquin, Ockeghem, de Lassus, Palestrina, Dunstable, Taverner, Tallis, and Byrd.

<sup>31</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 9.



The fundamentals of singing placed emphasis on theoretical understanding rather than vocal pedagogy and aesthetics. The sequence of instruction outlined in “Teaching to Sing” progressed from gamut, clefs, hexachords, intervals, note values, ligatures, a lengthy discussion of mensuration (mood, tempus, prolation), *custos* (what Morley called “Index” or “Director”), augmentation and diminution, proportion, and teacher-provided songs for the student to practice. Once discoursed, and with practice, the student’s vocal training was complete!<sup>32</sup> “And let this suffice for your instruction of singing, for I am persuaded that, except practice, you lack nothing to make you a perfect and sure singer.”<sup>33</sup> Within the pedagogical sequence in the treatise, the methodology followed the prescribed order: (1) student asked question, (2) teacher answered question and if applicable, modeled example for student, (3) student responded, (4) teacher provided student example, often musical, (5) student sang example perfectly, and (6) teacher acknowledged student’s mastery of task. Unlike Parts II and III which were Morley’s own contributions, Part I represented an amalgamation of principles, techniques, and sequence by European theorists and musicians whom he listed as “Authors whose authorities be either cited or used in this book.”<sup>34</sup> The dialogue can appear dry and pedantic upon first glance, but a closer read discovers real actions by the teacher and students.<sup>35</sup> Here is one such action by the teacher, *Master*, “but by reason that this is better conceived by deed than word, here is an example. . . .”<sup>36</sup> By observing the account of the actual learning process

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<sup>32</sup> “Practice” is mentioned more than 12 separate occasions throughout the treatise.

<sup>33</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 88.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 319.

<sup>35</sup> The tradition and organic nature of Morley’s treatise is explored by Cristle Collins Judd, *Reading Renaissance Music Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9.

<sup>36</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 42.

between a teacher and student with the above-described sequence and methodology, sixteenth-century and twenty-first century readers alike discover a non-cathedral music education in an Elizabethan chamber.

### 3.6 Performance Practice - *A plaine and easie introduction to practycall musicke*

This subchapter is arranged by topics addressed throughout *A plaine and easie introduction*. What follows is not listed sequentially as it appeared in the treatise, nor by its importance. The danger exists in using the following analysis without its proper context. Therefore it is recommended to read the complete text. The interpretations that follow the excerpted passages have undoubtedly been influenced by modern values and aesthetics. This approach in itself may be anachronistic to sixteenth-century thought and practical use, but the exercise of studying Renaissance theory and pedagogy illuminates preferences that existed during the time of composition and performance. Chapter 5 applies relevant passages from *A plaine and easie introduction* to specific musical examples of William Byrd's "Tristitia et anxietas."

#### 3.6.1 Text Intelligibility

MA. . . [A]nd likewise you shall be perfectly understood of the auditor what you sing, which is one of the highest degrees of praise which a musician in ditting can attain unto or wish for.<sup>37</sup>

Text intelligibility, a very common sixteenth-century complaint, represented the ideal to Morley. It can only be assumed that if this was a primary concern of composers in post-Reformation England, a similar sensitivity existed amongst performers and audiences. In order to understand

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<sup>37</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 292.

the composer's text setting, it is necessary to examine the text as it would have sounded according to regional and dialectal variances.<sup>38</sup> A Latin-texted motet in and around London during the last quarter of the sixteenth-century sounded a specific way.<sup>39</sup> The *Royal Injunctions* of 1559, which were added to the *Elizabethan Religious Settlement*, most affected English composers.<sup>40</sup> Injunction XLIX (49) decreed, "[a]nd that there be a modest and distinct song so used in all parts of the common prayers in the church, that the same may be as plainly understood, as if it were read without singing." *The Act of Uniformity* (1559) outlined monetary penalties for disobedience. Choirmasters then were subject to the legalese found in the *Injunctions* and *Act of Uniformity*. By association, choristers were held to the same ideals extolled by Morley. This includes elocution and rhetoric.

### 3.6.2 Timbre and Tone

PHI. Why then was your scale devised of twenty notes and no more?

MA. Because that compass was the reach of most voices, so that under Gam ut the voice seemed as a kind of humming, and above E la (e") a kind of constrained shrieking.<sup>41</sup>

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MA. Likewise take a voice (being never so good) and cause it sing above the natural reach, it will make an displeasing and unsweet noise, displeasing the singer because of the straining and the hearer because of the wildness of the sound.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Sing the opening point of imitation of Byrd's "Civitas sancti tui" using Italianate Latin, then with Anglo Latin. It changes the affect of the motet!

<sup>39</sup> Refer to Chapter 4 of Timothy J. McGee *Singing in Early Music* and Chapter 9 of Harold Copeman of *Singing in Latin* which offer pronunciation of Anglo Latin during the Renaissance.

<sup>40</sup> Refer to <https://history.hanover.edu/texts/ENGref/er78.html> for the Injunctions of 1559.

<sup>41</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 16.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 275.

As seen in Chapter 2, qualities of vocal technique—namely timbre and tone—can be challenging to decipher from ancient manuscripts and treatises. The two passages above, the first from Part I and second from Part III, suggest limitations of the human voice and corresponding aural clues. In the discussion between PHI and MA, a “kind of humming” can be understood as a vocal fry that occurs in the low extremities of a male’s range. Conversely, “a kind of constrained shrieking” implies laryngeal elevation, breath pressure, an overbalance of thyroarytenoid to cricothyroid muscles, and an audible break due to antagonistic muscle disengagement in the upper register. Morley’s description of beauty is measured by its opposite. Instead of unnatural, unpleasing, and unsweet, the ideal human voice expressed pleasing and sweet tones, a naturalness, and unstrained sound. It is difficult to compare the contemporary interpretation of these words with that of sixteenth-century connotations. The words do, however, point to modification at registration events and extremities of range in the male voice in order to keep a natural and refined beauty across all pitches of the gamut.

### 3.6.3 Intonation

MA. Sing then after me till you can tune, for I will lead you in the tuning, and you shall name the notes yourself.<sup>43</sup>

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PHI. Here is no difficulty but in the tuning. . . .<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 13.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

“[F]or if you would think that the sharp in G sol re ut would serve that turn, by experiment you shall find it is more than half a quarter too a note too low.”<sup>45</sup>

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be—choristers have struggled with proper intonation throughout history. The passages point to intonation issues of Elizabethan singers, the pedagogy of teacher modeling to correct intonation, and an advanced system of tuning based on the distinct properties of the hexachords: natural, soft, and hard.

#### 3.6.4 Phrasing

MA. Discords mingled with concords not only are tolerable but make the descant more pleasing if they be well taken; moreover there is no coming to a close, specially with a cadence, without discord. . . .<sup>46</sup>

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MA. . . . [W]hen a discord is taken it is to cause the note following be the more pleasing to the ear; now the perfect concords of themselves being sufficiently pleasing need no help to make them more agreeable, because they can be no more than of themselves they were before.<sup>47</sup>

An option of heightening cadences and consonances is to sing with greater resonance or dynamic level into suspensions or dissonances, especially *cantisans* and *tenorisans clausulae*. By intensifying the discord with resonance or dynamic, the performer creates contrast with the subsequent consonance, making it “more pleasing to the ear.” Similar to text intelligibility, elocution was of utmost importance.

#### 3.6.5 Shaping Points of Imitation

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<sup>45</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 103.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

MA. But to instruct you somewhat more in formality, the chiefest point in it is singing with a Point or Imitation.<sup>48</sup>

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MA. . . . [B]ut it is supposed that when a man keepeth long silence and then beginneth to speak he will speak to the purpose, so in resting you let the other go before that you may the better follow him at your ease and pleasure.<sup>49</sup>

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MA. Indeed it is true that the nearer the following part be unto the leading the better the imitation is perceived and the more plainly discerned. . . .<sup>50</sup>

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MA. No, but every part may reply upon the point of another, which causeth good variety in the harmony. . . .<sup>51</sup>

The treatment of equal voice imitative polyphony must be considered when performing sixteenth-century vocal music. According to Morley's teaching of descant (improvisation atop plainchant), imitation is the "chiefest point." A possible way to shape imitation in order to "speak to the purpose" and be "perceived" is to increase the dynamic level of the entering point while diminishing the dynamic of the previous point. Other techniques include phrasing and articulation. One way is to heighten the unique melodic nature of a point of imitation through distinct articulation, drawing the ear to the threads of the polyphonic fabric. Imitation, just like the format of Morley's treatise, acts as a conversation and points of imitation are in dialogue with one another. If the performer is able to recognize their point in another voice part, they

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<sup>48</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 149.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 265.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 278.

may wish to respond with a similar phrase shape or articulation so that “every part may rely upon the point of another.”

### 3.6.6 Starting Pitch

MA. The music is indeed true, but you have set it in such a key as no man would have done, except it had been to have played it on the organs with a choir of singing men, for indeed such shifts the organists are many times compelled to make for ease of the singers.<sup>52</sup>

Starting pitch was flexible. Organists transposed at sight for the performing forces at hand. It can also be deduced that organs were used *colla parte*. The genre and occasion remain unclear from this passage.

### 3.6.7 Text Underlay

MA. We must also have a care so to apply the notes to the words as in singing there be no barbarism committed. . . .<sup>53</sup>

“Barbarism,” or mistakes, made by either the scribe or performer caused the composer to accept the responsibility of text underlay. Unlike earlier in the century when one of the primary responsibilities of performers was underlay, the late sixteenth-century composer acted more like those from the early twentieth century with degree of specificity. MA placed the onus on PHI and POL as composers to carefully set the words with the corresponding notes. Today’s performer must determine through careful source comparison which faction the manuscript or printed music belonged to, the composer or the scribe/performer.

### 3.6.8 Cadences

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<sup>52</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 261.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 291.

MA. Here be all the ways which this plainsong will allow wherein a discord may be taken with a cadence in counterpoint. . . .<sup>54</sup>

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MA. As for the Motets and other grave music you must in them come with more deliberation in bindings and long notes to the close.<sup>55</sup>

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POL. . . . [L]ikewise that close of the tenor is of the ancient block which is now grown out of fashion, because it is thought better and more commendable to come to a close deliberately with drawing and binding descant than so suddenly to close, except you had an 'Euouae' or Amen to sing after it.<sup>56</sup>

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MA. . . . [B]ut (as I told you before) the best coming to a close is in binding wise in long drawing notes (as you see in the first of these examples following) and most chiefly when a point which hath been in the same song handled is drawn out to make the close in binding wise. . . .<sup>57</sup>

MA provided examples of *cantisans* and *tenorisans clausulae* (M6 to P8 ; m3 to P5; and m3 to M3), the punctuation of the Renaissance. Because polyphonic cadences were conceived linearly, a non-vertical analysis may be necessary. Instead of analyzing polyphony with roman numerals, identify *clausulae* using a full score.<sup>58</sup> It may also be useful to rehearse the participating voice parts in isolation for intonation and phrasing purposes. The last three excerpts hint at tempo at cadences, especially final cadences. MA described the compositional practice of elongating rhythms at the close. Common practice adds rallentandos to the ends of phrases, sections, and

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<sup>54</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 146.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 228.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 267.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>58</sup> I suggest adapting Margaret Hillis's score study technique of using colored pencils. Assign a specific color to each *clausula* formula.



pieces. Was it understood that the performer should exaggerate the construction of the piece through expressive means, primarily tempo? Text intelligibility ought to be one arbiter of speed, alongside affect.

### 3.6.9 Affect

POL. . . . [A]nd whereas you talk of passions and mind-changing humours . . .<sup>59</sup>

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MA. . . . [I]t followeth to show you how to dispose your music according to the nature of the words which you are therein to express, as whatsoever matter it be which you have in hand such a kind of music must you frame to it. You must therefore, if you have a grave matter, apply a grave kind of music to it; if a merry subject you must make your music also merry, for it will be a great absurdity to use a sad harmony to a merry matter or a merry harmony to a sad, lamentable, or tragical ditty. You must then when you would express any word signifying harshness, cruelty, bitterness, and other such like make the harmony like unto it, that is somewhat harsh and hard, but yet so that it offend not. Likewise when any of your words shall express complaint, dolor, repentance, sighs, tears, and such like let your harmony be sad and doleful.<sup>60</sup>

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MA. But those chords so taken as I have said before are not the sole and only cause of expressing those passions, but also the motions which the parts make in singing do greatly help; which motions are either natural or accidental. . . . So that those natural motions may serve to express those effects of cruelty, tyranny, bitterness, and such others, and those accidental motions may fitly express the passions of grief, weeping, sighs, sorrows, sobs, and such like.<sup>61</sup>

Passions and humors were not just Baroque principles! Just as Greek and Roman orators from antiquity used rhetoric to move the affections of their audiences, sixteenth-century composers sought to move those of their listeners through musical devices. In order to bring out the affect

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<sup>59</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 209.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 290.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

of the text and its musical setting, the performer must (1) know the word for word translation if a foreign language, and (2) understand how the composer unified the text with the music. MA hinted at *musica ficta*—“accidental motion”—to further express the words and meaning. The teacher encouraged moderation in composition - “but yet so that it offend not.”

### 3.6.10 Clefs

MA. There be in all seven clefs (as I told you before) as A, B, C, D, E, F, G; but in use of singing there be but four, that is to say the F fa ut, which is commonly used in the bass or lowest part . . . the C sol fa ut clef which is common to every part. . . . ; the G sol re ut clef which is commonly used in the treble or highest part. . . . ; and the b clef, which is common to every part. . . .<sup>62</sup>

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MA. All songs made by the musicians who make songs by discretion are either in the high key or in the low key. . . . But if you would make your song of two trebles you may make the two highest parts both with one clef . . . If the song be not two trebles then is the Quinto always of the same pitch with the tenor. Your alto or Mean you may make high or low as you list, setting the clef on the lowest or second line. If you make your song in the low key or for Means, then must you keep the compass and set your clefs as you see here . . . The musicians also used to make some compositions for men only to sing, in which case they never pass this compass.<sup>63</sup>

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MA. It is true that the high and low keys come both to one pitch (or rather compass) but you must understand that those songs which are made for the high key be made for more life, the other in the low key with more gravity and staidness, so that if you sing them in contrary keys they will lose their grace and will be wrested, as it were, out of their nature. . . .<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 12.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 274-275.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 275.

MA. Even so if songs of the high key be sung in the low pitch and they of the low key sung in the high pitch, though it will not be so offensive as the other, yet will it not breed so much contentment in the hearer as otherwise it would do.<sup>65</sup>

MA described seven clefs in use, but only four of them were used in vocal music. Those included the modern precursors to the bass, alto, and treble clefs. The identification of clef helped to determine relative pitch, but more significantly, mode. Surprisingly, clefs determined performing forces that also influenced affect. Clefs or “keys” in the Renaissance, too, had certain attributes: higher clefs were used for “life” and lower clefs for “gravity.” MA challenged the practice of the time that transposed music from its original clef. This contradicts a previous subchapter regarding organists who transposed pitch for singers' ease. Morley recommended to *not* transpose because of the loss in affect.

### 3.6.11 Mode

MA. A great fault, for every key hath a peculiar air proper unto itself. . . . The perfect knowledge of these airs (which the antiquity termed ‘Modi’) was in such estimation amongst the learned as therein they placed the perfection of music, as you may perceive at large in the fourth book of Severinus Boethius his *Music*; and Glareanus hath written a learned book which he took in hand only for the explanation of those modes; and though the air of every key be different one from the other yet some love (by wonder of nature) to be joined to others, so that if you begin your song in Gam ut you may conclude it either in C fa ut or D sol re and from thence come again to Gam ut; likewise if you begin your song in D sol re you may end in A re and come again to D sol re, etc.<sup>66</sup>

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“And thus much for the twelve tunes, which if any man desire to know more at large let him read the second and third books of Glareanus his *Dodecachordon*, the fourth book of Zacconi his *Practice of Music*, and the fourth part of Zarlino his *Harmonical Institutions*, where he may satisfy his desire at full, for with the help of this which here is set down he may understand easily all which is there

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<sup>65</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 275.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 249.

handled, though some have causeless complained of obscurity. Seeing therefore further discourse will be superfluous I will here make an end.”<sup>67</sup>

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“. . . [B]ut of these fourteen (saith Glareanus) the musicians of our age acknowledge but eight though they use thirteen. . . .”<sup>68</sup>

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“To the Autentas they give more liberty of ascending than to the Plagales which have more liberty of descending. . . .”<sup>69</sup>

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“Now for the use of them (specially in tenors and plainsongs wherein their nature is best perceived).”<sup>70</sup>

Identifying the mode of a piece is critical because it determined melodic contour, *musica ficta*, and affect. “It was widely believed that the intrinsic spirit of composition, and sometimes its moral quality too, derived from the mode in which it was written.”<sup>71</sup> For mode, Morley referred to the following resources:

1. *De institutione musica*, Book 4, Chapters 14-17, by Boethius
2. *Dodecachordon*, Books 2 and 3, by Heinrich Glarean
3. *Prattica di musica*, Book 4, by Lodovico Zacconi
4. *Le istitutioni harmoniche*, Part 4, by Gioseffo Zarlino

Boethius discussed Greek modal theory including an abstract explanation of the eight modes.<sup>72</sup>

Glarean expanded the eight medieval modes by adding four more. Book 2 of his referred to

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<sup>67</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 304.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 300.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 304.

<sup>71</sup> John Harley, *William Byrd's Modal Practice* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), 108.

<sup>72</sup> Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Hypodorian, Hypophrygian, *Hypermixolydian*

mode in plainchant and Book 3 of polyphony. Glarean's writings formed the basis for Zarlino's *Istitutioni harmoniche*.

Morley suggested analyzing the tenor part to identify mode. Because of the importance of the tenor in the development of the motet, the mode of the tenor can help determine the mode of all voices. It is also helpful to look at the polyphonic final.<sup>73</sup> To further assist mode identification, Morley assigned attributes to the authentic and plagal modes: ascending and descending, respectively. Once identified, mode affords an emotive lens through which to analyze and interpret, using the comprehensive writings of Glarean.

#### 3.6.12 Hexachords

MA. There be in music but six notes, which are called Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La. . . .<sup>74</sup>

Morley also provided an easily readable chart on hexachords and their mutations.<sup>75</sup> If singers first learned to sing using the five vowels of the hexachord—u, e, i, a, and o—how did this influence their phonation and resonance? Did the inherent formant characteristics of each vowel influence their understanding of the hexachord, including intonation and relationship between each interval?

#### 3.6.13 Consonance and Dissonance<sup>76</sup>

An understanding of sixteenth-century consonance and dissonance (see Table 3.1 and Table 3.2) serves as a reminder to musicians who belong to a post-tonal world.

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<sup>73</sup> Harley, *William Byrd's Modal Practice*, 20.

<sup>74</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 13.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

Table 3.1

Consonance and Dissonance

Consonance	Dissonance
unison	2nd
3rd	4th
5th	7th
6th	
8th	

Table 3.2

Perfect and Imperfect Consonances

Perfect	Imperfect
unison	3rd
5th	6th
8th	

3.6.14 Mood

MA. There be four Moods now in common use: Perfect of the More Prolation; Perfect of the Less Prolation; Imperfect of the More Prolation; and Imperfect of the Less Prolation.<sup>77</sup>

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MA. The Mood Imperfect of the Less Prolation . . . This Mood is in such use as whensoever there is no Mood set at the beginning of the song, it is always imagined to be this, and in respect of it all the rest are esteemed as strangers.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 30.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

Not to be confused with Mode, *Mood* referred to the ratio between the long and breve in mensural notation, either 3:1 or 2:1. MA explained the default mood when no symbol existed.

### 3.6.15 Time and Prolation

“ . . . [A]nd lastly for all the degrees of music, in which sense it is commonly though falsely taught to all the young scholars in music of our time, for those signs which we use do not signify any Mood at all but stretch no further than Time, so that properly they might call them *Time* Perfect of the More Probational, etc., than *Mood* Perfect of the More Prolation.”<sup>79</sup>

Related to Mood, Time and Prolation referred to the ratio between the breve and semibreve, and semibreve to minim, respectively.

### 3.6.16 Rests

“Those which are to be told for two causes chiefly were invented; first, to give some leisure to the singer to take breath; the second that the points might follow in imitation one upon another at the more ease, and to show the singer how far he might let the other go before him before he began to follow.”<sup>80</sup>

Rests offered polyphony, and subsequently singers, the opportunity to breathe. Without the luxury of score format, choirbook and partbook formats require the singer to stay engaged with the notation and music-making process.

### 3.6.17 Ligatures

“Ligatures were devised for the ditty’s sake, so that how many notes served for one syllable, so many notes were tied together. Afterwards they were used in songs having no ditty, but only for brevity of writing.”<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 117-118.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

A remnant of medieval neumes, the ligature is a component of sixteenth-century polyphony that can be puzzling to modern day musicians. Ligatures informed text (“ditty”) underlay—one syllable per ligature. “The rules are basic: place syllables on strong beats and sing only one per ligature.”<sup>82</sup> The presence of a ligature once implied vocal music, but was later used in instrumental music. Their inclusion or absence informed vocal or instrumental performing forces. As seen in Chapter 2, ligatures were sung with articulation at the onset and then legato within the symbol.<sup>83</sup> Ligatures are often represented in modern notation with brackets above or below the two notes.

### 3.6.18 Composition

MA. . . [Y]et shall you hardly find either in Master Alfonso, Orlando, Striggon, Clemens non Papa . . . Fayrfax, Taverner, Shepherd, Mundy, Whyte, Parsons, Mr. Byrd . . . ; but if you change to find any such thing in their works you may be bold to impute it to the oversight of the copiers, for, copied passing from hand to hand, a small oversight committed by the first writer by the second will be made words and notes, according as shall seem best to his own judgment, though (God knows) it will be far enough from the meaning of the author; so that errors passing from hand to hand in written copied be easily augmented, but for such of their works as be in print I dare be bold to affirm that in them no such thing is to be found.<sup>84</sup>

MA made his reverence to composers and their works while discrediting the ability of copiers and scribes of the time. When consulting manuscript and printed music from this period, discernment is needed across multiple sources. Morley gave further insight into the compositional process, listing a table that presented the order in which voices were conceived

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<sup>82</sup> Harold Mayer Brown and Stanley Sadie, eds., *Performance Practice: Music Before 1600* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990), 190.

<sup>83</sup> McGee, *The Sound of Medieval Song*, 30.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 255.



homophonically: tenor, treble, bass, and alto or mean.<sup>85</sup> From this table translated from Zarlino *Le istitutioni harmoniche*, it can be determined that music was still inspired linearly. The tenor functioned as the foundation, just like it had in *cantus firmus*-based compositions. Added next, the treble voice was subservient and related to the tenor by interval. Third, the bass provided stability and support beneath the tenor and treble. Finally, the alto colored the chord with the necessary tone. By tuning chords in the same sequence in which they were composed, conductors and singers can get closer to how composers conceived and initially heard the harmony.

### 3.6.19 Harmony

MA. . . [F]or the closer the parts go the better is the harmony and when they stand far asunder the harmony vanisheth, therefore hereafter study so much as you can to make your parts go close together, for so shall you both show most art and make your compositions fittest for the singing of all companies.<sup>86</sup>

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MA. . . [A]nd this I say because that even as a picture painted with divers colours doth more delight the eye to behold it than if it were done but with one colour alone, so the ear is more delighted and taketh more pleasure of the consonants by the diligent musician placed in his compositions with variety than of the simple concords put together without any variety at all.<sup>87</sup>

Two principles of sixteenth-century harmony shape current understanding. MA first advised PHI and POL on the appropriate distance between voices. The second principle, however, may be more instructive as it described “divers[e] colours” and an aesthetic preference for contrast and

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<sup>85</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 226.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 248.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 255.

diversity. Similar to *clausulae* and cadences, the composer enhanced consonance through the use of dissonance.

### 3.6.20 Tactus

PHI. What is stroke?

MA. It is a successive motion of the hand directing the quantity of every note and rest in the song with equal measure, according to the variety of signs and proportions. . . .<sup>88</sup>

PHI learned a basic definition of tactus (“stroke”). Instead of patterned conducting, Renaissance musicians followed a down and up of the hand.

### 3.6.21 Singing Intervals

MA. . . . [I]magine a note betwixt them thus, and so leaving out the middle note, keeping the tune of the last note in your mind, you shall have the true tune. . . .<sup>89</sup>

MA instructed PHI to audiate the notes between intervals greater than a second. Intervals were devised as a series of inaudible steps. He also employed the Guidonian hand to assist beginners in the singing and reading of music.<sup>90</sup>

### 3.6.22 Breathing

PHI. A time for an Atlas or Typhoeus to hold his breath, and not for me or any other man nowadays.<sup>91</sup>

Analogy of Greek mythological figures confirmed limitations to human breath. Accordingly, singers breathed, even during long musical lines without punctuation.

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<sup>88</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 19.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 104-108.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

### 3.6.23 Ear

MA. . . . [L]et your ear be judge. . . .<sup>92</sup>

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MA. Now let your ear be judge in the singing and you yourself will not deny but that you find much better air and more fullness than was before.<sup>93</sup>

MA advised listening when composing and singing with others. Choristers were required to listen as intently as they sang!

### 3.6.24 Analogies

PHI. I pray you talk not so darkly but let me understand your comparison plainly.<sup>94</sup>

MA confused PHI when he used an abstract analogy at the start of lessons on descant. Choral conductors can learn from PHI's confusion by speaking directly in their rehearsals.

### 3.6.25 Music

PHI. As for music, the principal thing we seek in it is to delight the ear. . . .<sup>95</sup>

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MA. . . .[F]or music was devised to content and not offend the ear.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 166.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

MA. This kind of all other which are made on a ditty requireth most art and moveth and causeth most strange effects in the hearer, being aptly framed for the ditty and well expressed by the singer, for it will draw the auditor (and specially the skillful auditor) into a devout and reverent kind of consideration of Him for whose praise it was made. But I see not what passions or motions it can stir up being sung as most men do commonly sing it, that is leaving out the ditty and singing only the bare note, as it were a music made only for instruments, which will indeed show the nature of the music but never carry the spirit and, as it were, that lively soul which the ditty giveth. But of this enough; and to return to the expressing of the ditty, the matter is now come to the state that though a song be never so well made and never so aptly applied to the words yet shall you hardly find singers to express it as it ought to be, for most of our churchmen, so they can cry louder in their choir than their fellows, care for no more, whereas by the contrary they ought to study how to vowel and sing clean, expressing their words with devotion and passion whereby to draw the hearer, as it were, in chains of gold by the ears to the consideration of holy things. But this for the most part you shall find amongst them, that let them continue never so long in the church, yeah though it were twenty years, they will never study to sing better than they did the first day of their preferment to that place, so that it should seem that having obtained the living which they sought for they have little or no care at all, either of their own credit or well discharging of that duty whereby they have their maintenance.<sup>97</sup>

The above closing passage of Part III requires several readings to fully unpack its significance.

Music was designed and intended for a higher being, greater than oneself. It had the ability to move and persuade its listeners to this awareness. Morley complained though, about current practices including the ability of singers, singing music without words (text provided “spirit” and “soul”), and complacency of job placement. He charged all choristers to continue to refine their singing, regardless of status. Practice centered on neutral vowels and “clean” singing. It is unclear from context if “clean” alluded to pitch, intonation, tone, or vibrato. Text intelligibility and affect appear to be the greatest expectation placed upon singers.

### 3.6.26 Expectations of Student

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<sup>97</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 292-293.

MA. And let this suffice for your instruction of singing, for I am persuaded that, except practice, you lack nothing to make you a perfect and sure singer.

PHI. I pray you then, give me some songs wherein to exercise myself at convenient leisure.

MA. Here be some following of two parts which I have made of purpose, that when you have any friend to sing with you, you may practice together, which will sooner make you perfect than if you should study never so much by yourself.

PHI. Sir, I thank you, and mean so diligently to practise till our next meeting, that then I think I shall be able to render you a full account of all which you have told me; till which time I wish you such contentment of mind and ease of body as you desire to yourself, or mothers use to wish to their children.

MA. I thank you, and assure yourself it will not be the smallest part of my contentment to see my scholars go towardly forward in their studies, which I doubt not but you will do, if you take but reasonable pains in practice.<sup>98</sup>

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MA. Then you must get it perfectly without book, to say it forwards and backwards. Secondly, you must learn to know wherein every key standeth, that is, whether in line or in space. And thirdly, how many clefs and how many notes every key containeth.<sup>99</sup>

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MA. You say well, and therefore take this song, peruse it, and sing it perfectly, and I doubt not but you may sing any reasonable hard prick song that may come to your sight.<sup>100</sup>

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PHI. I did no other sing but sing, practising to skip from one key to another, from flat to sharp, from sharp to flat, from any one place in the scale to another, so that there was no song so hard but I would venture upon it, no Mood nor Proportion so strange but I would go through and sing perfectly before I left it; and in the end I came to such perfection that I might have been my brother's master. . . .<sup>101</sup>

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MA. There is no way to discern them but by diligent marking wherein every note standeth, which you cannot do but by continual practice, and so by marking

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<sup>98</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 88.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-11.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

where the notes stand and how far every one is from the next before you shall easily know both what chords they be and also what chord cometh next.<sup>102</sup>

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PHI. You say true, but I have had so many observations that I pray God I may keep them all in mind.

MA. The best means to keep them in mind is continually to be practising. . . .<sup>103</sup>

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MA. . . . [W]hoso will be excellent must both spend much time in practice and look over the doings of other men.<sup>104</sup>

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MA. At your pleasure; but I cannot cease to pray you diligently to practise, for that only is sufficient to make a perfect musician.<sup>105</sup>

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PHI. Employing those hours which we would have bestowed in hearing of him in learning music.<sup>106</sup>

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POL. . . . [A]nd because he continually carried a plainsong book in his pocket he caused me to do the like, and so, walking in the fields, he would sing the plainsong and cause me sing the descant, and when I sung not to his contentment he would show me wherein I had erred.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 143.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 210.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

PHI. Wishing will not avail but ‘fabricando fabri fimus,’ therefore never leave practising, for that is, in my opinion, the readiest way to make such another.<sup>108</sup>

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MA. . . . [A]nd that practice must only be done in time as well by yourselves as with me. . . .<sup>109</sup>

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“Also for the better helping of the scholar’s memory they have devised these verses following. . . .”<sup>110</sup>

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“But this is the world; every one will take upon him to write and teach others, none having more need of teaching than himself. . . .”<sup>111</sup>

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“. . . [A]nd therefore if they do but look upon the numbers and mark the concourse of the lines enclosing them, they shall there plainly find set down what relation one of those numbers hath to another.”<sup>112</sup>

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MA. What then was the cause of your coming hither at this time?

PHI. Desire to learn, as before. . . .<sup>113</sup>

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MA. I thought you had only sought to know pricksong, whereby to recreate yourself being weary of other studies.

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<sup>108</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 260.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 301.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

PHI. Indeed when I came to you first I was of that mind, but the common proverb is in me verified that 'much would have more,' and seeing I have so far set foot in music I do not mean to go back till I have gone quite through all. . . .<sup>114</sup>

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MA. . . . [A]nd therefore because I thought it better flat than sharp I have set it flat; but if any man like the other way better let him use his discretion.<sup>115</sup>

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MA. Therefore there is no way readier to cause you become perfect than to contend with someone or other, not in malice (for so is your contention your passion, not for love of virtue) but in love, showing your adversary your work and not scorning to be corrected of him, and to amend your fault if he speak with reason. But of this enough.<sup>116</sup>

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POL. I pray you then be silent for I must have deliberation and quietness also, else shall I never do anything.<sup>117</sup>

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MA. I hope before such time as you have sufficiently ruminated and digested those precepts which I have given you that you shall hear from me in a new kind of matter.<sup>118</sup>

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"But those men who think they know enough already when (God knoweth) they can scarce sing their part with the words. . . . But to such kind of men do I not write, for as a man having brought a horse to the water cannot compel him to drink except he list, so may I write a book to such a man but cannot compel him to read it. . . ." <sup>119</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 140.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 167.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.



These twenty-two excerpts illustrate the expectations that Thomas Morley and his contemporaries had of their students and singers. Practice, exercises of memory, commitment to continuing education, student drive, empowerment to use their own musical discretion, and openness to growth and collaboration were expectations that can readapt to modern music education and choral rehearsals. Specifically, several excerpts encouraged singers to examine the music first, before singing. Inferences to limited rehearsal time in the Renaissance aside, Morley advised singers to contemplate, mark intervals in the partbook, anticipate mistakes and transitions, and even struggle with difficult music. The pace of the rehearsal then must allow time for such student (and teacher) reflection.

Practicing polyphony poses a challenge to today's choristers as articulated by Stratton

*Bull of Cappella Pratensis:*

You know the way you do with a modern Renaissance concert? You don't practice. People don't practice Renaissance music, I don't think. If you're going to sing a song cycle, or the solos in the *St. Matthew Passion*, you practice. Right? But if you're going to sing a shit-load of Palestrina. Who sits there and finds a piano, or some place? It's actually quite hard to do in a way. It's so abstract. And then you want to hear the other voices, and you can't hear them.

Thomas Morley, however, offered an obvious solution—practice polyphony with a friend.<sup>120</sup> To learn from Morley—*fabricando fabri fimus*—we become musicians by devoting ourselves to the craft of music through commitment and sustained practice.<sup>121</sup> After analyzing performing sources in Chapter 4, the principles found in *A plaine and easie introduction* can be applied to the performance of William Byrd's "Tristitia et anxietas" in Chapter 5.

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<sup>120</sup> Bull, interview.

<sup>121</sup> Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 260.

### 3.7 Conclusion

In 1597, Thomas Morley outlined musical pedagogy based on the conventions of his teacher's generation, effectively preserving the practices of the last quarter century for future generations. Morley presented education as an open dialogue between students and teachers. His instruction covered topics ranging text intelligibility, timbre and tone, intonation, phrasing, shaping points of imitation, starting pitch, text underlay, cadences, affect, clefs, mode, hexachords, consonance and dissonance, mood, time and prolation, rests, ligatures, composition, harmony, tactus, singing intervals, breathing, the ear, analogies, music, and expectations of students. Thomas Morley's commandment for Renaissance musicians still resounds today—thou shalt embrace the past through careful study and dedicated practice.

## CHAPTER 4

### SIXTEENTH-CENTURY PERFORMING SOURCES

#### 4.1 Introduction

The didactic exchange that existed between sixteenth-century musicians—illustrated throughout Morley’s treatise as discourse between teacher and his students—still appears in the notation and formatting of sixteenth-century manuscripts and printed partbooks as dialogue between composer, scribe, printer, and performer.<sup>1</sup> The addition of *custos*, *signum congruentiae*, and text underlay, or lack thereof, implied certain expectations of the performer. Caused by increasing demands of repertoire and milieu, modern notation makes these ancient interchanges unintelligible. Worse, modern publications create twentieth- and twenty-first centuries exchanges, anachronistic to those from the Renaissance. The spirit of sixteenth-century sacred vocal music exists in its notation, and therefore must be studied in its original form. Choirbooks and partbooks were the two types of formats used for the performance of sacred vocal music during the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Score format existed for purposes of composition and teaching, but not performance.<sup>3</sup> As the motet and mass developed and expanded, so did its visual representation. The choirbook that once fit three- and four-voice motets and masses of Dufay, Ockeghem, and Josquin, no longer accommodated the works of Tallis and Byrd. Composers, scribes, and performers turned to partbooks.

Partbooks represented and imbued the equal-voiced, imitative, polyphonic textures that dominated the middle and late Renaissance. No longer were voices stratified atop each other as

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<sup>1</sup> Read the article by Cristle Collins Judd, “Music in Dialogue: *Conversational, Literary, and Didactic Discourse About Music in the Renaissance*,” *Journal of Music Theory* 52 (2008): 41–74.

<sup>2</sup> A helpful summary of foliation can be found in Allan W. Atlas, *Renaissance Music* (New York: Norton, 1998), 44-45.

<sup>3</sup> For further reading on Renaissance compositional process, see Jesse Ann Owens, *Composers at Work: The Craft of Musical Composition 1450-1600* (New York: Oxford, 1997).

they were in the choirbook. Each voice part was liberated, receiving its own partbook. It was humanism at its finest—books were no longer physically supported by churches’ consecrated lecterns. Rather, books were placed in to human hands. Like their predecessor, partbooks pose certain problems for today’s trained musicians.

When reading most twentieth- or twenty-first-century scores, trained musicians can hear them quite precisely in their ‘mind’s ear.’ The exact instrumentation is given; the characteristic of the instruments are familiar; standard modern pitch and equal temperament are presupposed; tempo is prescribed by metronome markings; rhythm, phrasing, articulation and dynamics are clearly indicated; the realization of the few ornament signs is obvious; even the playing techniques and sound colors are accurately notated.<sup>4</sup>

Modern day values and sensibilities are very different from those that guided sixteenth-century practice. Fortunately, sixteenth-century notation is similar enough to our modern notation that only a few differences need to be compared, primarily rest and note values.<sup>5</sup>

Because of technological advances, the digitization of and access to medieval and Renaissance sources offer performers an unprecedented opportunity to interact with extant publications, including those at Christ Church, Oxford Digital Library, Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music (DIAMM), and Early English Books Online (EEBO) databases.<sup>6</sup> A close examination of William Byrd’s motet “Tristitia et anxietas” in manuscript and print will aid modern performers in a thoughtful and informed performance of sixteenth-century sacred polyphony. Analysis of sixteenth-century performing sources reveals learned choices in text underlay, *musica ficta*, phrasing, expression, performing forces, and pronunciation. By

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<sup>4</sup> Bartholdi Kuijken, *The Notation Is Not the Music Reflections on Early Music Practice and Performance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 1.

<sup>5</sup> Many references exist which display mensural notation with its modern equivalent. See Allan W. Atlas, *Renaissance Music* (New York: Norton, 1998), 48-49.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/library-and-archives/music-manuscripts>; <http://www.diamm.ac.uk>; <http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>

examining original manuscripts of sixteenth-century sacred vocal music, modern-day performers and audiences alike gain a greater understanding of the relationship between original notation and performance practice. Chapter 4 focuses on the idiosyncrasies of formatting, notation, and calligraphy of three applicable sources, widely available to the public.

This project relies on practical, readily-accessible online resources. At the moment of this project's publication, the superius partbook of Byrd's "Tristitia et anxietas" is the only voice part accessible across three sixteenth-century sources: Robert Dow partbook (GB-Och MUS 984: folio 36r & 36v), John Baldwin partbook (GB-Och MUS 979: folios 142-143), and the printed *Liber primus sacrarum cantionem quinque vocum*. By focusing on the *prima pars* of the motet, I am able to scrutinize differences in source that yield informed decisions of pitch, text underlay, pronunciation, phrasing, *musica ficta*, vocal technique, expression, and performing forces.

#### 4.2 Robert Dow partbooks (GB-Och MUS 984: folio 36r & 36v)

Robert Dow (1553-1588) penned five handwritten partbooks (GB-Och MUS 984-988) in beautiful calligraphy on red stave manuscript paper—the paper approved by the 1575 royal printing monopoly given to Tallis and Byrd.<sup>7</sup> Dated the same year that Edmund Campion and two other Catholic priests were tried and executed, the 1581 partbooks contain later additions made by John Baldwin and an unidentified scribe. The complete set features England's finest composers, including ornate Latin motets by Byrd, Tallis, White, and Parsons. Dow, a Fellow of

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<sup>7</sup> John Milsom, "Sacred Songs in the Chamber," in *English Choral Practice, 1400-1650*, ed. John Morehen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 165.

All Souls College, University of Oxford, studied law and gave lessons in penmanship.<sup>8</sup> Before the first appearance of music—“Heth” from Robert White *Lamentations a 5*—Dow inscribed:

Quisquis es hunc nostrum tacturus forte libellum  
Seu quid voce vales seu cecinisse nequis  
Pupillam domini te contrectare putato;  
Pars ea vult nitidas sic liber iste manus

Whoever you are that are by chance about to touch this little book of ours,  
whether you sing well or cannot sing at all,  
remember that you are handling the master's treasure;  
this Part wishes for clean hands, just as that book of yours does.<sup>9</sup>

Humorously, the digitized image on DIAMM displays the hand of a man beneath this inscription. Unlike today's choristers who crumple and misplace music in backpacks, car seats, and dorm rooms, sixteenth-century partbooks were cherished, prized possessions. The psychology behind valuing the physical representation of music undoubtedly influences the vocal manifestation of the notes and words.

Robert Dow died one year before “Tristitia et anxietas” was officially published by Thomas East in *Liber primus sacrarum cantionem quinque vocum*. Dow, however, had access and was “close enough to Byrd to have pre-publication versions of his printed songs and motets.”<sup>10</sup> It is well-documented that Dow altered notation and text underlay.<sup>11</sup> A comparison of sources isolates the role that Robert Dow played as a scribe. Unlike John Baldwin and Thomas East, Dow began “Tristitia et anxietas” on the same page (see Figure 4.1) as William Byrd’s “O quam gloriosum” cadenced on *Amen*. Under the watchful name of “Mr. Wm. Bird,” Dow’s

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<sup>8</sup> David Mateer, “Oxford, Christ Church Music MSS 984-8: An Index and Commentary,” *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* No. 20 (1986/1987): 2.

<sup>9</sup> Morrison Comegys Boyd, *Elizabethan Music and Musical Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962), 312.

<sup>10</sup> Philip Brett, “Editing Byrd,” *Musical Times* 121 (1980): 557.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

transcription spanned three sheets of manuscript paper, while Baldwin and East's only two. Across these sheets, Dow used less punctuation—zero commas and only a few periods.

Figure 4.1

GB-Och MUS 984 (folio 36r)<sup>12</sup>

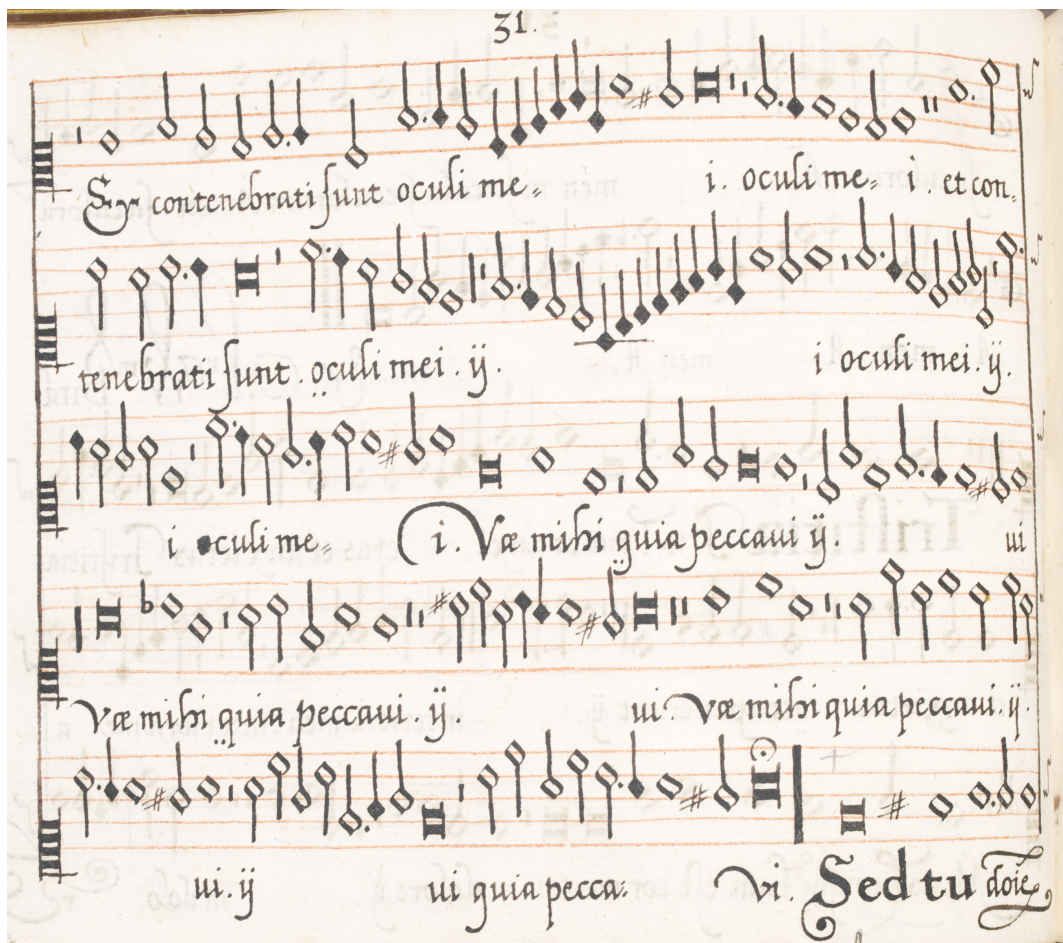


The freedom granted to the performer for decisions of breathing and phrasing is further permitted with the addition of “ij” signs. Dow used “ij” after “occupaverunt,” “in dolore,” “oculi mei,” and “quia peccavi,” (see Figure 4.2) requiring the singer to participate in the composition process by setting the text underlay based on what preceded it textually and musically.

<sup>12</sup> Used by permission of The Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford.

Figure 4.2

GB-Och MUS 984 (folio 36v)<sup>13</sup>



Note-wise, the first instance of “occupaverunt” has a sharp accidental before the first F, but not the second F, unlike Baldwin and East who placed accidentals before both notes. Similarly, Dow is missing the second flat before B on “vae mihi” that appears in the other sources. It was likely assumed by the singer that the accidentals pertained to the second notes as well. An assumption that cannot be made, however, is the discrepancy of the second “oculi

<sup>13</sup> Used by permission of The Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford.



mei” which differs from the other two sources. Dow engraved the notes G, *F*, F instead of G, G, F. Dow also omitted *musica ficta* after the second semi-minim ascending scale, above the stanza where “Vae mihi” first appears. Baldwin and East used *ficta* above and below to raise the G to G-sharp. Dow and Baldwin notated the final note as a breve with a fermata above; East (and by proxy, Byrd) ended the *prima pars* with a *longa*, twice as long as a breve, without a fermata.

Two of Robert Dow’s *editorial* decisions are most provocative. First, Dow aided the singer by placing the rest on the space of the upcoming note. During the point of imitation with repetitive “oculi mei,” for example, Dow placed the rest on the same space as the subsequent note. This acts like a *custos*, and informs the singer of the location of the next note. A striking instance is at the octave leap on C during the same point of imitation. Dow and East placed the minim rest equidistant to the higher octave on the third space. Baldwin set his rest on the second space. Although the location of the rest did not change its duration, its location guides the eye and voice to the higher octave, enabling an easier and perhaps more expressive navigation of the voice.

Robert Dow’s most noticeable contribution was his embellished calligraphy. Words like “Tristitia,” especially its first instance, “moestum,” the decorated ampersand, the “V” of “Vae,” and especially the final “dolore,” leap off of the page, inspiring its reader. Whether consciously or not, the ornate handwriting of each “tristitia” could render three different expressions. The first “Tristita” is bold, implying an interpretation that is different from the second and third with their ornate “t” and “s” respectively. Stratton Bull, who reads from original notation with *Cappella Pratensis*, remarked:

I think things like illuminations, different kinds of notations—sometimes it’s quickly written, other times it’s very elegant—that’s mostly subliminal...we did actually a three-day workshop with singers of our group, and a bunch of musicologists, and some other students here from Leuven, singing for instance one piece from three or four different

situations: a big choirbook, a small choirbook, a printed partbook, different situations. How does that change the way that you sing the music? It was really interesting. The funny thing was, we had these guinea pigs here, and the musicologists could actually ask the singers, “what was that like for you?” And the singers gave all the wrong answers, “Meh, wasn’t really that much different,” or “the notes and whatever, if it’s really clear or really messy...” I was like “no, that’s not what you’re supposed to say!” So I thought that was kind of interesting. It wasn’t quite as incredibly deep and inspiring as you would like to think, theoretically. On the other hand, I just don’t think that they’re describing the situation. They’re not aware of things. That’s my feeling, but who am I to put words into their mouth? Ask them at point black, and they’d say “ah, it doesn’t matter, just give me the music and I’ll get on with it.” Okay so, I say that that stuff is subliminal. But I think it’s also a bit subjective and some people are more inspired by it than other people.<sup>14</sup>

Using the evidence found in Robert Dow’s partbooks, including the inscription insisting on “clean hands,” the psychology of holding and looking at “treasure” subliminally influences the performance of music, differently amongst choristers.

#### 4.3 John Baldwin partbooks (GB-Och MUS 979: folios 142-143)

Shelved next to Robert Dow’s partbooks at Oxford, Christ Church Library, John Baldwin’s partbooks (GB-Och MUS 979-983) constitute a five-part, incomplete set with the Tenor partbook lost to the passage of history and time. Baldwin’s partbooks, copied between 1575-1581, were also written on music paper issued by the 1575 Tallis and Byrd royal patent. Baldwin partbooks include *Cantiones, quae ab argumento sacrae vocantur*, the thirty-four compositions produced by the joint collaboration.<sup>15</sup> John Baldwin (1560-1615) was a chorister at St. George’s Chapel in Windsor Castle—where King Henry VIII is interred beneath the Quire—and later a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal where he sang at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth I.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Bull, interview.

<sup>15</sup> Iain Fenlon and John Milsom, “‘Ruled Paper Imprinted’: Music Paper and Patents in Sixteenth-Century England,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* Vol 7, No. 1 (Spring 1984): 148.

<sup>16</sup> David Mateer, “John Baldwin and Changing Concepts of Text Underlay,” in *English Choral Practice, 1400-1650*, ed. John Morehen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 144.

In addition to his vocal output, Baldwin transcribed Byrd's pavans and galliards in *My Ladye Nevells Booke* for keyboard. Like Dow, Baldwin is known for his editorial decisions on text underlay.<sup>17</sup> What unique imprint did Baldwin leave on Byrd's motet?

Figure 4.3

GB-Och MUS 979 (folio 142)<sup>18</sup>



After the first word, Baldwin (see Figure 4.3) used two semibreve rests, differing from Dow who notated one breve. In this instance, East used two semibreves, though on different

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>18</sup> Used by permission of The Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford.

lines of the staff. The reverse is true for the imitative section of “oculi mei.” Baldwin and East used breve rests, while Dow used two semibreves. At the end of the point of imitation on “in dolore” and before the final “quia peccavi,” (see Figure 4.4) Baldwin inscribed rests on the same space as the previous note. As found earlier, this differed from Dow and East, who usually placed the rest on the space of the subsequent note that began the new point of imitation. The scribe or printer in these moments assisted or hindered the singer in reading from left to right.<sup>19</sup> In terms of text, Baldwin did not insert standard punctuation. Rather, he used slashes (/) between words. Dissimilar to Dow, who invited the singer’s expertise on text underlay, Baldwin did not use the “ij” sign to denote repeated text. Instead, Baldwin supplied all of the text beneath corresponding notes. “Quia peccavi” is inconsistent in detaching the last syllable and setting it beneath the final note, as seen in the second iteration in the fifth stanza.

Generally, Baldwin seemed to supply all necessary information for the singer, whether text or pitch. Musically, “occupaverunt” has accidentals on both notes, unlike Dow. Baldwin wrote a G-sharp accidental on the “oculi mei” before the “Vae mihi” section. This is absent from Dow and East’s editions which placed G-sharp only on the penultimate note before the cadence.<sup>20</sup> Baldwin created a sorrowful cross-relation with the contratenor’s G-natural as the section concluded the point of imitation referring to “mine eyes are darkened.” Baldwin also added a sharp to make B-natural for the final “vae mihi” on the fifth stanza, cancelling the previous B-flats. Dow and East provided no such courtesy accidental. Compared with Thomas East’s printed version, John Baldwin’s penmanship and spacing allows his readers the ability to easily discern melodic shapes.

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<sup>19</sup> See for example the rest before the octave C leap of “oculi mei.”

<sup>20</sup> It is also absent from the Collected Works edition, Philip Brett and Alan Brown, eds., *The Byrd Edition* Vol. 2 (London: Stainer & Bell, 1988).

Figure 4.4

GB-Och MUS 979 (folio 143)<sup>21</sup>

69.

p̄ca mi, q̄nia p̄ca mi, q̄nia p̄ca mi: Sed tu Dñe qui nō derelinq̄is sperantes  
in te, in te, qui nō derelinq̄is, qui nō derelinq̄is, sperantes in te, sperantes in te  
sperantes in te consolare consolare et adimna me consolare consola re et adimna me  
propter nomē sanctū tuū, et miserere mei, et miserere mei, et miserere mei, me i  
et miserere me i: m: w: birde:

#### 4.4 *Liber primus sacrarum cantionem quinque vocum*

London-based publisher Thomas East (c. 1540-1608), a modern-day Condé Nast of sixteenth-century music publishing, was responsible for printing England's lasting contributions of Tudor music. Benefitting from the death of Thomas Vautrollier, French printer of the aforementioned Tallis and Byrd *Cantiones, quae ab argumento sacrae vocantur*, East played a part in nurturing the English Madrigal as printer of *Musica transalpina* (1588/1597)—Nicholas

<sup>21</sup> Used by permission of The Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford.

Yonge's anthology of English-texted, Italian Madrigals—and Thomas Morley's *The Triumphes of Oriana* (1601). Thomas East's first partnership with William Byrd was *Psalms, Sonnets, and Songs* (1588), and was followed quickly with *Liber primus sacrarum cantionem quinque vocum* (1589).<sup>22</sup>

Published on October 25, 1589 in London according to the title page, *Liber primus sacrarum cantionem*, "*The First Book of Sacred Songs*," consists of sixteen Latin motets for five voices. The dedication to Edward Somerset prefigured Byrd's intended audience and message. Somerset, Earl of Worcester, was described by Queen Elizabeth I as a "stiff papist."<sup>23</sup> Aligned with the recusant Catholic community, Byrd and his motets were intended for the Elizabethan hipster of the day: bilingual in English and Latin, well-educated, musically adept, religiously pluralistic, and a connoisseur of private, forbidden art.<sup>24</sup> East's publication yields an unusual urtext with the combination of Thomas East's reputation and workmanship, William Byrd's involvement from manuscript to print, and their intended consumer.<sup>25</sup>

East (see Figure 4.5), like Dow, used the "ij" sign, but with far fewer occurrences. The "ij" only appears twice—after "tristitia" and "in dolore." Looking closely at those examples, one can surmise that East was forced to use the sign because of the lack of space surrounding it, especially after "tristitia." Like Dow, East used an ampersand in place of "et," though with much less artistic flair in typed font. Unlike Dow, the printed partbook is punctuated with a plethora of periods and commas.

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<sup>22</sup> Jeremy Smith, *Thomas East and Music Publishing in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 58.

<sup>23</sup> Kerry McCarthy, *Byrd* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 260.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>25</sup> Smith, *Thomas East and Music Publishing*, 64.

Figure 4.5

*Liber primus sacrarum cantionem quinque vocum*<sup>26</sup>

V. Voc. VI. SUPERIVS.

Ritit a, .ij. & anxi- etas, & anxi- etas, tristiti-  
a & anxie- tas oc- cu- pauerūt, occupauerūt in- teri- ora mea, in-  
teri- ora me- a. Mœstū factū est cor meum in dolore, in dolore,  
.ij. & cōtenebrati sunt ocu- li me- i, oculi  
me- i, & cōtenebrati sunt oculi me- i, oculi me-  
i, oculi me- i, .ij. oculi me- i, vae mihi quia pec-  
caui, quia pecca- ui, vae mihi quia peccavi, quia pecca- ui,  
vae mihi quia peccavi, pecca- ui, quia pecca- ui, quia pec-  
ca- ui.

This information provided the performer with places to breathe and informed phrase length and shape. “Vae mihi” is not offset by punctuation or capitalization as Baldwin's slash nor Dow's

<sup>26</sup> Image published with permission of ProQuest. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission. Image produced by ProQuest as part of *Early English Books Online*. [www.proquest.com](http://www.proquest.com)

period or calligraphy. The text underlay of “interiora mea” is easier to assign compared to the other two sources.

“Occupaverunt,” like in Baldwin’s, has accidentals on both F-sharps. In stanza seven, East did not use a sharp accidental to cancel the previous B-flats on “mihi” and “quia.” Dow and Baldwin wrote sharps for “quia” to cancel the previous B-flats. Again, Baldwin went one step farther by adding a courtesy sharp on the final “vae” entrance. Does East’s exclusion of a fermata on the final note imply a strict mathematical rhythmic length of a longa? Compare this to Dow and Baldwin’s use of breve with fermata. Finally, rests appear in different order and permutation than in Dow. East and Baldwin, however, used the same order for the majority of instances.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

The three sources do share many characteristics including C clefs, cut time signatures, and *custos*. Another similarity of Dow, Baldwin, and East would have been the pronunciation of Latin text (see Table 4.1) amongst singers in London and surrounding areas. Harold Copeman, Timothy McGee, and *The Byrd Edition* supplied evidence of Anglo Latin pronunciations common to the late sixteenth century. The International Phonetic Alphabet transcription below adheres to the recommendations by A.G. Rigg.<sup>27</sup>

Table 4.1

Text Underlay and Pronunciation

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<sup>27</sup> A.G. Rigg, “Anglo-Latin,” in *Singing Early Music*, ed. Timothy McGee (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 46-61.



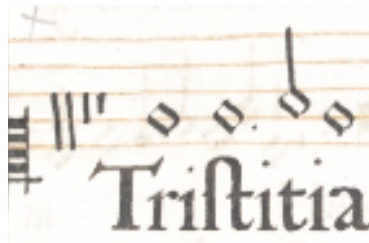
Robert Dow	John Baldwin	Thomas East
Tristitia Tristitia et anxietas et anxietas Tristitia et anxietas	Tristitia/ tristitia/et anxietas/et anxietas/ tristitia/et anxietas/	Tristitia, ij. & anxietas, & anxietas, tristitia & anxietas
occupaverunt ij.	occupaverñt occupaverñt/	occupauerūt, occupauerūt
interiora mea. interiora mea	interiora mea, interiora mea	interiora mea, interiora mea.
Moestum factum est cor meum in dolore ij. in dolore	mestñ factñ est cor meñ in dolore/ in dolore/ in dolore	Mœstū factū est cor meum in dolore, in dolore, .ij.
& contenebrati sunt oculi mei. oculi mei. et contenebrati sunt. oculi mei. ij. oculi mei ij. oculi mei.	et contenebrati sunt / oculi mei oculi mei/ et contenebrati sñt/ oculi mei/ oculi mei/ oculi mei/ oculi mei/ oculi mei	& cōtenebrati sunt oculi mei, oculi mei, & cōtenebrati sunt oculi mei, oculi mei, oculi mei, .ij. oculi mei,
Vae mihi quia peccavi ij. Vae mihi quia peccavi. ij. Vae mihi quia peccavi. ij. ij. quia peccavi.	Ve mihi quia pecavi/ quia pecavi/ Ve mihi quia peccavi/ quia pecavi/ Ve mihi quia pecavi pecavi/ quia pecavi/ quia pecavi	væ mihi quia peccauī, quia peccauī, væ mihi quia peccauī, quia peccauī, væ mihi quia peccauī, peccauī, quia peccauī, quia peccauī.
<b>Pronunciation</b>		
trɪstɔɪsja ɛθ anksɔɪetas ɔkypaverunt ɪntɪrɪora meɑ mestom faktom est kɔr meom ɪn dɔlore ɛθ kɔntenebræsi sont okyli mei ve mæiçi kwɔɪɑ pekævi		

The “j” glide within “tristitia” is altered by the syllable division found in the Thomas East partbook. The pronunciation would then be [trɪstɔɪsja].

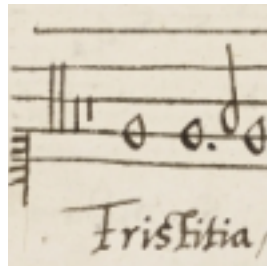
Figure 4.6

“Tristitia”

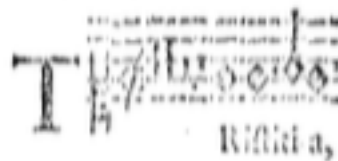
Dow



Baldwin



East



David Wulstan suggested a change in vowel quality as a result of British legislation.<sup>28</sup> The 1549 Act of Uniformity under Edward VI established Thomas Cranmer's 1549 Book of Common Prayer, effectively changing liturgies from Latin to English.<sup>29</sup> Wulstan proposed a general dulling of resonance: ". . . the English vowels generally display lower high formants than their Latin equivalents. Thus the change from Latin to English after the Reformation would have resulted in a lackluster vowel spectrum."<sup>30</sup> Regardless of pronunciation, the visual layout (including lack of barlines) and shapes found in Dow, Baldwin, and East's partbooks elicit different responses from

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<sup>28</sup> David Wulstan, *Tudor Music* (Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 1986), 229.

<sup>29</sup> For further reading, reference Chapter 2 of John Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: A Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

<sup>30</sup> David Wulstan, *Tudor Music* (Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 1986), 229.

one another. Take, for example, the opening word, “tristitia,” in Figure 4.6. Variance can be seen in size, style, and spacing between each note. Dow’s bold penmanship reads uniquely compared to Baldwin’s sophistication and East’s mechanical efficiency. Although the pitches and rhythms are identical, three distinct interpretations can be gleaned from the vocal realization of its physical nature, depending on which source is used for consultation or performance.

CHAPTER 5  
PERFORMANCE GUIDE

5.1 Introduction

Using the findings of Chapters 2 and 3 and a brief biographical glance at William Byrd, Chapter 5 suggests learned choices in pronunciation, tone, intonation, phrasing, pitch, text underlay, *musica ficta*, rhetoric, and expression for the *prima pars* of “Tristitia et anxietas.” Additionally, a performance edition of the superius partbook appears in Appendix E.<sup>1</sup> Two components are notably missing from the edition: barlines and ties. Although ties appeared as early as the beginning of the sixteenth-century, they are absent from the three sources used in this project. Recent practice instructs singers to typically “sing through ties,” prompting a conditioned response to a symbol. By eliminating ties, I have discouraged the practice. I would be remiss if I did not mention barlines and their disruptive nature. Ink has been spilled over barlines as singers emphasize their metricity. Whether consciously or not, barlines—even *mensurstriche*—influence performance. Their absence in the performance edition recalls a time of linearity and plainchant.

5.2 Text intelligibility

As stated by Injunction XLIX of the 1559 Royal Injunctions and echoed by Morley’s treatise, text intelligibility was of utmost importance. The singer must clearly articulate consonants and follow scansion using the previous chapter’s pronunciation guide:

Tristitia et anxietas occupaverunt interiora mea. Moestum factum est cor meum in dolore, et contenebrati sunt oculi mei. Vae mihi, quia peccavi.

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<sup>1</sup> The additional partbooks are available upon request.

tristæisija εθ anksæietas ðkypaveront interiõra mea mestom faktom est kør meom in  
dõlore εθ kontenebræsi sont okyli mei ve mõiçi kwæia pekævi

### 5.3 Timbre and Tone

The tone used should be perceived as pleasing and sweet, natural to the individual's instrument, and unstrained. Vowel modifications are encouraged at registration events and extremities of range. Utilize Musical Example 2.1 and similarly devised exercises as vocal warm-ups to reproduce the ubiquity and nature of plainchant in the sixteenth century. The singer should also articulate individual notes with the absence of ligatures, and sing with a quality of resonance (one that allows for flexibility in timbre and expressivity) that can be sustained for hours of singing. Another consideration of tone is the partbooks' intended performance venue—a tapestried Elizabethan chamber, not a vaulted cathedral.<sup>2</sup> “Today's performers and audiences, hungry for the sound of echoing vaults and heavenly choirs, often express a different preference.”<sup>3</sup> Tempo is also influenced by the chamber's acoustic under the banner of text intelligibility; a drier acoustic requires a quicker tempo. Similarly, vocal mechanism and performing forces would need to adapt to the acoustical properties and size of the room.<sup>4</sup>

### 5.4 Intonation

Linear and vertical parameters guide polyphony. Rehearsing on neutral vowels, principally closed “i” and “u,” can yield a balance of subglottal pressure, laryngeal position,

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<sup>2</sup> McCarthy, *Byrd*, 104.

<sup>3</sup> Milsom, “Sacred Songs in the Chamber,” 163.

<sup>4</sup> Dimensions and pictures of rooms at Ingatestone Hall can be viewed at <http://www.ingatestonehall.com/spaces.php>

pharyngeal shape, and formant tuning.<sup>5</sup> The conductor can model proper and improper intonation using the inherent properties of the vowels, their formants, and the appropriate breath energy.

## 5.5 Phrasing

Sing with more resonance or dynamic into suspensions or dissonances, especially *cantisans* and *tenorisans clausulae*, while relaxing cadences when textually appropriate.

Without the crutch of a full score, partbooks require an acute awareness of the other vocal lines. Partbooks do have a main advantage to modern scores in their ability to illustrate the musical phrase.

What you get is a very clear sense of the musical line. You don't have these big spaces while you're waiting for other people to do stuff. You just see this sort of undulating line, the shapes of the notes which correspond to the words...You can see it on the page. You see these undulating lines going back and forth. So once you've gotten over the stage of just computing what the notes mean, I think it helps you to create these horizontal lines. Let's face it, what's polyphony? It's simultaneous melodies, right? And so, it really encourages each part to think of itself as an independent, horizontal event that happens almost—seems almost by chance—with the other parts that it sounds good. But it's not a series of vertical things. It's four melodies.

When you have a modern score, it encourages you to think of it as much vertical as horizontal. It's a chart. A modern score is a chart. It's this thing going on all the way through. Whereas that score is four separate, undulating lines. Everybody has their job. The result is this thing that has a vertical event, but it's like the harmony even takes care of itself. You don't have to think about it. You just have to do your part and use your ears and keep time, obviously, but the harmony is a result of all those things. What I think is so important in this music is the clarity of those separate melodies, that everybody is pursuing their own melody towards their own end. As opposed to trying to coordinate with everybody else as going along.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Amanda Renee Quist, "Choral Resonance: Re-examining Concepts of Tone and Unification" (DMA diss., University of North Texas, 2008), 22-23.

<sup>6</sup> Bull, interview.

Whether using partbooks or a modern score, looking at a sixteenth-century version unearths the organic musical shape.

#### 5.6 Shaping Points of Imitation

If text intelligibility was king of English artistry, shaping imitation was cardinal. Using Morley's teaching of descant as guide, each first instance of imitation should be emphasized through articulation and/or dynamic level. Once the head motive is sung, and with an awareness of the other voices, subsequent episodic material should then be diminished in articulation and/or dynamic. The resultant conversation between points reflects the dialogue between *Master, Philomathes* and *Polymathes*.

#### 5.7 Starting Pitch

Accounts varied on the flexibility of starting pitch based on the singers at hand. English pitch in the Renaissance is reported to have sounded a minor third higher today than written. Based on contradictory evidence, Brett and Brown recommend singing at written pitch.<sup>7</sup> In reference to clefs, Morley challenged the practice of his time that transposed music from its original clef because of loss in affect. Accordingly, "Tristitia et anxietas" should be performed at written pitch.

#### 5.8 Text Underlay

In order to assume the sixteenth-century performer's role of setting text underlay, the "ij" sign is retained in the performing edition, as it appeared in Dow's manuscript. As the Critical

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<sup>7</sup> Brett and Brown, *The Byrd Edition*, xxiii.

Report in Appendix E makes known, the performer is invited to partake in the compositional process by realizing the text.

## 5.9 Cadences

Using a full score, identify all *cantisans* and *tenorisans clausulae* using a similar method as Margaret Hillis with colored pencils. Simon Carrington marked tenuto-like symbols above suspensions in red.<sup>8</sup> I suggest devising a coloring system that can symbolize *cantisans* and *tenorisans clausulae*. Although choristers who used partbooks would not have had the complete information of *clausulae* from a full score, their ears and eyes would have clued them in at the ends of phrases. Whether ascending or descending, the singer can identify which part of the formula they are, *cantisans* or *tenorisans*. If using partbooks, the singer must become aurally aware at the ends of stepwise phrases in order to potentially align their voice leading with other parts. If a conductor is using a full score, it can be helpful to rehearse the participating voice parts in isolation. Morley also described the compositional practice of elongating rhythms at the close. Again, using text intelligibility, expressivity, and affect as judge, it may be necessary to sing cadences with deliberate articulation and a slight broadening of tempo, if applicable.

## 5.10 Affect

In order to move the affections of the listener, the performer must first know a word for word translation and understand the composer's union of text and music. Morley also suggested using *musica ficta* to enhance the meaning of the text.

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<sup>8</sup> Masterclass by Simon Carrington at the 2013 Westminster Choir College Conducting Institute.



Tristitia et anxietas occupaverunt interiora mea. Moestum factum est cor meum in dolore, et contenebrati sunt oculi mei. Vae mihi, quia peccavi.

Sorrow and anxiety have taken hold of my inmost being. My heart is made sorrowful in grief, and mine eyes are darkened. Woe is me, for I have sinned!<sup>9</sup>

### 5.11 Clefs

Dow, Baldwin, and East used the C clef for the superius partbook, which determined relative pitch, mode, and performing force. By following Morley's recommendation of not transposing clefs, performers can ensure that the grave nature and setting of the text and music is left intact. Because C clefs have fallen out of use with most contemporary singers, the performing edition uses a treble clef without altering pitch or mode. The transposition of clef does, however, have psychological ramifications. With the C clef, the singer visually experiences the gamut of their range. A treble clef extends the staff, blurring the original visualization and properties of the C clef. For example, the first note appears as a "low" note in C clef, and a "middle" note in the treble clef. When singing notes at the top of the staff, a relationship develops between the visual representation and the physical requirement. The highest note of this motet, D5, "looks" differently on the two clefs, acting as a different stimuli for the singer.

### 5.12 Mode

"Tristitia et anxietas" is in the Aeolian mode. Morley endorsed the writings of Heinrich Glarean and Gioseffo Zarlino to inform performers of mode, thus directing affect and *musica ficta*.<sup>10</sup> Glarean's *Dodecachordon* described Aeolian as:

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<sup>9</sup> Translations from Philip Brett and Alan Brown, eds., *The Byrd Edition*, xxiii.

<sup>10</sup> Appendix C is an excerpt from *Dodecachordon*, Book II, Chapter XVII by Heinrich Glarean.

“. . . pleasant seriousness together with an agreeable sweetness charming beyond measure”<sup>11</sup>

“. . . the Romans were so fond of the Aeolian mode that, when the first church musicians of Rome thought of using songs in churches for the ears of the congregation, they employed this mode first, but very moderately and temperately.”<sup>12</sup>

“The final of the mode is A. . . .”<sup>13</sup>

“. . . this mode has been thought to be the Dorian among those ignorant of how the systems of modes should be distinguished by their nature. The ordinary singers even now have this same opinion, as we have also stated before.”<sup>14</sup>

“But now it is worthwhile to observe in the first examples, with how much simplicity, also with how much seriousness the songs of the first church musicians were undertaken, with all ostentation completely removed, with all shallowness excluded, in a word, with such grace that everyone must approve them unless he does not possess any hearing. How justly we ought to be ashamed to have degenerated in such a degree from this!”<sup>15</sup>

Book 4, Chapter 26 of Zarlino’s *Le istituzioni harmoniche* referred to the ninth mode (Aeolian):

“Some have called the ninth mode open and terse, very suitable for lyrics poetry. One can use this mode with words containing cheerful, sweet, soft, and sonorous subjects, because (as it is claimed) it possesses a pleasant severity, mixed with a certain cheerfulness and sweet softness. It is well known to all experts in music that this mode and the first mode conform with each other. . . .”<sup>16</sup>

The spirit of “Tristitia et anxietas,” defined by its mode, can be described as serious, unpretentious, graceful, terse, sonorous, and severe.

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<sup>11</sup> Heinrich Glarean, *Dodecachordon*, trans. Clement A. Miller (n.p.: American Institute of Musicology, 1965), 142.

<sup>12</sup> Glarean, *Dodecachordon*, 143.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Gioseffo Zarlino, *On the Modes: Part Four of Le Istitutioni Harmoniche, 1558*, trans. Vered Cohen (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 77.

### 5.13 Hexachords

An interesting experiment would be to sing “Tristitia et anxietas” with the Guidonian hand, using hexachords (see Musical Example 5.1) and their mutations. How did the vowels—ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la— influence understanding of phonation, resonance, intonation, and phrasing?

#### Musical Example 5.1

##### Tristitia Hexachord



### 5.14 Consonance and Dissonance

Refer to Tables 3.1 and 3.2 for clues to sixteenth-century intonation. Choirs who train with the assistance of equal tempered pianos distort the natural overtones created by just intonation. For example, perfect fifths in just intonation need to be raised slightly to achieve the true three to two ratio. Likewise, Morley's imperfect intervals require adjustment from equal temperament; the minor third and sixth are to be raised, while the major third and sixth are lowered to create pure consonances. Morley's dissonant intervals (seconds, fourths, and sevenths) also need alterations in just intonation from equal temperament; minor second, perfect fourth, and major seventh require lowering, and major second and minor seventh require raising.

### 5.15 Mood

“Tristitia et anxietas” is Imperfect Mood because of a two to one ratio between the long and breve. Together with time and prolation, mood determines the subdivision of the tactus.

#### 5.16 Time and Prolation

“Tristitia et anxietas” is Imperfect Time and Minor Prolation, as the relationship between the breve and semibreve, and semibreve to minim is two to one. Together with mood, time and prolation determine the subdivision of the tactus.

#### 5.17 Rests

Rests in partbooks require the singer to stay engaged with the notation and music-making process, influencing expressivity and vocal mechanism.

#### 5.18 Ligatures

There are no ligatures present in the *prima pars* of this motet in Dow's superius partbook.<sup>17</sup>

#### 5.19 Composition

Based on Morley's opinion of copiers and scribes, refer to the partbook by Thomas East for resolving discrepancies between pitch, underlay, *ficta*, etc. Using the Morley translation of Zarlino's *Le institutioni harmoniche* and his order of composition, the superius part should be rehearsed with the tenor for uniformity of intonation and imitative shape.

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<sup>17</sup> There is a ligature in the Medius partbook on the word “meum,” and Bassus “peccavi.”

## 5.20 Harmony

Let the ear, text, and harmony invite “divers[e] colours” in vocal timbre to enhance the contrast and diversity embedded within the motet.

## 5.21 Tactus

Instead of following a conducting pattern, one musician should measure time with a simple down and up (*positio* and *elevatio*) of the hand. This encourages independence and interaction with all voice parts.

## 5.22 Singing Intervals

As Morley instructed, audiate the notes between intervals greater than a second for accuracy and intonation.

## 5.23 Breathing

Breathe where it is logical, usually with punctuation. For longer lines, pace support by looking ahead or breathe according to musical and grammatical instinct.

## 5.24 Ear

Using partbooks in study, rehearsal, and/or performance strengthens listening skills, tuning abilities, independence, and musical acuity. The ear is the arbiter of beauty.

## 5.25 Analogies

Analogies in rehearsal can be effective to describe musicality or resonance imagery. Depending on the ensemble, conductors can be more efficient by speaking directly and talking less in rehearsal.

## 5.26 Music

Francesca Cuzzoni had yet to usher in the era of *prima donnas* and their counterparts, the castrati. Renaissance music was designed and intended for an entity greater than oneself. This understanding places music first, ahead of the individual.

## 5.27 Expectations of Student

Sixteenth-century education models of practice, commitment, responsibility, and openness serve as an inspiration and manifesto for twenty-first century choristers.

## 5.28 William Byrd

Beloved by choristers for his Latin-texted music, William Byrd's motets stylistically progressed from (1) continental, backward-looking cantus firmus and canonic compositions serving extra-liturgical purposes to (2) allegorical, non-pietistic, imitation-driven pieces intended for non-liturgical events involving amateurs to (3) liturgical works including three mass settings and collections of Propers intended for a few experienced singers.<sup>18</sup> "Tristitia et anxietas," belongs to his middle-period alongside the likes of "Ne irascaris" and "Tribulationes civitatum." Byrd composed "Tristitia et anxietas" during a decade of local and global unrest that included the execution of three Jesuit priests (Edmund Campion, Alexander Briant, and Ralph Sherwin),

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<sup>18</sup> Joseph Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 22-54.

citations, fines, and imprisonment for recusancy, plots (Throckmorton and Babington) to assassinate Queen Elizabeth I, the beheading of Mary, Queen of Scots, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada. David Trendell defined musical aspects consistent with the allegorical texts from Byrd's middle period.<sup>19</sup> He identified three unifying characteristics:

1. "rhetorical use of homophony"<sup>20</sup>
2. "preponderance of dissonance"<sup>21</sup>
3. "a musical motif based on a semitone"<sup>22</sup>

By finding these instances in the partbook and performance— homophony cannot be seen in a partbook—the singer can recreate the "claustrophobic atmosphere" that likely transpired in a huddled Elizabethan room.

## 5.29 Conclusion

Chapter 5 explored the technical and analytical expertise necessary to perform Byrd's "Tristitia et anxietas." Still remaining, however, is the inspiration that choristers likely received from morality songs and plays that surely informed their performance. By reciting poetry or writings during the rehearsal process, conductors can motivate today's singers to contemplate applicable values and context. Considering the political and religious landscape of England when Byrd composed "Tristitia et anxietas," I suggest William Byrd's consort setting of Henry Walpole's poem, "Why do I use my paper, ink, and pen?" Published one year before "Tristitia et

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<sup>19</sup> David Trendell, "Aspects of William Byrd's musical recusancy," *Musical Times* 148 (2007): 27-50.

<sup>20</sup> Trendell, "Aspects of William Byrd's musical recusancy," 30.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

anxietas," "Why do I use" exists in Byrd's 1588 publication *Psalmes, Sonets & songs of sadnes and piety*:

Why do I vse my paper incke & pen,  
and call my wits to counsel what to saie,  
such memories were made for mortall men,  
I speak of Saints, whose names cannot decaye,  
an Angel's trump, were fitter for to sound,  
their glorious death, if such on earth were found.

That stoare of such were once on earth pursu'd,  
the histories of auncient times record,  
whose constancie great tirants rage subdu'd,  
through patient death professing Christ their Lord,  
as his Apostles perfect witsse beare,  
with many more that blessed Martirs were.

Whose patience rare & most couragious minde,  
with fame renoum'd perpetuall shall endure,  
by whose examples we may rightly finde,  
of holie life and death a patterne pure:  
that we therfore their vertues may embrace,  
pray we to Christ to guide vs with his grace.<sup>23</sup>

Written in response to the brutal torture and execution of Edmund Campion and two Jesuit priests, the setting presents an opportunity to discuss and reflect upon the backdrop of sectarian violence in which Byrd composed. The poem was viewed as so seditious that publisher, Stephen Vallenger, had both ears cut off by Protestant authorities for its publication.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Philip Brett and Jeremy Smith, eds., *The Byrd Edition* Vol. 12 (London: Stainer & Bell, 2004), xxxiv-xxxv.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, xxxix.



## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

“We can nonetheless gain greater understanding of the music if we try and perceive it from the point of view of the who conceived it, if we, so to speak, attempt to walk in their footsteps.”<sup>1</sup> We can attempt to walk in the footsteps of sixteenth-century choristers by examining their music education, partbooks, dialect, and milieu. The endeavor, unfortunately, is incongruous to their actual approach to the performance of Latin motets, but is consistent with the humanistic ideals that fueled their discovery and study of ancient writings to rebirth and restore past ideals of science, art, architecture, philosophy, literature, and music. Just as the *custos*, or “direct,” guided singers in the performance of polyphony, today’s singers, through technology, can look back to former practices for inspiration and guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> Anne Smith, *The Performance of 16th-Century Music*, 162.

APPENDIX A

WILLIAM BYRD ASPICE DOMINE DE SEDE<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Used by permission of Choral Public Domain Library (CPDL).

# Aspice Domine de sede

William Byrd (c. 1540-1623)

Superius [Soprano]

Medius [Alto]

Contratenor [Tenor]

Tenor [Tenor]

Bassus [Bass]

A - - spi - ce Do - - mi -

A - - spi -

A - - spi - ce Do - mi - ne, Do - - mi -

Detailed description: This block contains the first system of the musical score. It features five vocal parts: Superius (Soprano), Medius (Alto), Contratenor (Tenor), Tenor, and Bassus (Bass). The music is in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: 'A - - spi - ce Do - - mi -' for Soprano and Alto, 'A - - spi -' for Tenor, and 'A - - spi - ce Do - mi - ne, Do - - mi -' for Bass. The Soprano and Alto parts have a fermata over the final note of the first phrase.

A - - spi - ce Do - mi - ne, \_\_\_\_\_ de

-ne, a - spi - ce Do - - mi - ne, \_\_\_\_\_ de se - de

-ce Do - - mi - ne, Do - mi - ne, de se - de san - cta tu -

A - - spi - ce Do - mi - - ne \_\_\_\_\_

-ne, a - spi - ce Do - mi - ne, \_\_\_\_\_ de se - de san -

Detailed description: This block contains the second system of the musical score. It continues the five vocal parts from the first system. The lyrics are: 'A - - spi - ce Do - mi - ne, \_\_\_\_\_ de' for Soprano; '-ne, a - spi - ce Do - - mi - ne, \_\_\_\_\_ de se - de' for Alto; '-ce Do - - mi - ne, Do - mi - ne, de se - de san - cta tu -' for Tenor; 'A - - spi - ce Do - mi - - ne \_\_\_\_\_' for Bass; and '-ne, a - spi - ce Do - mi - ne, \_\_\_\_\_ de se - de san -' for Bassus. The Soprano and Alto parts have a fermata over the final note of the first phrase.

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se - de san - cta tu - - - a, de se - de san - cta, de

san - cta tu - a, de se - de san - cta

-a, de se - de san - cta tu - - - a, de se - de

- de - - de san - - - -

-cta tu - - - a, de se - de san - cta tu - a,

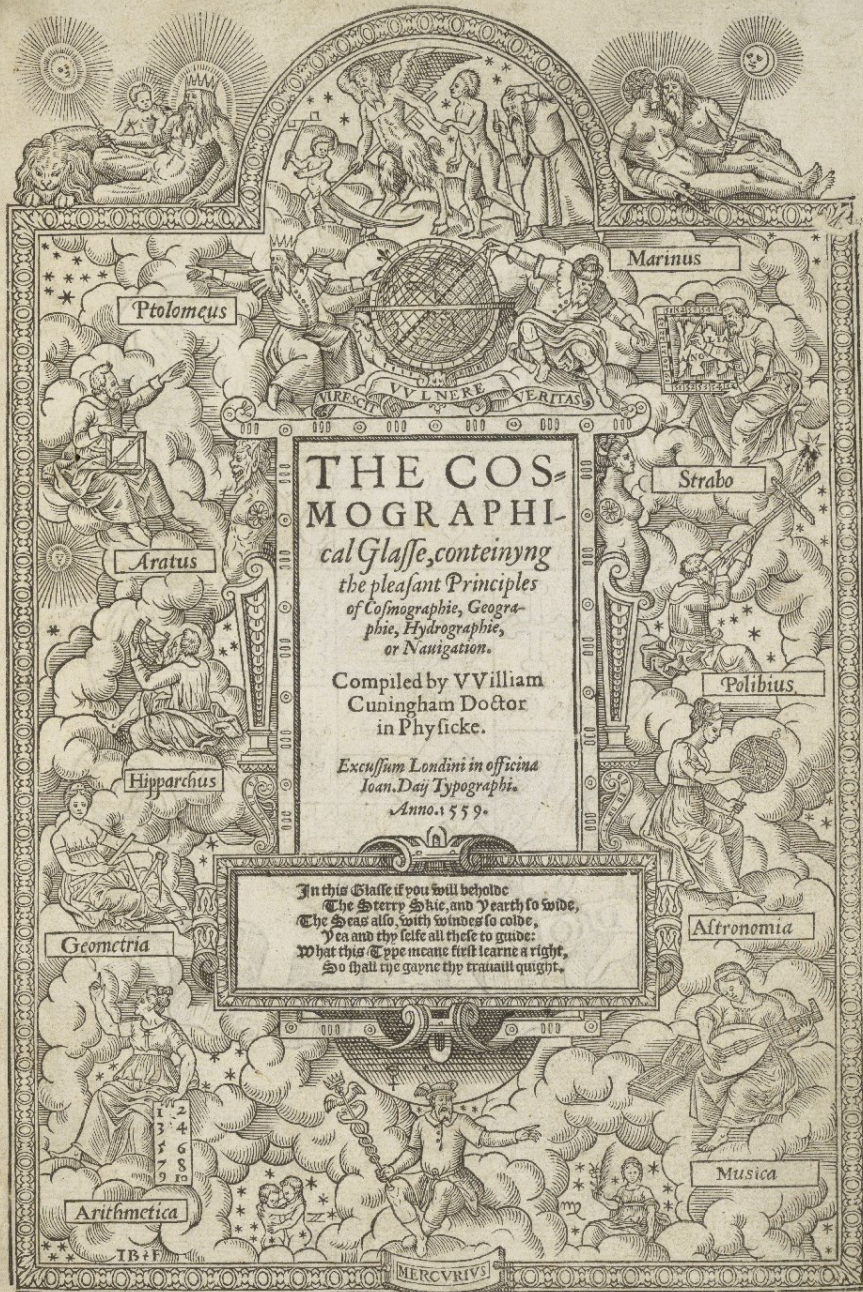
Detailed description: This block contains the third system of the musical score, starting with a measure rest of 10 measures. It continues the five vocal parts. The lyrics are: 'se - de san - cta tu - - - a, de se - de san - cta, de' for Soprano; 'san - cta tu - a, de se - de san - cta' for Alto; '-a, de se - de san - cta tu - - - a, de se - de' for Tenor; '- de - - de san - - - -' for Bass; and '-cta tu - - - a, de se - de san - cta tu - a,' for Bassus. The Soprano and Alto parts have a fermata over the final note of the first phrase.

APPENDIX B

TITLE PAGE OF *THE COSMOGRAPHICAL GLASSE*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> STC 6119. Used by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.



APPENDIX C

EXCERPT FROM HEINRICH GLAREAN *DODECACHORDON* - BOOK II, CHAPTER XVII<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Heinrich Glarean and Clement A. Miller, *Dodecachordon* (n.p.: American Institute of Musicology, 1965), 142-143.

## Chapter XVII

### Concerning the Aeolian mode.

The other mode of the first octave is called Aeolian and is divided harmonically. Thus it is the first mode in this class, old indeed, but deprived of a name for many years, and simple as Apuleius says, open and pure, most suitable for various songs and especially for setting lyric verses. It has a pleasant seriousness together with an agreeable sweetness charming beyond measure, which the fifth *re la*, common to the Dorian also inasmuch as it concludes both modes, does not produce so much as the fourth, *mi la*, added above to this mode, is wonderfully pleasing to the ears, while the fourth *re sol* in the Dorian is indeed neither disagreeable more inelegant, but is used more commonly with *re la*, and thus is less singular. Moreover, Dionysius of Halicarnassus clearly asserts toward the end of his first book on the antiquities that the Aeolian speech dominated in the Roman language. To some learned men this does not seem remarkable in itself, since the words of the Doric speech and also the changing of  $\eta$  into  $a$  among Latins because of their proximity to Sicily and lower Italy, which spoke Doric, were very familiar.

But I believe that Dionysius was speaking about speech intonation and not about diction. Although I would not contend with anyone about the matter, yet this opinion of ours on Dionysius's words is supported somewhat, because the Romans were so fond of the Aeolian mode that, when the first church musicians of Rome thought of using songs in churches for the ears of the congregation, they employed this mode first, but very moderately and temperately. For they first arranged according to this mode the Lord's Prayer, with a short preface, and the Nicene Creed. But after some years had elapsed, others then followed who arranged the Angelic Salutation, with a whole tone added below, according to the same mode, and also the Gospel of St. Matthew, although it extended further upwards. The final of the mode is *A*, but also *D* if *fa* is on the *b* key, which has now gained usage, as it also has in other modes. Yet this occurrence has brought it about that [105] this mode has been thought to be the Dorian among those ignorant of how the systems of modes should be distinguished by their nature. The ordinary singers even now have this same opinion, as we have also stated before. Moreover, there is the same freedom of ascending and descending in the Aeolian as in the Dorian, namely, that a whole tone may be added below and a minor third above, with a very pleasant effect.

Now I shall present various examples of this matter; on the one hand those which do not fill out the octave but only the fifth, and with the addition of a small semitone above; on the other hand, those which fill out the entire octave of this mode, just as it occurs in its normal condition. But now it is worthwhile to observe in the first examples, with how much simplicity, also with how much seriousness the songs of the first church musicians were undertaken, with all ostentation completely removed, with all shallowness excluded, in a word, with such grace that everyone must approve them unless he does not possess any hearing. How justly we ought to be ashamed to have degenerated in such a degree from this! But now, omitting useless complaints, let us penetrate more deeply into the matter under discussion.

APPENDIX D

TRANSCRIPT OF STRATTON BULL INTERVIEW



Transcript of Skype Interview with Stratton Bull, Artistic Director of *Cappella Pratensis*, March 16, 2016

**John Irving [JI]:** Can you describe how you use original notation in facsimile editions in rehearsal and performance?

**Stratton Bull [SB]:** We use them as performing scores. That's our main source, performing. We take facsimiles and we doctor them up for performance. In that sense, they are our primary performing scores. But we are not quite at the hardcore edge where we can perform straight from them. Because of the time constraints—that's really one of main reasons—it's a practical thing. We do things like, do the text underlay. It was considered, I think, one of the skills of the singer to be able do that. It's a skill that we don't really have so much now. So we have to cheat that way. So I'll go in ahead of time and work out a text placement scheme.

Same goes for *musica ficta*. Now we are to the point where lots of situations are cadential. We're altering the leading tone and stuff like that. People know more or less to do it. Again, in the interest of time—because, you know, you are paying professionals—you don't have endless time. I always go through and work out *ficta*, especially when there's those tricky places where there are real decisions to be made; there's not one answer. You have to come up with a possible solution just to save time in rehearsal.

And another thing we do is we write in the rehearsal numbers so that it is possible to actually stop and start in the middle of pieces, and rehearse. There's a whole question there in terms of all those things in performance practice. What are we doing that they weren't doing, and what were they doing that we're not doing? Like for instance, did they actually rehearse in the sense of stopping and starting in the middle and working on passages? We've had a lot of discussion about that. It's pretty clear. Actually we worked with Joshua Rifkin on a number of projects and he's got some strong opinions about this. His point of view—and I find it's a good one—that is you look at the way the music is set up. It's really not set up to encourage stopping and starting in places.

They could have had ways. Sometimes you have those *signum congruentiae* that actually lined up places saying, "look this is where we are all going to be doing something," but this is not very often. And it's for sure not something that was common, when it could have been. It wouldn't have been that hard to have a system of signs or letters or something. They didn't do that. It's just like the text placements. It would have been so easy to set the text. It's not like they were lazy. That was how the system was. *Musica ficta* is exactly the same. Those are all things that we fudge a little bit.

I have had discussions with people. We make a big fuss about how authentic we are, or whatever, how we are trying to get in to the heads of the people of the time. The fact is we don't go all the way, it's true. You could say, "well then, why don't you take a modern score?" But I think that the steps that we do take are really the big ones: that is, working from, let's say a choirbook (the physical thing of putting a choirbook on a stand and all standing around it), having the separate parts (you can't see what the other guys are doing), having no bar-lines (so the metrical organization is different and, of course, because it's only your part, the music is much more compact. You see the visual lines much more strongly), and of course the whole system of mensural notation (that's also a different way of organizing music and thinking about music metrically). So all those things, I think, those are the big steps to take. That takes you way out of your modern performance situation and that's the most important thing.

It's a fact that we've made compromises in the interest of the modern performance situation and I know there are other people out there that do different things, like Peter Urquhart. Very interesting guy. He's up in New Hampshire. He's a *musica ficta* maven! That's his life. He's the champion of the cross-relation. He's a cool guy and has a group called *Capella Alamire*, which has been going since the 80s. And they also perform from original scores—they always have—choirbooks. He'd be another interesting guy to talk to. He's got lots of ideas and insight.

We are doing a project here in Leuven right now where we got a bunch of singers—we're not doing anything—we're singing straight from a facsimile. And now really trying to see how do you deal with the text, and the *ficta*, and stopping and starting, and all those things. Fact is, you can do it. But you need more time and you have to kind of develop a culture. Get a bunch of singers who get used to that because, you know, most people don't have any experience of doing that.

**JJ:** It's humbling, too. I'm working with an ensemble at North Texas where we're reading from partbooks that I created from facsimiles to help bridge the gap. I find one of the biggest challenges, besides the formatting itself, are the rests, especially. There is so much anxiety that goes with counting a rest and then hoping, praying that you come in at the right time. You talked briefly about doctoring a score for practical purposes when you are paying professionals. For rehearsal letters and numbers, do you have any musical considerations when you set numbers? By points of imitation? Or do you divide a score evenly in halves or thirds? Can you expand on how you doctor a score?

**SB:** I have a rule of thumb that I try to do it every ten bars or so in the modern score. That's what I first go to. But that is just a matter of general spacing. After that I look for structural points: at a cadence or at the beginning of a new phrase, some place that makes sense. And also of course, if possible, when every body is on the beat. It's not always that easy in this music.

We did a project with Clemens non Papa with constant suspensions and dissonances going on. It was very difficult to find a place where you don't have a rehearsal number that actually comes in the middle of somebody's note. It's the same kind of issues that they had when it came to making choirbooks, where they all could turn at the same time. It's not always that easy to find a nice moment when everyone would come in on the next page, be on the beat. So that's a bit of an issue. But it's not so hard. Sometimes we do weird stuff. Sometimes we have a dotted line that goes through a note or something.

**JJ:** Stratton, can you tell me a little bit about the beginning? What inspired you to begin using facsimile editions? What set you down this path?

**SB:** I came in to the group when it was already doing that. I was studying in the Hague. It was actually Rebecca Stewart who was the conductor of the group for a long time. From the start of the group in 1987 until 2002, she was the conductor. She was the one who said, "look, we're going to do this, this way." In the very beginning they used modern scores, but they very quickly went to facsimiles. And that began one of the main trademarks of the group. I took over, or started conducting, in about 2004. That's what the group did, and the group has changed over

the years, but that's a constant . That is one of the things that we do. The performance—the interpretation—might change, but that particular aspect stays the same.

So it wasn't my idea! But I came in to the group and it was doing that, but I wanted to be in the group because of that and I totally signed on to it. And I just think it's a great way to do things. My point of view on the whole thing: I certainly don't think that anybody has to do it. Nobody has to do anything. You can play it on the xylophone, if you'd like. Also, if you want to sing it from a modern score, if you want to do what most choirs do with it, that's okay, too.

But my feeling is a little bit that..it's a bit strange in the early music movement. What's the early music movement? That's where you try to recreate the conditions of performances in a certain time in order to see how that recreation will affect the performance and you hope that it affects it in a good way. So you put gut strings on a violin, or do some trills, or whatever, and that's been done. If you look at Baroque music, for instance, that's been done pretty seriously and continues to be. People rebuilding and rethinking instruments and talking about all types of questions of numbers of performers and whatnot.

In Renaissance music, for some reason, that's happened a little bit, but not really to the extent of Baroque music. It's still part of the choral tradition with the conductor often standing in front of the people, giving you a choir concert. You can say, "well, the reason why that is, that actually works quite well." And you could argue that the advantages that you get from the way we do it don't make that much of a difference, and, in fact, there might be just as many disadvantages involved in it to make it not worthwhile.

So I understand why people don't do it. It's a pain in the ass to be honest. You have to go find the scores, and you have to doctor them, and you have to find singers who know how to read them, and it takes you way out of your comfort zone. Whereas you've got a whole group of singers who have been trained to read music, and sing together in choirs and ensembles in a good way. Why wouldn't you want do that? So, I understand that point of view, but I just find it strange in the early music movement that that point of view is the mainstream. When in other parts of early music, when you think about, like the gut string Baroque thing that sort of happened in the 70s. It also took them out of their comfort zone and sounded terrible, but people stuck to it and now that's the way you do it. But when it comes to Renaissance music, it only partly happened.

It's not completely fair to say that it's just a pure choral tradition. There's a very strong, new vocal ensemble tradition that kind of came out in the 70s. When you think of David Munrow and David Wulstan, and especially out of England, sort of adapting the cathedral choir tradition to performer's practice for Renaissance music. They really changed the way the music sounded. It wasn't this big choral, mushy sound, but suddenly very clear lines, and incredible tuning, and clarity, certain timbre and everything. It's not completely fair to say it's just this sort of Robert Shaw chorale approach. So in that sense there is a sort of authentic approach to polyphony. But like so many things, I'm part of it, but there are so many things that aren't being done. That I think, my point of view is, nobody has to do it but somebody should be doing it.

**J1:** I wonder if you have any thoughts about why that hasn't been more widely experimented with. Because, you are right, there are sort of certain industry standards that we have come to accept about Baroque music, especially, but it hasn't translated to the Renaissance world. Thoughts?

**SB:** Well as I say, I think that a lot of people—as far as they even gave it any thought, which I think lots of people have not given it any thought at all, including some of the very top performers, but as much as there are some who have thought about it—they’ve considered it and said, “it’s not worth the trouble.” Let’s say the gain of having an orchestra playing on gut strings and really jigged violins, that really changes the game in a big way. The whole technique changes, people playing it in a different way. The bows are really different, the sound of the strings. It really is a whole different ball game. Whereas if you take a really good group of professional singers, eight singers, singing from a modern score of a piece of polyphony or you put them in front of a choirbook, I think there are people who say “it’s not really worth the trouble, it’s not different enough, and there aren’t that many advantages.”

In fact, you could even say like, “listen to *Cappella Pratensis* blind. Can you tell that they are actually doing anything, singing in front of an old score or a modern score. Is there any difference?” Whereas if you take one of those great string orchestras of the 60s, and put them next to a modern orchestra specializing in the Baroque, boy, you really can hear the difference. There’s even the idea that you can actually hear the difference of people using facsimiles because it’s worse! That’s not what you want to prove. When you take people out of their comfort zone and now suddenly they can’t see the other parts, their whole concept of tuning, maybe, went out the window, their whole sense of security, like you said, counting the rests, Suddenly it’s scary, one on a part for instance.

I once did a workshop, and a famous singer who will remain nameless was the teacher, the professor, at this institution. And we gave a workshop and he was really interested. “Oh this is so cool what you guys are doing. It’s really great. I just have one question, and that is ‘can you get to the point where when you sing from original notation, you can’t tell the difference between that and singing from modern notation?’” I didn’t understand the question. It didn’t make any sense to me. No, that’s not the point. We don’t want to make it sound the same. But his point was, it’s so manifestly obvious that singing from the original notation will make it worse, that your goal would obviously be to keep working on it until you get it up to the same level as modern notation.

My point of view on that stuff is from modern notation—especially if you have good readers—very quickly you can achieve a result. You can go from zero to final result. In England, they do it in one rehearsal. Whereas in older notation you go quite slowly in the beginning. On the other hand in modern notation, you often go quickly and then you’ve arrived, that’s it, it doesn’t go any further. It’s perfected. Whereas with the older notation, my experience is that you can actually go a lot further in the music. It takes longer, and there is more trouble in the beginning, but at the end you have way more things beginning to happen because of the interplay between the independent voices. Because what the notation shows you about the lines, all the advantages, the situation of standing in front of the choirbook is a different relationship to the other things.

Once you get comfortable with that, that’s my experience, you can go further. But going further with the modern notation is more difficult. So that’s my experience. And that’s like the answer to your first question in a way, “what are you interested in?” That’s what makes it cool for me. You can go much deeper in to the music this way. That’s the challenge with our group, that’s what we want to prove. I do want it to be audible that we’re singing from a transcription because it’s better. The performance is better. That’s a fairly high bar to set for ourselves. But in a way, I don’t see any reason to do it if that’s not what you’re shooting for. Just doing it because

it's authentic, there's no point to that. The only reason to do it, ultimately, is that you hope that it will make the music better.

**Jl:** Can you talk specifically about some of these advantages of using facsimile editions, either in rehearsal, as an ensemble, or in musical adaptation?

**SB:** Right. Well, in terms of, let's say, having a score where the parts are separate, whether in partbooks or in a choirbook, you can't see what the other guy is doing, so you're required to do it through your ears. There's a nice example where in the beginning it's actually a disadvantage. That is, my experience is that people in the beginning are focused so much on their own part and just getting through it. They actually have less contact with the rest. And the fact that they can't see them visually, they're even more in sort of tunnel vision. But as you get to know a score and also as you get more proficient at reading, so that it's not such a big deal just to read your part, then you become aware of the other parts.

I sort of compare it to a blind person. You've got no sight so you develop your hearing like two hundred percent. You actually have a better contact, but it's a physical sound contact with the other parts. It's not intellectualized through visual, so it's a very physical relationship to the other voices. It means that the full score—and I can't remember who said this...another person that is really good to talk to about this is Valerie Horst—she put it that when you sing from a facsimile you are relating your voice to the other voices purely in the space around you, and not intellectually on a space on a piece of paper. So it makes the whole thing much more tactile, and much more alive somehow, I find, when it works well. So that's one of the really big things right away.

And if you combine with, when we're talking about choirbooks, the physical situation of everybody standing quite close together and all looking at the same book—so all sort of focused in the same direction, so you got the other voices quite close to you, not spread out in a wide line nicely separated, but really interacting with each other—then you also get much more of the sense of the tactile relationship between the different parts. I think in terms of the separate parts on the choirbook, those are two things that really make a difference.

I must say again, it has its downsides. When it doesn't work, it kind of is confusing, in a way. The sound is very confused. It's almost so close together. Whereas if you sing from modern notation in a row, and now what's the difference? Actually when you stand in a row separately with your own scores, the separation of parts is much clearer. In a certain way, it's easier. Because the sopranos are over there, the altos are over there. Whereas, here there is a lot of potential confusion. When it doesn't work well, it's like disturbance. But when it does work well, it's like, kind of, an organism. The whole thing is this one thing that has different aspects to it, which is very cool when you get that working. Then that's a whole thing that doesn't really happen with the other setup. So that for me is a real primary advantage to singing that way.

Another one is, of course, in terms of your own line, I said it before, the visual of a line that has no barlines. Also the notes are very compact. In fact, every note takes the same amount of space no matter what its length is basically. There's a little bit of movement. Five bars of rest is as long as two notes. A breve and a minim aren't that much different in terms of the amount of space they take up. What you get is a very clear sense of the musical line. You don't have these big spaces while you're waiting for other people to do stuff. You just see this sort of undulating line, the shapes of the notes which correspond to the words. Especially in the music

we do, although I think any fifteenth or sixteenth polyphony, but when I think of Josquin and that kind of French-based polyphony around 1500, it's very flowing music.

For instance, when it comes to French language, there's flow in the language and linguistic approach that you can actually see it. You can see it on the page. You see these undulating lines going back and forth. So once you've gotten over the stage of just computing what the notes mean, I think it helps you to create these horizontal lines. Let's face it, what's polyphony? It's simultaneous melodies, right? And so, it really encourages each part to think of itself as an independent, horizontal event that happens almost—seems almost by chance—with the other parts that it sounds good. But it's not a series of vertical things. It's four melodies.

When you have a modern score, it encourages you to think of it as much vertical as horizontal. It's a chart. A modern score is a chart. It's this thing going on all the way through. Whereas that score is four separate, undulating lines. Everybody has their job. The result is this thing that has a vertical event, but it's like the harmony even takes care of itself. You don't have to think about it. You just have to do your part and use your ears and keep time, obviously, but the harmony is a result of all those things. What I think is so important in this music is the clarity of those separate melodies, that everybody is pursuing their own melody towards their own end. As opposed to trying to coordinate with everybody else as going along.

**JJ:** It seems that by reading from this notation, you are bringing out how polyphony was originally conceived, its linear nature. And like you said, they were thinking of consonances and relationships, but it's almost as if we are doing it futuristically by looking at it vertically with modern scores. Fascinating! You sort of talked about this already, but can you talk a little more about how your approach and understanding of sacred, Renaissance polyphony may have changed as a result of working with *Cappella Pratensis*? What was it like before 2004 to look at, listen to, digest a score, and now twelve years later having worked with this ensemble?

**SB:** Yeah! How has it changed? I've been doing it for so long now. I can't hardly remember what it was like. The fact is, if I do a gig with another group and we do it from modern notation, I can take some of the stuff that I've learned with *Cappella [Pratensis]* and use it, a little bit of it. Second, you're confronted with this different commodity, this modern score. You just start to do things differently. So that horizontal thing disappears to a certain extent. To say that now because of my *Cappella* experience, now everything I do is more horizontal or influenced, I don't know if that's actually the case. It's very easy to fall back in to trying to make sure it fits together as a puzzle. So they're really separate experiences. It's not completely true, mostly. You attempt to have this sense of the horizontal gesture once you've experienced it from the old notes. It's in there somewhere. I really do have this idea, what you see is what you sing. The visual thing has a big influence.

Another guy who's interesting, Tim Shephard. You can look up some of his stuff because he's been doing some stuff involved in the sort of psychology of the visual to music and how does actually what you see maybe, even unconsciously, effect how you perform. I saw a paper that he gave where it was lute music that had pastoral images—pictures around the edge of the music that kind of were there as direction—but he said actually maybe on purpose they help you to perform. This is pastoral music, you should think of some guy sitting by a little stream. It kind of creates the mood that you're going to go for. He had a few examples like that.

Or in the case of our music, I just think that the scores are often so gorgeous. They are inspiring and they're meant to be inspiring. They're supposed to look as beautiful as they

should sound. I think that was the intention. It's a very kind of medieval idea that they're just different aspects of the same beauty. That's kind of a normal way for them to think. Whereas we have managed to separate things out in to categories to be able to make them much clearer. So we've made this very clinical, modern score which is actually much more accurate in a way and gives you more oversight than older scores, but you've lost that connection between the visual and sounding aspect of the music.

**Jl:** Right. Modern scores give us so many instructions, whether dynamics, tempo, or density of voicing. If we think about its extreme in serialism, scores inform us to the minute detail including timbre. Can you talk then—it's provoking to think about the psychology of the visual—about stylistic or interpretative decisions that you make based on the appearance of the score, or based on calligraphy, illuminations, or formatting? Anything that you grapple with the visual? How does that manifest itself as a singer?

**SB:** I think things like illuminations, different kinds of notations—sometimes it's quickly written, other times it's very elegant—that's mostly subliminal. In fact we did a project here. Do you know about Thomas Schmidt? He's now at the University of Manchester. He's had this project, you can look it up. It's called PROMS. It's a bit strange. It's called The Production and Reading of Music Sources and it's all about looking at all the music that was either printed or written in manuscript from I think it's 1480-1530, or something. And in a way it's the idea he wants us to just make a complete inventory of all those sources which apparently has never been done before, a real systematic description of every single instance of polyphony and then all the different aspects. Is it a big book? What's the size of the book, basically, that the music was notated?

But one of the aspects of his project was also the differences in the way that music is presented. How does that relate to the performance situation? We actually did some work together with our group with him. We were sort of the guinea pigs. I was quite involved with that whole project. And we did for instance, here in Leuven where I am, we did actually a three-day workshop with singers of our group, and a bunch of musicologists, and some other students here from Leuven, singing for instance one piece from three or four different situations: a big choirbook, a small choirbook, a printed partbook, different situations. How does that change the way that you sing the music? It was really interesting.

The funny thing was, we had these guinea pigs here, and the musicologists could actually ask the singers, "what was that like for you?" And the singers gave all the wrong answers, "Meh, wasn't really that much different," or "the notes and whatever, if it's really clear or really messy..." I was like "no, that's not what you're supposed to say!" So I thought that was kind of interesting. It wasn't quite as incredibly deep and inspiring as you would like to think, theoretically. On the other hand, I just don't think that they're describing the situation. They're not aware of things. That's my feeling, but who am I to put words into their mouth? Ask them at point black, and they'd say "ah, it doesn't matter, just give me the music and I'll get on with it." Okay so, I say that that stuff is subliminal. But I think it's also a bit subjective and some people are more inspired by it than other people.

But I think that there are other levels, and I've talked about it already, the fact of having no barlines, and the fact of having these compact lines. That really does make you experience the music in a different way. Other things like ligatures and chant. Chant is another whole aspect of what we do. Chant is a big part of what we do. It's kind of the basic motor, just as it

was in those days. Everybody sang chant all of the time, and when it was important, they sang polyphony. Polyphony is based on chant, and chant is what forms your whole way of singing. Also the way that chant looks, the gestures that are in the neumes, but also the difference between neumes, the really old style or square notes which are much more square and clear. Personally I think that's got to have some influence on the way that you sing.

For instance, in chant we've been going recently, very much, for a very rhythmic—like with a beat to it—chant; and very melodic, and not this kind of recitative, free chant which is kind of the Solesmes style. Somehow the chant and polyphonic line is chant, basically. Then they approach each other on some level. Now there is no way to prove whether that's how they did it or not, but I think it's quite cool. The reason I want to do that is because I think that looking at the chant, it invites you to sing it in that way. It's very square and looks a lot like mensural notation. So those aspects of what you see influence how you're going to make the line work. I do think that that has a real direct influence on the way you perform. That's not just something subliminal, and as I say, the fact that your part is separate, you can't see the other parts. Again, that really invites you to have an independent line of your own.

**Jl:** Does the custos effect you or other performers?

**SB:** Oh yeah, they're fantastic.

**Jl:** I wish we didn't do away with them!

**SB:** I always used to write them in when I sang from modern scores. Always, always wrote a little thing at the end of the line, a word or a note that was a bit of a surprise. You must do the same thing.

**Jl:** Sure, absolutely if there's a tricky leap or something.

**SB:** And people who are doing this for the first time, they're not aware of the custos. They think it's something goofy. But the rest of us who have been doing it for a while, you use it because you never know when that clef is going to jump on you. So you really want to know, well what's my first note of the next line in relation to my last one of this line? What interval are we going to sing? And when you get to the beginning of the next line, ok, now I'll just go from there. They're absolutely useful. It's a really valuable part of this notation system.

**Jl:** Absolutely. Will you walk me through the process of performing a piece? How do you first choose facsimiles? How do you rehearse, specifically when you experience those incongruent moments that you mentioned? And finally, the actual performance of the work.

**SB:** Okay, the choice of the sources. You come up with some concept for whatever reason, you have a brainwave. I want to do this. Or do a program and that suggests another program. Sometimes it's the actual source. Like right now, our whole thing is about 's-Hertogenbosch and Jheronimus Bosch. The big celebration that's going on right now, and that's our city, and they have these fantastic choirbooks there. So we are doing programs that are in function of those choirbooks. We go to those books and see what's in them and do programs. We also did a program of the Requiems by [Johannes] Ockeghem and [Pierre de] la Rue. Well, Ockeghem,



there is only that one, but la Rue there were several. And we kind of looked around and chose the one that we seemed to like most, but I think we could have easily sung it from a different one.

We doctor the scores, so in a funny way, we're not always being true to a particular score. For instance, this Clemens [non Papa] project, we did it with Joshua Rifkin, and he was quite fierce about this. He wanted to have an ideal score and we were working very specifically from a score that was here in Brussels. We did the project once and then he started looking closer at the text especially, the text underlay, and really found out that this source that we were working with wasn't the best solution for a lot of the text by a long shot. So then we just went through, and we made lots and lots of changes to the text. So in that sense, it's a choice you make. Sometimes it's about the source, and we want to sing what's in this source. And sometimes it's really we want to get to an urtext of some sorts that might be a compromise between different sources.

In that sense, I have no qualms at all about proceeding from the modern complete works edition of somebody, where a kind of ideal score has been invented, and projecting that back on a particular score. But that's a decision you make. And you could also make the decision, and we do that sometimes, and saying "no, I want to do this score," even if it's wrong or has some funny things about it. "I want to sing the way these guys would have sung from this book." I don't have a hard-and-fast choice about that. It's just like the other question, "do you try to sing the ideal performance for this particular work, or do you want to sing this particular work the way it would have been sung at a certain place in a certain time?"

For instance, now we're singing a [Pierre de] la Rue mass that's in a book in 's-Hertogenbosch. We're really in to this whole linguistic thing. La Rue is a francophone. He's at the court. It's a totally highfalutin French culture. They would have used French latin, and had a very refined, flowing, an unaccented way of singing. But now it's in a book in a Dutch-speaking part of the world, that's very clearly Dutch, nothing French there at all. Let's assume that different places had different linguistic traditions. That there's no reason why in Brabant, quite far north, they would be singing with a French accent in their church. So now we're singing this mass with sort of Dutch accented inflection. The vowels are Dutch and the accentuation of the text is Dutch. We might actually be going against the spirit of the piece, conceived in a French spirit and now we are doing it in a Dutch way.

So that's a choice you make. You either say I want to do the ideal performance of this piece or I want to do this piece as it might have been done in this place. Again, for me it's a choice. I mean I think in a perfect world you would always go for the ideal version. Try to make the piece really shine up as well as possible because that's what [Pierre de] la Rue had in his head. He had these French sounds and this French cadence and that's why he wrote it the way he wrote it. But I think it can be cool, in a different context, to turn in to a different piece, that maybe rubs a little bit against the piece. So those are performance choices. But your question was about actually choosing the facsimiles. There are different reasons to choose facsimiles. Sometimes specifically because you want to work from that one and sometimes because that's the one that worked best of the two.

Then in terms of the rehearsal process, we again cheat. That is, I always send the modern scores with the old ones. Although I must say, the group I have now, we've been pretty stable for quite a while and I think they don't need the modern scores very much. What I do say—and I say this to them for sure, and I also say it to people who are doing courses who have never done it before—and that is, "I'm sending you the modern scores for problem solving."

Because if you don't know how long that rest is, and especially ligatures and things...don't get the system and there's weird notational problems that you can't figure out, you can go to the modern, and solve it, and go back. That's the way we have always worked with this group.

For instance, Valerie Horst, she's very much against this. She says it encourages the idea that the old notes are an earlier version of the score. Of course this is not exactly true, right? It gives people the wrong impression. When she gives courses, there's never a modern score anywhere nearby. They go right from zero and she teaches the basic rules of the notation and you just build it from there. You build this and get in to their world and you forget your world. Actually, that's the way you should go. But again, we're—she's working with amateurs and having fun and just trying to introduce them to that world—we're trying to get professional concerts. Unfortunately, at least the stage that we're at now, we have to make these compromises. That's one of the compromises, is to do it that way. But as I say, I think most of our guys now, they don't, and as much as they prepare their music at all, which in some cases isn't probably as good as it could be.

There's a couple of guys in there, I can think of one in particular who, he figured out at some point, "Oh, I can do this...I can read this music...I can come to rehearsal." Basically looks through music, "Nah...oh this might be a problem." You know the way you do with a modern Renaissance concert? You don't practice. People don't practice Renaissance music, I don't think. If you're going to sing a song cycle, or the solos in the *St. Matthew Passion*, you practice. Right? But if you're going to sing a shit-load of Palestrina. Who sits there and finds a piano, or some place? It's actually quite hard to do in a way. It's so abstract. And then you want to hear the other voices, and you can't hear them. Whatever. There are those in the group now who are at the point where they can pretty much come in and sing this stuff. That's where you want to get to.

That means that the modern notes are just an egg. This is certainly what I want to say to those in courses, or are really getting in to this for the first time: I really encourage them to learn the piece from the old notes. And especially not what people tend to have the desire to do is, "you know what, I'll learn the piece from the modern notes and then when I really got it, and then I'll go to the old notes and then I'll have no trouble with the old notes." And to me this whole thing of what you see is what you sing is "no, no!" You want to relate that sound to that image as soon as possible. Just don't even start with the barlines and all that stuff. It doesn't even help you that much, I find. Polyphony is too abstract to remember everything that you did from those modern notes when you go to the old notes. It's much better as soon as you can relate that sound and that text and everything to the look of those notes on the page. So in that sense, I really encourage not looking at the modern notes.

By the way, the same thing goes for me as a conductor. That's a bigger ask. I sing in the group and conduct. It's one of the physical situations of our group which I think was fairly common in the time, probably not always. There were probably old conductors that couldn't sing anymore, but kept conducting. It means that you have to make a decision. I can be the singer, and sing my part, and sort of try to learn the piece through my ears and get the sense. It goes quite slowly that way. Or, and what we've tended to do in this group, is at least in the early stages, that I'll conduct from a modern score. So that if there's people making mistakes, you can find them in a hurry. And the sense of the big structure, you can get that more clearly. But I tend to not do that if possible. I would rather flail around and not know the piece very well, than being stuck in this separate world.

You're not in the same world with the other guys. The way you do that, your whole sense of the piece is different. You say things to them, then when you go back to your own part and start singing. You say, "Why would I say that to them? That's not what you're looking at." They don't have any sense of it. "This is the place where everybody comes in on that beat..." They don't know that. Especially in the beginning, they don't know that. When you're doing it from the old score, and everyone's discovering that together. It's more time consuming, and that's what I say this whole thing, it goes slowly in the beginning and then goes further at the end. I would like to, as much as possible, do it from the choirbook or the partbook, as early as possible. But often in the very, very early stages, it's useful to be working from the modern because you can solve problems so much faster.

**Jl:** Stratton, you've touched upon the ceiling that choirs, especially professional, can reach rather quickly after reading a piece the first or second time. What are some of your experiences with bursting through the ceiling by using facsimile editions, either in rehearsal or performance?

**SB:** It's hard to think of specific instances. It's more of a general thing. As I say, when it really works, I get this sense of this organism. It becomes one creature. It has all these different aspects to it and it just kind of moves together. That's a sensation I get doing it the way we do it, but I haven't had that often singing from modern scores. Especially that difference of the choirbook set up as opposed to the line up. But the line up is much more a clear, clinical thing with the separate voices and every body doing their thing. Whereas you get this kind of teamwork, and this trading around of melodies within the group when you do it from the facsimile.

It's hard to pinpoint specific things. It's more moments that you're suddenly singing in parallel tenths with the bass and you become aware of that. The structure of the piece jumps out at you. If you see it on the paper it's like, "Eh, I can see that. That's no big deal." Whereas when you're singing this way, you might not notice it first because you're so fixated on just getting your own notes right. And then suddenly, your perspective widens and then you click in to, "Oh my God, ok, we all come in together at that moment." You're usually discovering the piece. I think of it often as this idea of a blind person feeling their way forward, and you find stuff, and you discover that you didn't know it was there.

The first time you sing it, you don't know what's going to happen. All you can see is your own notes, but you have no idea the next note you sing. You don't know how it's going to relate to those other parts. I'm not going to say that everybody is capable of reading a full score and always looking ahead, but you can do it just enough so that you can be ready for when you see a moment of homophony or you see that now we're going to have one, two, three, four parts coming in separately. You can see it. You can see it in a few bars that this is going to happen. Whereas with the thing here, you just see your own notes. I'm just going to start singing. Again, it's a tactile thing of really having these sounds and people coming at you that you weren't expecting.

That's not like an anecdote of it particularly happening at a certain time, but that's the situation that arises again and again. It's cool. You can sing a piece, especially this music is so good. You can discover relationships between things, after you've sung it twenty times, some new thing that you never noticed before. Because in a way, the permutations and combinations of polyphony are pretty much endless. You're always finding new things and especially pieces that are well written. We did this Obrecht mass that we did a big project around. And it's not

even a famous mass. It's his *St. Donatian Mass* that we did. At the beginning we were all like, "Eh...I guess it's ok." We did it because it was a project we had been asked to do. And then we sang it again, and we sang it many times on tour. We recorded it, made a video, and we did everything with it. Every time we sang it, it only got better. It was just more and more satisfying the more you did it. You never tired of all the little things that happened between the voices. It's a very dense piece, like Obrecht is, with lots of little details going over and over and over. You only go further in to it basically. I do think that the way we sing encourages that idea of going further in to a piece.

**Jl:** One final question, you've talked about it for the last hour, why should we do this? Why should we engage with original sources and notation? What is its impact on both the performers and audience, on modern eyes and ears?

**SB:** I've touched on in terms of the performers a bunch of the different issues. And again, why should we do it? As I say, I don't say that you should do it. It's a free world, a free country, at least parts of it anyway. Nobody has to do anything. As far as I remember, there was this thing called early music and it had a certain approach. When it comes to Renaissance music, this seems to fit in to that approach. So it seems normal to me that at least someone should be doing it. And it even seems to be slightly strange that not a whole lot of people are doing it. As I say, I get what the difficulties are. I also get that there are those who would say it's not a big enough payoff to do it this way. So whatever, that's as it is.

In terms of the audience, what you hope is that they're more exciting performances. I know it cuts both ways a little bit. For instance, there is one very practical thing with the choirbook. It's like an obstacle between us and the audience. It was not conceived for the concert situation, the music stand. We've been experimenting with different ways, turning it sideways a bit or trying to make it lower, and we've been thinking about using video with screens.

**Jl:** Like an organ recital!

**SB:** Yeah. Or having them in the middle with the audience around you so people can actual see the music some times. We have to get creative that way. In a way it's not very congenial to performance. That could be another reason why people don't do it. By the way that music stand itself is a hassle. We have this very weird solution where we have a music stand that screws apart and goes in to a suitcase so we can take it everywhere. We can put it on a plane. But does every group in the world have to invent this weird music stand? That's a physical thing, it's another reason not to do it.

There's also this sort of audience thing. You've got your audience sitting there and you have this group of people singing towards the audience, and it's back and forth. It's a classic concert situation. What we do creates this barrier to some extent. There's that going on. But there's obviously an upside to it. It's kind of cool in terms of the way we stand. The way we're set up on stage, it isn't the normal way. It's kind of a quirky way. You've probably seen the Huelgas Ensemble standing in a circle. Stile Antico does the same thing, and then the circle turns and everybody is standing on the outside. It's part of the charm of the group is they've got this cool way that they set up.

And the only difference there is that their cool way is just like something somebody made up to be cool. Ours isn't to be cool. It's the way they did it. It just turns out, it is kind of cool. So that's the upside, right? It is neat to see everybody standing and looking at this book. People come afterwards and want to see what's in the book and are intrigued by that. Also, that's part of the early music thing, I guess. It's not the main thing for me, but there is this sort of *frisson* of this is the way they did it.

We've got a violin. It's got gut strings on it. That's the way they did it. It's transporting you out of modern times in to some other time. That's the conceit of early music and of performance practice, one of the things. I've never been a fan of that. I still think the only reason you should ever do any of this is to make the music better and not to give people their jollies to think that they're now not in the twenty-first century, but they're being transported to another time. But to be honest, I think classical music...

\*SKYPE CONNECTION LOST\*

**Jl:** Stratton? I lost you. You were discussing the relationship between authenticity and the desire to make the music better.

**SB:** Right, that's what I espouse. I understand, and actually I'm not really against the idea that in early music there is this kind of cool thing that happens when you're hearing a voice from a very different time and at a very different place. It's kind of a romantic notion. It's taking you out of your space where you are now and then teleporting you back in to fifteenth century Flanders or at least you get that sense that you are hearing a voice that's coming from somewhere far away and exotic. It's very direct and right there. I don't think there's anything wrong with that either. I think that our way of performance does have some aspects of that to it.

I just think you have to be careful. If that's really what it's about, then you're kind of missing the point because ultimately it's still music and should be moving people's emotions or souls or whatever it is. You hope that the way you perform is going to be in the interest of making that better, as opposed to the worst case scenario—sterile, antiquated performances that are supposedly "ok" because they are historically correct. Instead, they are boring and stupid. That's what you don't want to have. If you can have both, then that's what we all want, right? We want historically correct, but "why?" because it makes the music way better. It makes it more direct and can really speak to people. Hopefully, we get close to the music, closer to the music, to the source, and hopefully that brings the listener closer to the music.

APPENDIX E  
PERFORMANCE EDITION

31.

Mr. Wm. Bird

Tristi-tia et an-xi - e-tas et an-xi-e-tas Tristi-tia  
 et an-xi-e-tas oc-cu-pa-ve-runt ij. in-te-ri-o-ra me-a. in-te-ri-o-ra me - a  
 et an-xi-e-tas oc-cu-pa-ve-runt ij. in-te-ri-o-ra me - a in do-lo - re ij. in do-lo - re

31.

& con-te-ne-bra-ti sunt o-cu-li me - - i. o-cu-li me-i. et con-  
 te-ne-bra-ti sunt. o-cu-li me-i. ij. i. o-cu-li me - i. ij.  
 o-cu-li me - i. Væ mi-hi qui-a pec-ca - vi ij. vi  
 væ mi-hi qui-a pec-ca-vi. ij. vi. væ mi-hi qui-a pec-ca-vi. ij.  
 vi. ij. vi. qui-a pec-ca - - vi. vi.



## CRITICAL REPORT

### TRISTITIA ET ANXIETAS, *PRIMA PARS*, SUPERIUS PARTOOK

Edition based on Oxford, Christ Church, GB-Och MUS 984, folio 36r & 36v, although it does not include the end of the preceding motet—“O quam gloriosum”—nor the beginning of the *secunda pars* of “Tristitia et anxietas,” as found in Robert Dow’s partbook. Typeset unfortunately does not reflect the beautiful penmanship and calligraphy by Dow. The partbook size has been increased to 7.73” by 10”. Editorial markings have been limited to remain true to the source partbook.

### MUSIC

The original C clef has been changed to the treble clef for singers who may wish a more familiar clef; stem direction appears as in Dow’s partbook. Rests have maintained the same order and duration as Dow, but have been modernized— maxima and long rests have been converted to consecutive breve rests, for example.

### ACCIDENTALS

*Musica ficta* is suggested with accidentals above the staff.

### WORDS

Text underlay is consistent with Robert Dow’s partbook, including the use of “ij,” instructing and inviting the performer to repeat the appropriate, preceding text. Dashes have been added between syllables to aid in placement. The “ij.” sign that ends the fourth stanza, second page presents a quandary. The previous “ij.” in the stanza directly above is easily realized as “quia peccavi. quia peccavi.” However if the same pattern is applied, the singer will notice that the second iteration is one semibreve short. By consulting the Thomas East partbook, *Liber primus sacrarum cantionum quinque vocum*, the following underlay is revealed: “quia peccavi, peccavi,”. This same moment in John Baldwin’s pen (GB-Och MUS 979, folio 143), who never used “ij.”, set “quia peccavi/peccavi/” as well. The underlay was either obvious to sixteenth-century singers, or Dow invited another permutation of underlay.

John Irving

18 May 2016

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