Transactions of the RHS 29 (2019), pp. 79–103 © Royal Historical Society 2019
doi:10.1017/S0080440119000045

MUSICALISING HISTORY

By Matthew S. Champion

Gladstone Prize Winner

and

Miranda Stanyon

ABSTRACT. While there have been growing calls for historians to listen to the past, there are also significant barriers to integrating music in particular into broader historical practice. This article reflects on both the gains and difficulties of this integration, moving from an interrogation of the category of music to three case studies. These concern musical terms, compositional practices and cultures from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, revisiting some key debates in musicology: first, the highly charged language of sweetness deployed in the fifteenth century; second, connections discerned in nineteenth-century music history between medieval polyphony and contemporary attitudes towards time and authority; and, third, debate over the anti-Jewish implications of Handel's music, which we approach through his *Dixit Dominus* and a history of psalm interpretation stretching back to late antiquity. Through these case studies, we suggest the contribution of music to necessarily interdisciplinary fields including the study of temporality and emotions, but also explore how a historical hermeneutic with a long pedigree – 'diversity of times' (*diversitas temporum*) – might help to reframe arguments about musical interpretation. The article concludes by arguing that the very difficulty and slipperiness of music as a source can encourage properly reflective historical practice.

Historians need to listen to the past. This is the charge of recent developments in the history of the senses, the cultural history of music, and the burgeoning field of sound studies.[1] Why is it, then, that historians,

[1] A number of general works now address these trends, including Charles Burnett, Michael Fend and Penelope Gouk (eds.), *The Second Sense: Studies in Hearing and Musical Judgement from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century* (1991); Veit Erlmann (ed.), *Hearing Cultures: Essays on Sound, Listening, and Modernity* (Oxford, 2004); Mark M. Smith (ed.), *Hearing History: A Reader* (Athens, GA, 2004); Jane F. Fulcher (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the New Cultural History of Music* (New York, 2011); Trevor J. Pinch and Karin Bijsterveld (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Sound Studies* (New York, 2012); Michael Bull and Les Back (eds.), *The Auditory Culture Reader*, 2nd rev. edn (Oxford, 2015). Important individual studies include Alain Corbin, *Village Bells: Sound and Meaning in the Nineteenth-Century French Countryside* (New York, 1998); Emily Ann Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900–1933* (Cambridge, MA,

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

despite the substantial and growing body of literature in these fields, still find it hard to integrate music into their interpretations of past worlds?[2]

One reason for music's relative absence from scholarly work outside musicology is obvious: music demands specific skills to access and evaluate its notations, its harmonic traditions, and music-specific analytical models – Renaissance modal theory, say, or Schenkerian analysis. Then there is the drama of translation (or 'transduction') within the study of sound.[3] The representation of sound in both notation and words confronts in complicated ways the problems of representation faced by any academic discipline. How can we mediate experiences of phenomena like music in ways that pay attention to the visual and textual media of its transmission, its sounds and performances, and to the material, social and cultural worlds within which it appears?

This problem is intensified by the difficulty of locating 'music' – in a score, an historically 'informed' or 'uninformed' performance, a thickly reconstructed event, a memory, or that elusive concept, the 'work'. The category of music is neither transtemporal nor transcultural (does it include Qur'an recitations, keening rituals, or postmodern noise installations?). In other words, music's 'presence' or 'existence' seems particularly unstable – although it might better be said that sound foregrounds epistemological and ontological difficulties endemic to any historical object of study.

To compound difficulties, a strong strand in nineteenth-century thought made music a paradigm of the aesthetic. In the process, music was often constructed as escaping articulable meaning, instrumental reason and historical mediation; music is imagined as underdetermined and resistant to the verbal and hermeneutic procedures underpinning the humanities and social sciences. Paradoxically, these developments secured enormous cultural value for music, but made its study vulnerable to marginalisation and trivialisation within the academy. Historians sometimes persist in caricaturing musicologists as arcane specialists, closed formalists, or technicians who do not wish to contribute to a wider scholarly programme of integration. And we, of course, risk perpetuating another caricature by inventing a realm of 'historians' as opposed to 'musicologists', musicologists who are not already historians

2002); Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham, NC, 2003); Veit Erlmann, *Reason and Resonance: A History of Modern Aurality* (New York, 2010); Emma Dillon, *The Sense of Sound: Musical Meaning in France, 1260–1330* (New York, 2012).

[2] For a recent reflection, see Beth Williamson, 'Sensory Experience in Medieval Devotion: Sound and Vision, Invisibility and Silence', *Speculum*, 88 (2013), 1–43.

[3] In sound studies, transduction describes the transformations of sound, and of its meanings, as it moves between media and different 'energetic substrate[s] (from electrical to mechanical, for example)'. Stefan Helmreich, 'Transduction', in *Keywords in Sound* (Durham, NC, 2015), ed. David Novak and Matt Sakakeeny, 222.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of sound, art, performance, politics, economics, devotion, liturgy and more.[4]

A final observation: the knowledge required to understand music notations, and traditions of elite conoisseurship associated particularly with Western art music, has meant that many historians have found the languages of sound and soundscape more congenial to analysing experiences of the world as heard across the social spectrum. We absolutely agree that the study of sound is critical to rich historical practice. But sound includes music, and we can miss critical aspects of social and cultural life if we do not analyse all facets of the sonic world.

What does this mean for our arguments here about music and history? Firstly, we will not use a language of novelty: current generations are not the first to think historically about music. Rather, a language of amplification and interaction between disciplines and methodologies will help us continue the task of understanding music's roles within integrative interpretations of the past. Secondly, engagements with particular compositions and techniques (like the ones discussed in the following) should be located within broader thinking about how 'music' is positioned as 'music'. This will involve considering music's changing others and its partners: from sound itself, noise, silence, chant, language and emotion, to ratio, astronomy, geometry, mathematics and magic.[5] Thirdly, we need to think about how our histories can be musicalised, to consider how music might contribute to and modify histories which seek to unite the study of culture with its material and social settings. In what follows, we fail to perform these tasks adequately. But we hope the failure is productive and will contribute to wider attempts to musicalise history.

Our argument is divided into three parts. We begin with some forms of fifteenth-century music and the language used to describe them. This section gives in miniature some of the problems in approaching music as a subject of historical investigation. More pointedly, it suggests how fifteenth-century theories of diversity might offer resources for creative

[4] For a survey of integrative moves within musicology, see Jane F. Fulcher, 'Introduction: Defining the New Cultural History of Music, Its Origins, Methodologies, and Lines of Inquiry', in *The Oxford Handbook of the New Cultural History of Music*, ed. Jane F. Fulcher (New York, 2011), 1–14.

[5] See, for example, Gary Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Towards a Historiography of Others* (Chicago, 1993); Penelope Gouk, *Music, Science and Natural Magic in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven, 1999); Elizabeth Eva Leach, *Sung Birds: Music, Nature, and Poetry in the Later Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 2007); Nicky Losseff and Jennifer R. Doctor, *Silence, Music, Silent Music* (Aldershot, 2007); Karin Bijsterveld, *Mechanical Sound: Technology, Culture, and Public Problems of Noise in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA, 2008); Georgina Born, 'For a Relational Musicology: Music and Interdisciplinarity, beyond the Practice Turn', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 135 (2010), 205–43.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

historicising responses to music, then and now. The second section continues to interrogate fifteenth-century music, widening to imagine a musicalisation of the history of time, and a history of music informed by research on temporality. We then turn, by means of an interpretive tradition strong in fifteenth-century culture, to the musicalisation of psalm interpretation, taking as our case study a single verse of Psalm 109/110. Uniting a hermeneutic of diversity with a long history of this psalm, this final section continues to explore how reflection on past sounds can contribute to other areas of history, in this case histories of emotions, religions and temporalities.

I

In fifteenth-century Europe, polyphonic music was changing. Historians of music have somewhat obsessively turned to a passage from Martin le Franc's *Le Champion des Dames* to discuss the possible influence of an English polyphonic style (associated with composers such as John Dunstaple (*c.* 1390–1453) on Burgundian composers like Gilles Binchois (*c.* 1400–1460) and Guillaume Du Fay (*c.* 1397–1474):[6]

> For they have a new way
> of making lively concord,
> in loud and soft music,
> in *fainte*, in *pause*, and in *muance*.
> And they have taken up something of the
> English style [or manner], and followed Dunstable;
> This is why wonderful pleasure makes
> Their song joyful and noteworthy [or memorable].[7]

[6] See, recently, David Fallows, *Henry V and the Earliest English Carols: 1413–1440* (Abingdon and New York, 2018), 237–49; Lisa Colton, *Angel Song: Medieval English Music in History* (Abingdon and New York, 2017), 190–210; also Margaret Bent, 'The Musical Stanzas in Martin Le Franc's *Le Champion des Dames*', in *Music in Medieval Manuscripts: Paleography and Performance*, ed. John Haines and Randall Rosenfeld (Aldershot, 2004), 91–127; Rob C. Wegman, 'New Music for a World Grown Old: Martin Le Franc and the "Contenance Angloise"', *Acta Musicologica*, 75 (2003), 201–41; Reinhard Strohm, 'Music, Humanism and the Idea of a "Rebirth" of the Arts', in *Music as Concept and Practice in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Reinhard Strohm and Bonnie J. Blackburn (Oxford, 2001), 368–85; Christopher Page, 'Reading and Reminiscence: Tinctoris on the Beauty of Music', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 49 (1996), 2–4; Philip R. Kaye, *The "Contenance Angloise" in Perspective: A Study of Consonance and Dissonance in Continental Music, c. 1380–1440* (New York, 1989); David Fallows, 'The *Contenance Angloise*: English Influence on Continental Composers of the Fifteenth Century', *Renaissance Studies*, 1 (1987), 189–208; Sylvia W. Kenney, *Walter Frye and the Contenance Angloise* (New Haven, 1964).

[7] Lines 16265–72, translation from Bent, 'Musical Stanzas'. Note, however, the English style or manner might also be translated as the 'countenance of angels/Angles' as in Colton, *Angel Song*, 204.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

What might have been meant by describing consonance as 'lively' (*frisque*) or music as 'joyous' (*joieux*)? How do we historicise terms like this? The history of musicological discussions of this passage shows just how vexed such questions can be. One contested explanation is that Dunstaple allowed 'imperfect' thirds and sixths into the range of acceptable consonances, thus marking a change from earlier 'perfect' harmonies. Others dispute the passage's reference to harmonic change, and see it evoking performance style, or as not necessarily reflecting any 'real' change in practice at all. Whatever we make of these debates, the passage does deploy a range of words to describe experiences of music – but the sounds described seem to slip beyond our grasp.

If we turn from the *Champion des Dames* to the evidence of musical notation, we face similar problems. The famous fifteenth-century composer associated with Cambrai Cathedral, Guillaume Du Fay, seems to have set texts relating to peace and unity using a technique known as *faux bourdon*, where (usually) two notated voices moving in parallel sixths were supplemented by an improvised third voice.[8] This might suggest that Du Fay linked such sonorities with order, harmony and stability.[9] *Faux bourdon* is known to have been used frequently in Cambrai's liturgy, but how might listeners have experienced it? One contemporary who gives some indication of his reception of choral music at Cambrai is the cathedral's dean, Gilles Carlier (*c.* 1400–1472). In the 1450s, Carlier reflected on the role of liturgical music in a short treatise, the *Tractatus de duplici ritu cantus ecclesiastici in divinis officiis* (Treatise on the Twofold Practice of Church Music in the Divine Offices).[10] The treatise repeatedly refers to 'sweet' (*dulcis*) and 'jubilant' music. Its opening specifically describes the 'sweet jubilation (*iubilatio*) of harmoniously blended voices', clearly referring to a variety of elaborate ecclesiastical music celebrating divine blessings.[11]

Carlier's theorisation of 'sweet jubilation' enlarges, and goes beyond, the connotations of unity and brightness possibly associated with Du

[8] For technical debates, see Fallows, *Henry V and the Earliest English Carols*, 72–83.

[9] Willem Elders, 'Guillaume Dufay's Concept of Faux-Bourdon', *Revue Belge de Musicologie/Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Muziekwetenschap*, 43 (1989), 179, 183. Craig M. Wright, 'Performance Practices at the Cathedral of Cambrai 1475–1550', *Musical Quarterly*, 64 (1978), 295–328.

[10] Reproduced in J. Donald Cullington and Reinhard Strohm, *'That Liberal and Virtuous Art': Three Humanist Treatises on Music* (Newtownabbey, 2001), 31–57 (hereafter Carlier, *Tractatus*). See further Matthew S. Champion, *The Fullness of Time: Temporalities of the Fifteenth-Century Low Countries* (Chicago, 2017), 90–106.

[11] On varieties of elaborate music and debates over its worth, see Ulrike Hascher-Burger, *Gesungene Innigkeit. Studien zu einer Musikhandschrift der Devotio moderna (Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Ms. 16 H 34, olim B i 13)* (Leiden, 2002), 185–205; Cullington and Strohm, *'That Liberal and Virtuous Art'*, 13–14; Rob C. Wegman, *The Crisis of Music in Early Modern Europe, 1470–1530* (New York, 2005), esp. 49–51.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Fay's *faux bourdon*. Sometimes referred to in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century sources as a quality of English singing, jubilation here more broadly relates to a theological tradition found in Augustine's (354–430) *Enarrationes in Psalmos* and elsewhere.[12] Augustine's use of the term *iubilatio* is connected with a joyous response to God characterised by both 'sighing' and 'singing'. Sweet jubilation and longing for God commingle. The relationship of the sweet music of jubilation to wider Augustinian emotional vocabularies becomes clearer as Carlier goes on to quote directly from Augustine's *Confessions* (Book 9.6). Augustine confesses that he 'wept at [God's] hymns and canticles, pierced to the quick by the voices of thy sweet-sounding church'. While for Augustine the sweet sound of the church was marked not by polyphony but by plainchant hymnody, we might say that for both writers *dulcis* is a polyphonic concept. For the 'voices of Thy sweet-sounding church' effect both jubilation and tears. All this indicates something of the semantic complexity of musical sweetness, which in medieval traditions could often link joy and sorrow through the 'sweetness' of Christ's passion and the taste of the Eucharist, events which combined suffering and sorrow with redemption and joy.[13]

The rich, allusive and imprecise language used to describe music within medieval liturgical and theological discourses draws attention to the crucial observation that responses to music are framed by the situation in which it is heard. Augustine's emotional response to hymnody is framed by his narrative setting, grounded in his discussion of sin and God's graciousness. Augustine was, of course, also aware of music's potential for different effects, arguing that music could direct the heart towards God or ensnare the soul in sensual distraction. Carlier similarly indicated that responses to music could not be essentialised. Following his citation of Augustine, he immediately acknowledged that responses to music would differ according to 'rank, person, time and place'.[14]

This potentially radical language of diversity has recently been traced by Carlo Ginzburg to origins in the writings of Paul and Augustine.[15] In *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine argued that differences in time, place and

[12] See Bonnie J. Blackburn, 'Music and Festivities at the Court of Leo X: A Venetian View', *Early Music History*, 11 (1992), 14–17; Ulrike Hascher-Burger, 'Music and Meditation: Songs in Johannes Mauburnus's *Rosetum exercitiorum spiritualium*', *Church History and Religious Culture*, 88 (2008), 361–4.

[13] See Mary Carruthers, 'Sweetness', *Speculum*, 81 (2006), 999–1013; Friedrich Ohly, *Süsse Nägel der Passion. Ein Beitrag zur theologischen Semantik* (Baden-Baden, 1989).

[14] Carlier, *Tractatus*, 23.

[15] Carlo Ginzburg, 'The Letter Kills: On Some of the Implications of 2 Corinthians 3:6', *History and Theory*, 49 (2010), 71–7. Compare Mary Curruthers, '*Varietas:* A Word of Many Colours', *Poetica* (2009), 45–9.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

person should shape the interpretation of texts and acts.[16] As Klaus Schreiner has shown, this hermeneutic became increasingly important in the later Middle Ages.[17] It was applied to music by Carlier's uncle, the influential theologian and reformer Jean Gerson (1363–1429).[18] For Gerson, the value of music depended on the relationship of the soul with God.[19] In this way, the 'same' song might be the old song of a sinful soul for one singer, and in the mouth of another the song of the new creation and a soul properly directed to God.[20] Music's meaning is not fixed, but varies according to person, time and setting.[21]

If we return to the implications of this excursus for the modern historian, we can see that understanding fifteenth-century polyphony requires not only knowledge of particular sounds (e.g. intervals of thirds and sixths), but also a sense of their aural quality in relation other sounds (e.g. fourths and fifths), and, further, the history of their use in earlier polyphony – we need something like a 'period ear', attuned to earlier sonic horizons of expectation.[22] Understanding, then, requires interpretation of these aural qualities alongside the cultural structures which helped give these sounds meaning. We have drawn attention to only some of the linguistic and theological possibilities here; visual culture, social networks and spatial and performative dimensions remain unexamined.[23] From the inherently slippery figurative representation of aural qualities, to more specific but less evocative technical designations ('third' or 'sixth'), the discussion of fifteenth-century music is fraught with theoretical and practical complexity.[24]

A specific question for historians dealing with music is how we relate to these vocabularies, both the technical (sixth, fifth, etc.) and the qualitative

[16] Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, ed. Roger P. H. Green (Oxford, 1995), III.35–78.

[17] Klaus Schreiner, '"*Diversitas temporum*" – Zeiterfahrung und Epochengliederung im späten Mittelalter', in *Epochenschwelle und Epochenbewusstsein*, ed. Reinhart Herzog and Reinhart Koselleck (Munich, 1987), 381–428.

[18] See Isabelle Fabre, *La Doctrine du chant du cœur de Jean Gerson: édition critique, traduction et commentaire du 'Tractatus de canticis' et du 'Canticordum au pélerin'* (Geneva, 2005).

[19] For the following, see Joyce L. Irwin, 'The Mystical Music of Jean Gerson', *Early Music History*, 1 (1981), 194–7.

[20] *Tractatus secundis de canticis* (Second Treatise on Songs), section 23, reproduced in Fabre, *La Doctrine*, 309–476, here 383.

[21] *Ibid.*, 395–6. Also, see Irwin, 'Mystical Music', 199.

[22] Compare Shai Burstyn, 'In Quest of the Period Ear', *Early Music*, 25 (1997), 692–701; in relation to sound, Jan Missfelder, 'Period Ear: Perspektiven einer Klanggeschichte der Neuzeit', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 38 (2012), 21–47.

[23] For fuller attempts to situate music in a fifteenth-century context, see Andrew Kirkman, *The Cultural Life of the Early Polyphonic Mass* (Cambridge, 2010).

[24] Even the 'technical language' of thirds and sixths must be modified by historicisations of temperament. See, for example, Rogers Covey-Crump, 'Pythagoras at the Forge: Tuning in Early Music,' in *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music*, ed. Tess Knighton and David Fallows (1992), 317–26.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(sweetness, joy, etc.). Trained musicians within the humanities have a set of skills not available to many historians. They can (typically) hear internally a melodic leap like a sixth with a variety of timbres, and (perhaps) hear sixths internally as a concurrent sonority. A choral singer might know how it *feels* when sixths and thirds are absent from the harmonic structure. For modern singers, this might feel 'bare' or 'raw'. But such apparently immediate feelings, of course, grow from particular experiences, including habituation to an harmonic tradition that values major and minor triads, with their mediating or sweetening third.[25] A historian trained in music might well internally hear individual lines of a score, although hearing these concurrently becomes increasingly difficult the more parts or lines are present. This 'internal hearing', however, is itself a fraught process with historical baggage, linked with idealising mental performance over and above the physical impermanence of external performance.[26]

Even armed with these (perhaps dubious) resources, we still face a problem of how to be convinced, or unconvinced, by a musical interpretation – how can we evaluate descriptions of sonority? This is partly a problem of expertise, but also of intellectual process. We cannot normally press a book's page to hear a recording of the score in front of us, although new technologies can help us here. Still, in the main, the author who discusses music relies either on readers conjuring up an internally heard performance, or remembering a work already heard; or presupposes that the reader has an instrument, recording or YouTube to hand to consult mid-argument. In all of these cases difficulties multiply. To take only an obvious example: sounding out fifteenth- or sixteenth-century vocal music on a twenty-first-century keyboard will bring 'anachronisms' in timbre and tuning, and technical impediments when it comes to music with, say, forty vocal lines. So the difficulties of accessing and evaluating the ephemeral physical sound of music are a barrier to scholarly conversation in their own right.

This terminology – 'physical sound' – should itself ring methodological alarm bells. Even if we can hear a choir singing a mass by a fifteenth-century composer like Du Fay, it is impossible for the performance to create the same sets of harmonic, rhythmic and textural relations

[25] See, for example, E. T. A. Hoffmann's depiction of the sweet-voiced youth 'Third' in his *Ritter Gluck* (1809/14), *Sämtliche Werke in sechs Bänden*, ed. Hartmut Steinecke et al. (Frankfurt, 1993), vol. 2.1, 24. See Miranda Stanyon '"Rastrierte Blätter, aber mit keiner Note beschrieben": The Musical Sublime and Aporias of Inscription in Hoffmann's *Ritter Gluck*', *German Quarterly*, 83 (2010), 412–30.

[26] Gary Tomlinson, 'Musicology, Anthropology, History', in *The Cultural Study of Music. A Critical Introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton (New York and London, 2003), 39–40. On performance, see Carolyn Abbate, 'Music – Drastic or Gnostic?', *Critical Inquiry*, 30 (2004), 505–36.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

created and heard in the fifteenth century by particular voices and instruments in particular listening environments.[27] Nor can one recreate the situations and communities of hearing in the particular places and times when music was heard. These difficulties do not, however, bar the historian and musicologist from reconstructing a diversity of interpretations of musical practices, nor bar musicians from reinterpreting works in ways not entirely divorced from the sounds of the past.[28] These attempts must be made in the knowledge that the musical past cannot be recaptured, any more than other alterities.

II

How then might we integrate musical analysis into the understanding of the past? In the following, we pursue one possible answer, through a particular case study: we consider what music might bring to the history of time. We begin with a hoary old musicological chestnut: the relationship between music and scholasticism. In his *Geschichte der Musik* (1864–8), the musicologist August Wilhelm Ambros (1816–1876) drew analogies between structures of fifteenth-century liturgical music and the methods of scholasticism.[29]

> In these [composers], though, here and there, something can still be sensed which has a kind of analogy with scholasticism – at that time already being overcome by an altered world view – and its 'nit-picking, word-rummaging method' (Schopenhauer). Some lengthy passages of music above a motive in the tenor consisting of just a few notes taken from Gregorian chant, constantly repeated or returning under changing time signatures, upon which motive the most artful canonic imitations and every possible contrapuntal subtlety are then built in the contrapuntal voices, can recall quite directly the intellectual edifices that the scholastic philosopher piled up over some thesis taken from the dogma of the church.[30]

While we would dissent from Ambros's Hegelian schematisation of history, with its negative appraisal of scholasticism, his structural

[27] On listening environments, see Dillon, *Sense of Sound*, 6–7. For recent studies engaging with acoustics and historical space, see Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti, *Sound and Space in Renaissance Venice: Architecture, Music, Acoustics* (New Haven, 2009); Bissera V. Pentcheva and Jonathan S. Abel, 'Icons of Sound: Auralizing the Lost Voice of Hagia Sophia', *Speculum*, 92 (2017), 336–60. See also the Edinburgh College of Art project 'Space, Place, Sound and Memory', www.eca.ed.ac.uk/research/space-place-sound-and-memory (accessed 19 April 2019).

[28] This is an attempt to navigate between historicist 'authenticity' and fatalistic diagnoses of history's impossibility. On this debate in relation to 'historically informed' performance, see Richard Taruskin, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (Oxford, 1995); Peter Kivy, *Authenticities: Philosophical Reflections on Musical Performance* (Ithaca, 1995); John Butt, *Playing with History: The Historical Approach to Musical Performance* (Cambridge, 2002).

[29] August Wilhelm Ambros, *Geschichte der Musik* (Leipzig, 1868), III, 8. Compare Kirkman, *Cultural Life*, 9–20.

[30] Ambros, *Geschichte der Musik*, III, 8.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

observation is significant. The method of composition from a tenor does have intriguing similarities with scholastic argument. But what are the temporal characteristics of this similarity? To answer the question, we first review the structure of a basic scholastic argument. Our example is the article from Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*: 'should songs be used in praising God?' (2.2.91.2), a text Carlier also deploys in the opening to his *Tractatus*.

The article begins with a question ('whether God should be praised with song'?). It then moves to five objections. The first opens with the negative proposition that 'it would seem that God should not be praised with song' and then cites an authority (Colossians 3:16), from which is derived the argument that humans should 'employ not corporeal but spiritual canticles'. This structure is common to the first four objections: each derives its authority from a variety of pre-existing texts. The fifth objection, however, purports to derive from experience: if singers pay too much attention to the process of chanting, and chanting makes the words less comprehensible, then the music presents a barrier to the heart's true praise of God. Then follows the *sed contra*: 'Blessed Ambrose established singing in the Church of Milan, as Augustine relates (*Confessions*, ix)'. From this authoritative statement, Aquinas moves to his answer, that music is necessary 'to arouse man's devotion towards God'. He substantiates his answer by referring to his response to the previous question (Whether God should be praised with the lips?) and drawing on the authority of Aristotle, Boethius and, finally, Augustine. The argument then replies individually to each of the five objections.

The temporal structure involved in reading scholastic argument is highly discursive; it runs to and fro (*discurrere*) between different positions. From the initial objections, the reader familiar with the method can derive the form of the positive proposition, projecting the argument's future shape. The turning point of the argument is the invocation of an authoritative text, followed by an explication and elaboration in the answer which the reader, again, already expects. The replies to the objections that conclude each section demand a mode of reading where the negative and positive arguments are held in tension, despite their temporal position at either end of the argument, and where the reader's mind oscillates between objection and reply.

Guillaume Du Fay certainly made use of argumentative principles similar to those of the scholastic tradition in a short work, *Iuvenis qui puellam*, composed in Italy around 1436/7.[31] *Iuvenis qui puellam* sets sections

[31] Alejandro Enrique Planchart, *Guillaume Du Fay: The Life and Works* (2 vols., Cambridge, 2018), I, 143–4, II, 407–8. David Fallows, *The Songs of Guillaume Dufay: Critical Commentary to the Revision of Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae, ser. 1, vol. VI* (Neuhausen–Stuttgart, 1995). For a score,

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of a letter from Pope Eugenius III (r. 1145–53) that had been incorporated into Gratian's authoritative twelfth-century collection of canon law, the *Decretum*. The sole and damaged surviving manuscript of the piece has the title 'William Du Fay's Decretal' (*Decretalis Guillermus dufay*).[32] After the legal text is stated, the piece turns to a sterile academic disputation on the subject:

> A young man, who married a girl not yet seven years old, was tempted perhaps, however, on account of human weakness, to complete that which he was not able to, although her age should have repelled him.
>
> Since therefore in doubtful matters we ought to hold to the safer course, and because she is said to have been his wife, both for the honour of the church and because of the aforesaid doubt, we order that the cousin of the girl, whom the young man married later, be separated from him.
>
> *The first argument.* It is argued against you where it is suggested by you that the attempt will be punished and not take effect; which would be clearly proved, but brevity does not permit.
>
> *Solution to the first argument.* To this I reply briefly thus: in not reciting the case which you have made against me in due form, that which is maintained by you is not open to the justice of public honour.
>
> *The second argument.* Although you have spoken well, nevertheless I argue against you. For you conclude by saying that she should be separated from him, and yet you can see the opposite in the single chapter which you cited elsewhere, under the sixth heading.
>
> *Solution to the second argument* … [manuscript incomplete][33]

Several attempts have been made to clarify the text's meaning. The least helpful attempt quasi-allegorical readings of the girl as the Council of Basel, the young man as the Duke of Savoy. Far more persuasive is the interpretation of the piece as a parody legal dispute in the tradition of satirical quodlibetal questions.[34]

In following the conventions of the law, the arrangement of Du Fay's text resembles, rather than precisely follows, scholastic argument. But, significantly, there is a stark musical contrast between the legal order *Mandamus* ('We order') and those sections of argument articulated by the objector. Du Fay set the authoritative text with breves topped with fermata marks, which have the effect of slowing the harmonic rhythm (Figure 1). The meaning of these fermatae or *cantus coronatus* (crowned song) is, again, a matter of disagreement among musicologists. Whether we take these marks to signal slow and reverent performance or as a trigger for rhythmically and melodically complex improvisation above sustained chords, the wider point remains clear: the structure of meaning effected by the sonority and fermatae at this point links

see Heinrich Besseler and David Fallows (eds.), Guillaume Dufay, *Opera Omnia*, vol. 6 (Neuhausen, 1995), 15–18.

[32] Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Mus. ms. 3224.

[33] Translation adapted from Leofranc Holford-Strevens, 'Du Fay the Poet? Problems in the Texts of His Motets', *Early Music History*, 16 (1997), 151–2.

[34] *Ibid.*, 150–7.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

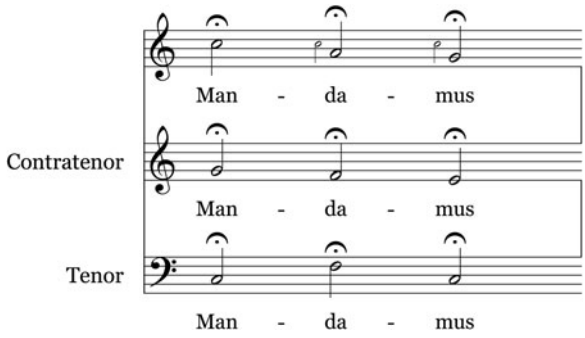


Figure 1 Measure 52, Guillaume Du Fay, *Iuvenis qui puellam*.

authority with harmonic and temporal stability (perhaps with emphatic decoration).[35]

In contrast, the first objection is set to rhythmically intricate and highly imitative polyphony between the upper voice (*cantus*) and the lower voice (*tenor*). The listener might notice the academic sophistication (and potential for sophistry) of this dense imitation. As well as having a strong implication of forward motion, created amongst other things by the numerous scalar passages and through their imitation (in modern score, measures 76ff, 85ff), the parts create a highly discursive mode of listening (Figure 2). The ear is drawn, entry by entry, to switch backwards and forwards between the initial statement and its imitation.

The appearance of such imitation and its accompanying sense of oscillation mirrors the temporal structure embedded in the typical arrangement of objection and reply in traditional medieval legal and scholastic argumentation. By contrast, those sections in which the harmonic rhythm slows and points of authority are specifically marked resemble forms of textual authority and their direct and emphatic

[35] For improvisation on *cantus coronatus*, see Charles W. Warren, '*Punctus Organi* and *Cantus Coronatus* in the Music of Dufay,' in *Dufay Quincentenary Conference*, ed. Allan W. Atlas (Brooklyn, 1976), 128–43. For wider revision and debate, see Timothy Brothers, *Chromatic Beauty in the Late Medieval Chanson: An Interpretation of Manuscript Accidentals* (Cambridge, 1997), esp. 3–5, 76, 84; Timothy J. McGee, *The Sound of Medieval Song: Ornamentation and Vocal Style* (Oxford, 1998), 104–10; Bonnie J. Blackburn, 'The Dispute about Harmony *c.* 1500 and the Creation of a New Style', in *Théorie et analyse musicales 1450–1650/Music Theory and Analysis 1450–1650*, ed. Anne Emmanuelle Ceulemans and Bonnie J. Blackburn (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2001). Some theorists associated the fermata mark with a cardinal's hat, suggesting again the mark's signalling of authority. See, for example, Anonymous, *Tractatus et compendium cantus figurati (mss London British Libr., Add. 34200; Regensburg, Proskesche Musikbibl., 98 th. 4°)*, ed. Jill M. Palmer (Stuttgart, 1990), 64.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

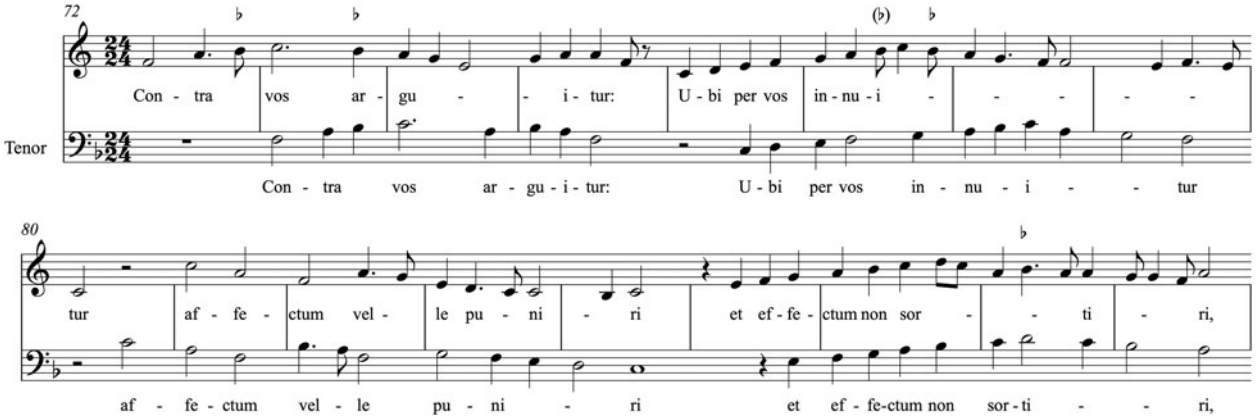


Figure 2 Measures 72–88 (*Primum argumentum*), Guillaume Du Fay, *Iuvenis qui puellam*.

statement at the heart of each question. The fermatae can even be read as analogous to citations within brackets. They not only slow the process of reading, but are also crucial markers of textual authority.

This relationship between musical and verbal structures is underscored by the form of *Iuvenis qui puellam*'s manuscript. Like almost all fifteenth-century polyphony, the song is notated in parts. Unlike score notation, where imitative parts are synchronised and surveyable at a glance, the separation of parts (for example the *cantus* and *tenor* in the first objections) requires forms of composition and transcription which mirror the discursive process of reading scholastic objections and replies. Consonances between voices must be verified and maintained across physical manuscript space, just as argumentative consonance must be maintained across scholastic argument.

The performance of the motet complicates this temporal arrangement, as various areas of the manuscript page are brought together into a single moment. The discursive patterns of listening described above curiously coincide with a synchronisation of musical parts within the flow of time. This is the same kind of temporal process which must occur as a result of scholastic reasoning: arguments made at different times in the process of the argument (objection, reply) must be placed together with the answer to form a coherent sense of the argumentative 'whole'. This movement between part and whole is a characteristic both of writing and reading scholastic logic, on the one hand, and of singing and listening to fifteenth-century polyphony, on the other.

Similar temporal structures are created by Du Fay's four-voice *Missa Ecce ancilla Domini*. The mass, written in 1464 in Cambrai, is a *cantus firmus* mass, based on the plainchants *Ecce ancilla Domini* (Behold the handmaiden of the Lord) and *Beata es Maria* (Blessed art thou, Mary).[36] It was this process of building music around earlier authoritative melodies which led Ambros to associate 'Netherlandish' composers like Du Fay with 'gothic' scholasticism.

The temporal persistence of chant's authority is embedded in musical works like *Ecce ancilla*. In the Gloria, for example, temporal persistence or permanence is signalled by the length and slow movement of the first statement of the chant (the *cantus firmus*). Against an intricate duet between cantus and contra, it enters in the tenor in slow and stable breves (measure 21, Figure 3). This entry is striking. The texture thickens from two to four voices, and rich sonorities contrast starkly with the intricate and discursive movement of the upper parts which precedes and follows. This *cantus firmus* functions in a way particularly similar to Aquinas's citation of Augustine in the section of the *Summa* analysed

[36] Planchart, *Guillaume Du Fay*, II, 603–10.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press
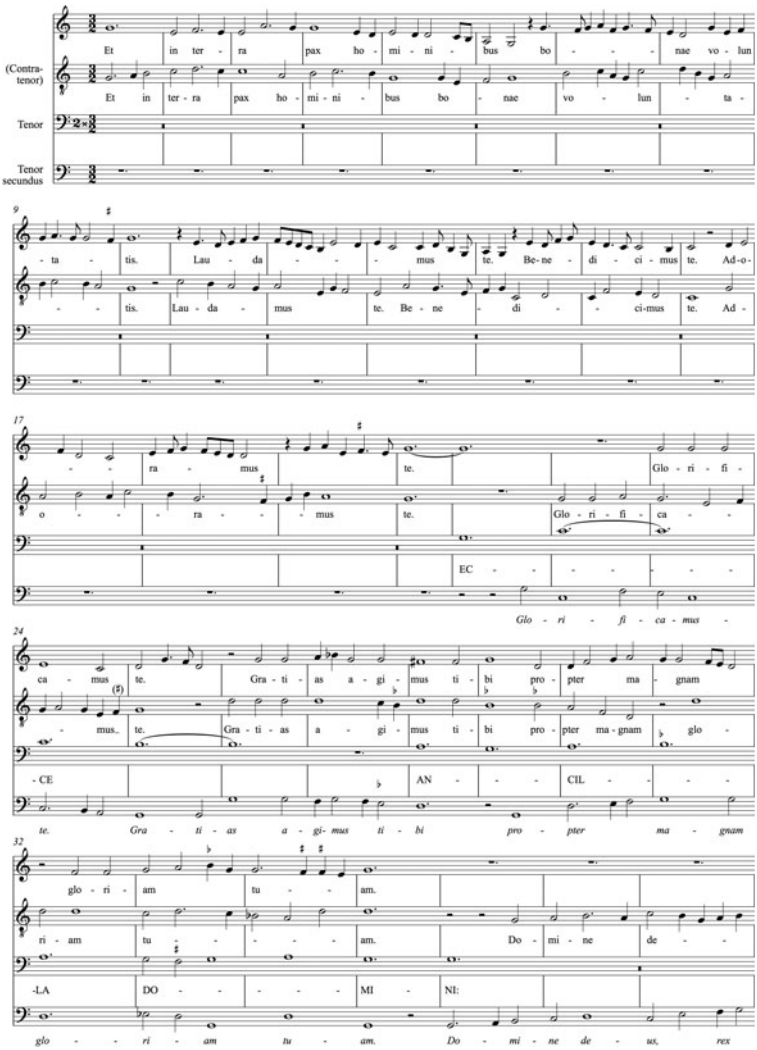


Figure 3 Measures 1–38, *Gloria*, Guillaume Du Fay, *Missa Ecce ancilla Domini*.

above. The authoritative citation appears near the centre both of the mass's four voices (in the tenor) and of the *Summa* article (in the *sed contra*). Its placement within the discursive structures of polyphony

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

mirrors the placement of authoritative proof texts within the *Summa*'s discursive oscillation between objection and reply.

The temporalities of reading, listening and citation implied by scholastic argument and by Du Fay's music also resonate with explicit arguments about time propounded within scholasticism and widely accepted in fifteenth-century learned culture. These arguments contrast synchronic and diachronic knowledge. For Aquinas, God's intellective knowledge in eternity encompasses all time, enfolding past, present and future into a single 'intellective' glance (*Summa contra gentiles* 1.66.7).[37] God's vision of time can be formulated as the relationship between a circle's central point (God's eternity) and its circumference (time). This image resonates strongly with the musical structures of *Missa Ecce ancilla*. The chant *Ecce ancilla* sits within the arc of the surrounding counterpoint. This repeated *cantus firmus* melody provides the points which harmonically define and underpin the diachronic arcs of the surrounding parts.[38]

As opposed to God's eternal intellective knowledge of time, human knowledge for Aquinas is always temporally bound: 'we see what is future because it is future with respect to our seeing, since our seeing is itself measured by time' (*De veritate* 2.12). This means that human thinking always involves 'a kind of motion, running from one thing to another' (*Summa Theologiae* 1.1.79.9; 1.1.58.3). For Aquinas, imperfect human thought involves 'partial views' from different moments being resolved into some form of 'intelligible unity'. Following this logic, we might make the case that the diversity of partial comprehensions of music makes it a human art par excellence. Yet by its modes of representing the comprehension of complex wholes, those ways of comprehending many voices in a single ear-glance (for want of a better word), music might also model ways of ascending from human discursivity, approaching an intellective understanding of the ratios of the created order. The waning of this kind of metaphysical understanding of music and harmony separates much modern musical thought from its classical and medieval forebears, and is a reminder that music is a cultural resource that extends beyond often more limited modern definitions, crossing artificial boundaries of human knowledge and praxis.

[37] See *Summa Theologiae* 1.1.10, 1.10.2.4, 1.14.13; *Compendium Theologiae*, ch. 133. For further discussion, see Champion, *Fullness of Time*, 71–2.

[38] A speculative extension of this argument could be made to *Iuvenis qui puellam*. Charles Warren has argued that the fermata originally had a referential function: the dot signifies the notated note; the arc signified the improvisatory material elaborated around it (on debates surrounding this interpretation, see n. 37 above). The fermata, then, could be seen as embodying visually the same temporal schemas which are heard in the music: the fermata is a diagram of diachronic improvisation around points of authoritative and rich harmonic stasis. Warren, '*Punctus Organi* and *Cantus Coronatus*', 132, 135–6.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The preceding discussion is only one way of approaching a history of time and music. We have suggested resonances between the temporalities of verbal texts and music, set with wider cultural structures of time; we have not properly considered, however, the difficult question of how to interpret – or even identify – conceptual 'dissonances' and lack of synchronisation between music and words. What might music tell us about the history of time that differs from that which words can tell us, and how would we articulate and maintain this 'musical' knowledge without citing authoritative (because more explicit) verbal texts?[39] (Ambros's progress-oriented discussion in fact alludes to this problem: he criticised 'scholastic' fifteenth-century polyphony for seeming old-fashioned and out-of-synch with the rest of culture, which was in the process of 'overcoming' medieval scholasticism.) And we have not touched on the performance contexts of Du Fay's music, its social production, its possible roles in forming and maintaining identity, or its possible functions as (bad) comedy in elite cultures of masculine learning. But this partial analysis nonetheless suggests one way of drawing Du Fay's piece into a wider, intermedial history of tensions between discursivity and synchronicity, dispute and authority, time and eternity in late medieval culture.

III

As numerous scholars have noted, questions of eternity and time are deeply bound up with textual interpretation in the Christian tradition. Central to this tradition are ways of reading the Hebrew scriptures as figural announcements of Christ – his advent, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension.[40] In this final section, we explore how this tradition functions in relation to the long and intermedial history of the psalm *Dixit Dominus* (Psalm 109/110). Our hope is that threads from the previous two reflections – vocabularies of affect, hermeneutics of diversity, synchrony and diachrony, eternity and time – might tie into some thoughts on the roles of music and of Jews in this story (bringing us as far as eighteenth-century music and its performances in the present).

In early Christianity, Psalm 110 became a prominent proof text for the claim that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah.[41] In the words of Augustine's influential interpretation: 'Our psalm deals with these

[39] Andrew Bowie, *Music, Philosophy, and Modernity* (Cambridge, 2007), advocates approaching music as way of thinking, rather than simply an object (and problem) for verbal thought.

[40] The classic discussion is Eric Auerbach, 'Figura', in *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature* (Manchester, 1984), 11–76.

[41] See Michel Gourges, *À la droite de Dieu. Résurrection de Jésus et actualisation du Psaume 110:1 dans le Nouveau Testament* (Paris, 1978); Ulli Roth, *Die Grundparadigmen christlicher Schriftauslegung – im Spiegel der Auslegungsgeschichte von Psalm 110* (Münster, 2010); Miriam von Nordheim, *Geboren von der Morgenröte? Psalm 110 in Tradition, Redaktion und Rezeption* (Neukirchen–Vluyn, 2008).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

promises [of the coming of Christ]. It speaks prophetically of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with such certainty and clarity that we cannot doubt that it is he who is proclaimed here.'[42]

For Augustine, the psalm's first verse, 'The Lord said to my Lord: sit at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool,' unequivocally showed David acknowledging that God the Father ('the Lord') had decreed that Jesus ('my Lord') should sit at his right hand. Asked who Jesus was, the Jews 'should have found the answer in the scriptures which they read but did not understand'; '[t]hey did not seek after [Jesus] as the Lord, for they did not recognize him as David's descendant'.[43] This failure justifies Augustine's inclusion of the Jews among Christ's enemies:

> Now you reign amid your enemies, Lord: now in this transient age while the centuries roll on, while mortal humanity propagates itself and the generations succeed each other, while the torrent of time (*torrens temporum*) slips by, now is the scepter of your power sent forth from Zion that you may hold sway in the midst of your enemies. Be Lord of them: be Lord, you son of David who are also David's Lord, be Lord amid pagans, Jews, heretics and false brethren. *Have dominion in the midst of your foes.*[44]

A particular language of time appears here: time as a torrent. For Augustine, it was this torrent that washes away the Old, allowing the new age of Christian knowledge and social order to emerge. This appearance of the torrent of time foreshadows Augustine's discussion of the psalm's enigmatic final verse, *de torrente in via bibet, propterea exaltabit caput* ('He will drink from the torrent beside the way, and therefore he will raise his head'):[45]

> Let us also contemplate him drinking from the torrent on his journey. But first, what torrent is this? The cascade of human mortality. A stream is formed by rainwater; it swells, roars, rolls swiftly, and as it surges forward it is running downward to the end of its course. The course of mortal life is like this …
>
> The torrent is the stream of birth and death, and Christ accepted it. He was born and he died; thus he *drank from the torrent beside the way*, for *he leapt up like a giant to run his course with joy* (Ps. 19:5). Because he refused to stand still and linger *in the way of the sinner* (Ps.1:1) he *drank from the torrent beside the way*, and therefore *he will raise his head*. Because he *humbled himself and was made obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross, God raised him high and gave him a name above every other name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven, on earth or in the underworld, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, in the glory of God the Father*. (Phil. 2:8–11)[46]

[42] Maria Boulding and Boniface Ramsey (eds.), *The Works of Saint Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century*, vol. III.19: *Expositions of the Psalms 99–120* (Hyde Park, NY, 2003), 263.

[43] *Ibid.*, 266, 264.

[44] *Ibid.*, 272.

[45] All translations in the *Vetus Latina* database use *torrens*. Modern translations often use 'brook' instead of 'torrent' here – 'brook' originally denoting a strongly rushing stream.

[46] Augustine, *Psalms 99–120*, 284. See also Augustine's commentary on Psalm 123/124: 'As long as this world flows on, with its succession of births and deaths, it is a torrent, and from it

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Read this way, the final verse of *Dixit Dominus* becomes the moment both of God's intense temporalisation – his incarnation, passion and death – and an affirmation of his eternity – his exultation, ascension and immortality.

This interpretation was dominant until historicist readings emerged in the nineteenth century. Even before then, its inflections changed – as Augustine himself would have it – according to time, person and place. In thirteenth-century Paris, following the famous arrival of the relic of the crown of thorns, a new liturgy was composed that featured *De torrente* as a responsory.[47] Now the exulted head was not Augustine's risen and ascended Christ, but the bloodied head of Christ on the cross, crowned, as another antiphon for the Feast has it, by Jewish men: 'Drinking of the torrent (*De torrente bibens*) of misery, the king of glory lifted up his head (*exultavit caput*), crowned with thorns of agony.'[48]

Christ suffering at Jewish hands became the keynote of the *de torrente* motif in the later Middle Ages. As others have shown, the psalm episode became attached to increasingly elaborate descriptions of Christ's passion.[49] There was precedent for this. The Jews' role in Christ's suffering was explicit in the early commentary of Cassiodorus (*c.* 485–*c.* 583), where the psalm's torrent was 'the turbulent persecution of the Jews, of which the Lord Christ drank on the way'.[50] The narrative of Jews as Christ-killers was combined with Jerome's reading of the torrent as the brook Cedron over which Christ was led to his crucifixion. This was elaborated in texts and images portraying Christ falling into, or being dragged through, the brook. Here is one account from a fifteenth-century vernacular Dutch version:

> And the cursed Jews led Jesus through the valley of Josaphat, and when they came to the bridge over the stream or brook of Cedron, they … dragged Jesus through the water so

arise persecutions. Our head drank from it first, he of whom it is said in another psalm, *He drank from the torrent beside the way*.' Jerome (*c.* 340–420) had earlier related drinking from the torrent to Christ's passion. 'Commentarioli in Psalmum CVIIII', in *S. Hieronymi Presbyteri Opera* 1.1 [CCSL 72] (Turnhout, 1959), 232; 'Tractatus de Psalmo CVIIII', in *S. Hieronymi Presbyteri Opera* 2 [CCSL 78] (Turnhout, 1958), 227–30. Hereafter Jerome, *Tractatus*. See also James H. Marrow, *Passion Iconography in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance* (Kortrijk, 1979), 104; Rudolf Berliner, 'Die Cedronbrücke als Station des Passionsweges Christi', in *Rudolph Berliner (1886–1967): 'The Freedom of Medieval Art' und andere Studien zum christlichen Bild*, ed. Robert Suckale (Berlin, 2003), 24.

[47] Judith Blezzard, Stephen Ryle and Jonathan Alexander, 'New Perspectives on the Feast of the Crown of Thorns', *Journal of the Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society*, 10 (1987), 23–53.

[48] Cambrai Mediathèque Municipale, Ms. 38, f. 428v; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms lat. 15182, f. 291r, f. 293r.

[49] Marrow, *Passion Iconography*; Berliner, 'Die Cedronbrücke'.

[50] 'Expositio in Psalmum CIX', in *Magni Aurelii Cassiodori Senatoris Opera* 2.2 [CCSL 98] (Turnhout, 1958), 1012.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> that the prophesy spoken by David, He shall drink of the brook in the way, would be fulfilled.[51]

The survival of this trope in the Catholic Low Countries into the seventeenth century is shown in three images by the Antwerp artist Frans Francken II (1581–1642).[52] Here, Christ's passage through Cedron is framed by the deformed faces of his Jewish and Roman persecutors (Figure 4).[53] The darkness of this scene amplifies Jerome's early gloss on the meaning of the brook's name – 'Cedron in the Hebrew tongue means shadows … All who hate the light, love shadows.'[54]

Which brings us to the best-known musical interpretation of *De torrente*: George Frideric Handel's (1685–1759) setting of *Dixit Dominus* (1707). Handel's *De torrente* is an intricate, chromatic and affective duet for two sopranos (Figure 5). The intertwined soprano duet, comprised of plangent suspensions and dissonant leaps, presents the text *de torrente in via bibet* ('he will drink from the torrent beside the way') until almost the movement's close. In the sopranos' oscillating semiquaver exchanges, we might hear a kind of dialogue. The melismatic duet is punctuated by syllabic, unison interjections from a lower chorus singing *propterea exaltabit caput* ('therefore he shall lift up his head'). After the first entry, each choral interjection commences with one octave leap and closes with another.[55] Apart from these leaps, each phrase sung by the men remains fixed on a single note. By contrast, the soprano duet weaves a plaintive, thorny path to its final resolution.

In this description we are, of course, suggesting an interpretation, a reading of Handel's music in relation to the textual tradition of interpreting Psalm 110. This typological tradition helps understand the intense pathos of Handel's setting – something even a listener attuned to eighteenth-century harmonic culture might recognise with puzzlement on a first hearing. (It must be recognised, however, that trained listeners will not be unanimous: John Eliot Gardiner recently noted *De torrente*'s

[51] *Fasciculus Mirre*, Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Ms. Lett. 357, f. 113*v*, cited in Marrow, *Passion Iconography*, 106–7.

[52] *Ibid.*, 106. To Marrow's example – Bob Jones University Gallery, Greenville (inv. no. P64.336) – should be added Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tourcoing (inv. no. D335, dated 1630), and an example in a private collection (1639). The scene also appears in a betrayal image. See Ursula Härting, *Frans Francken der Jüngere (1581–1642): Die Gemälde mit kritischem Oeuvrekatalog* (Freren, 1989), 281–2.

[53] On such crowds, see Sara Lipton, *Dark Mirror: Jews, Vision, and Witness in Medieval Christian Art, 1000–1500* (New York, 2014).

[54] Jerome, *Tractatus*, 229.

[55] Except at measures 23–25 for the tenors, for tessitura reasons; the first entry is a leap of a fourth.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press



Figure 4 Frans Francken the Younger, Christ being dragged through the brook of Cedron. Private Collection. © Christie's Images/ Bridgeman Images.

'grinding harmony clashes', yet summed up its mood as 'gentle and soothing'.[56])

We could enrich this interpretation by examining other musical settings of the psalm, or by comparing Handelian instances of word-painting which explicitly portray the Passion, Resurrection, darkness, torrents and so on. Or we could cite early modern commentaries on the psalms from Handel's lifetime: the reading of the psalm text as a prophecy of Christ's suffering and final victory by the Lutheran professor of Hebrew and court preacher Martin Geier (1614–1680);[57] the commentary of the eminent Catholic theologian Joseph Maria Thomasius (1649–1713), published in Rome in 1697, that draws on Cassiodorus, Jerome and Augustine to speak of the torrent 'of great and heavy afflictions' which Christ drank in his sufferings;[58] or we could turn to the English traditions so relevant to Handel's later career, and find Symon

[56] John Eliot Gardiner, sleeve notes to Gardiner, Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists, *Live at Milton Court: Handel, Bach, Scarlatti* (Monteverdi Productions, 2014), 7.

[57] Martin Geier, *D. Martini Geieri opera omnia* etc. (Amsterdam: Rembertus Goethals, 1696), I, cols. 1740–2.

[58] Joseph Maria Thomasius, *Psalterium cum canticis versibus prisco more distinctum argumentis et orationibus vetustis* etc. (Rome: Joseph Vannaccius, 1697), 488–90.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press
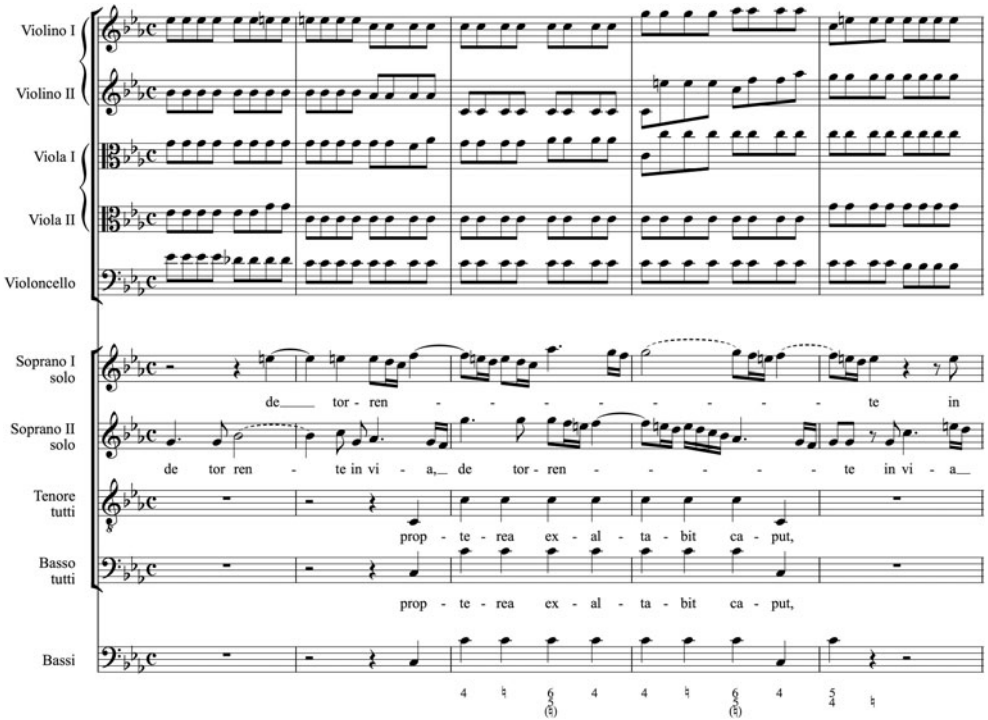


Figure 5 Measures 12–16, *De torrente*, George Frideric Handel, *Dixit Dominus*.

Patrick (1626–1707), the latitudinarian bishop first of Chichester and then of Ely, defending figural interpretations of the psalm against

> the Jews [who] have taken a great deal of pains, to wrest this Psalm to another sense; yet they are so divided in their opinions about it, (speaking inconsistent things, like drunken men, as Saint Chrysostom's words are, or rather, says he, like men in the dark, running against one another) that from thence alone we may be satisfied they are in the wrong, and have their eyes blinded.[59]

Alongside interrogating the affective range of the movement, we might also interpret Handel's setting as playing with the long musical tradition in which a *cantus firmus* might be aligned with a synchronic apprehension of time, and an interwoven imitation might emulate the diachronic, discursive flow of time (time's torrent). The flow of sorrowful time in the upper voices contrasts with the stable male synchrony of the exulted Lordship of Christ over creation. We could work this interpretation into a series of reflections on the gendering of time and creation, the weeping women at the foot of the cross, or the women who weep because they know not where the Lord has been taken – those very women who are comforted in the Gospel by an angelic (and male) voice speaking of Christ's resurrection and freedom from the bonds of mortality.

But we want to return to the untied threads of our discussion, to consider other historical ways of hearing Handel's music. It is possible that *Dixit Dominus* was first performed within an elaborate liturgy for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel for Rome's Carmelite church, S. Maria di Montesanto, in 1707.[60] These feasts became a remarkable spectacle in early eighteenth-century Rome, with illuminations,

[59] Symon Patrick, *The Book of Psalms Paraphras'd; with Arguments to Each Psalm* (London: J.H., [2]1691), 546.

[60] See Graham Dixon, 'Handel's Vesper Music: Towards a Liturgical Reconstruction', *Musical Times*, 126 (1985), 393, 395–7; *idem*, 'Handel's Music for the Carmelites: A Study in Liturgy and Some Observations on Performance', *Early Music*, 15 (1987), 16–30. Other occasions are possible, but less likely. Handel certainly directed music for the Feast on 15 July 1707. See recently Juliane Riepe, *Händel vor dem Fernrohr. Die Italienreise* (Beeskow, 2013), 207n, 236, 237n, 447. Donald Burrows observes that the context of *Dixit*'s first performance has 'generated strong disagreements, rival performances and recordings, and bizarre situations that would make good material for an extended comedy film'. Burrows, 'What We Know – and What We Don't Know – about Handel's Career in Rome', in *Georg Friedrich Händel in Rom: Beiträge der Internationalen Tagung am Deutschen Historischen Institut in Rom, 17–20 Oktober 2007*, ed. Sabine Ehrmann-Herfort and Matthias Schnettger (Kassel, 2010), 103. The work's composition history is also debated. Intriguingly, John H. Roberts has recently (and persuasively) argued that Handel probably completed a version of *Dixit Dominus* in Venice, but 'later revised it in Rome, discarding the original last two sections [including *De torrente*] in favor of new versions'. Roberts, '"Souvenirs de Florence": Additions to the Handel Canon', *Handel Jahrbuch*, 57 (2011), 205–7.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

fireworks, elaborate newly commissioned music for orchestral and choral forces, and large crowds of spectators and participants. A learned Carmelite, or visiting cleric, might indeed have perceived in this music something of the arcs of interpretation we have traced here.

Beyond this possibility, how did the work's liturgical placement frame its reception as sacred object, as entertainment, or object of incomprehension? Would the music be the same for a devout Catholic spectator as for, say, a curious Protestant attracted by the immense scenery erected on the processional *via* leading to the church?[61] One such Protestant visitor to the Carmelite festivities was Prince Anton Ulrich of Saxe-Meiningen. He noted in his diary the 'lovely music' directed by 'the German Handel from Halle', but was seemingly less concerned with devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel – whose church he records as '*la Madonna dell Clementini*', before correcting this to '*Carmi*' – than with seeing and being seen ('Cardinal Ottoboni himself spoke to me as he passed by'; 'I spoke … with a certain French *Marquis*').[62] Or how might Handel have heard his own music, or his music have been heard by a fellow composer? Would perceptions have changed with the memory of previous liturgies with different settings of *Dixit Dominus*; might there be some element of 'emulation, competition, and homage' in operation?[63] What roles did the power of Handel's music play in exalting the Carmelite Order, or constructing the power of the festival's patron, Cardinal Colonna, and his family? Could a listener possibly be transported to a vision of Christ's passion, seeing the bleeding crown of thorns and a crowd of persecuting Jews? Or, indeed, might one hear Handel's work as the violent appropriation of a Jewish psalm in the service of the false cult of a false Messiah? Might an equally historicised account imagine the work's vigorous energy and 'sublimity' overwhelming a visiting music lover – anticipating the response to *Dixit Dominus* of a later Jewish and Christian reader of the work, Felix Mendelssohn?[64] How is the gendered interpretation of the psalm

[61] *Idem*, 'Handel's Music for the Carmelites', 18. On Protestants in Handel's Rome and interconfessional relations, see Sabine Ehrmann-Herfort and Matthias Schnettger (eds.), *Georg Friedrich Händel in Rom: Beiträge der Internationalen Tagung am Deutschen Historischen Institut in Rom, 17–20 Oktober 2007* (Kassel, 2010).

[62] See Riepe, *Händel vor dem Fernrohr*, 143.

[63] Howard Mayer Brown, 'Emulation, Competition, and Homage: Imitation and Theories of Imitation in the Renaissance', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 35 (1982). Relationships between Handel's *Dixit* and other settings are debated. See Hans Joachim Marx, 'Händels lateinsiche Kirchenmusik und ihr gattungsgeschichtlicher Kontext', *Göttinger Händel Beiträge*, 5 (1993), esp. 118–19, 142; Riepe, *Händel vor dem Fernrohr*, 160–1.

[64] Ralf Wehner, 'Mendelssohn and the Performance of Handel's Vocal Works', in *Mendelssohn in Performance*, ed. Siegwart Reichwald (Bloomington, 2008), 165. Published soon after Handel's death, John Mainwaring's *Memoirs of the Life of the Late George Frederic*

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press

altered if we recall that the soprano parts would have been sung by castrati in Rome?[65] We are returned to the question of *diversitas*. Handel's *Dixit* is part of time, of space, of people, and its 'is-ness' is therefore full of diverse receptions and constructions of meaning, embedded in a rich historical sediment, in the limitations and possibilities of this musical setting as it was and is appropriated, re-inscribed, re-performed and re-heard according to a variety of times, places and persons.

An emphasis on diversity does not lend itself to a simple summary of the difficulties and gains of incorporating music into historical practice. Still, the argument on one level should be clear from the cases sketched here: histories of sweetness should consider sweet sonorities; histories of temporality should include compositional techniques; histories of liturgy, biblical interpretation, and of anti-Jewish thought, should be alert to musical word-painting, as well as to musical perception and unperceptiveness; histories of emotion should incorporate musical genres and discourses of diverse kinds.[66] Sonic sources belong in general historical practice, just as we increasingly accept as the case for visual sources. (Indeed, one fertile direction for methodology is to consider the parallel between 'high' art/visual culture and 'classical' music/sonic culture.) This is true despite the need for particular kinds of expertise, and despite music's ability to generate a tide of methodological and interpretive questions. Why? Not least because these questions also make music a model among our sources. Take the plunge into the torrent: this is musicalised history – to realise that musical sounds, musical works, musical texts and images, exist in their genesis and performances, in their receptions and interpretations, and that these ephemeral presences can both be touched and flow out of our reach, even as we attempt to hold them fast.

Handel (1760) already claimed that Handel had left Italian audiences 'thunderstruck with the grandeur and sublimity of his stile' and eminent musicians 'puzzled how to execute' his secular music's 'amazing fulness, force, and energy' (53, 56, 62).

[65] On musicians for the Carmelite Feasts, see Riepe, *Händel vor dem Fernrohr*, 237–8.

[66] Detailed grapplings with music and anti-Jewish traditions include John H. Roberts, 'False *Messiah*', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 63 (2010), 45–97; Ruth HaCohen, *The Music Libel against the Jews* (New Haven, 2012); Michael Marissen, *Tainted Glory in Handel's 'Messiah'* (New Haven, 2014).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0080440119000045 Published online by Cambridge University Press