

Canadian University Music Review Revue de musique des universités canadiennes

Susan Rankin and David Hiley, eds. *Music in the Medieval English Liturgy. Plainsong and Medieval Music Society Centennial Essays*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. viii, 413 pp. ISBN 0-19-316125-7 (hardcover)

Olga E. Malyshko

Numéro 15, 1995

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1014403ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1014403ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Canadian University Music Society / Société de musique des universités canadiennes

ISSN

0710-0353 (imprimé)

2291-2436 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Malyshko, O. E. (1995). Compte rendu de [Susan Rankin and David Hiley, eds. *Music in the Medieval English Liturgy. Plainsong and Medieval Music Society Centennial Essays*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. viii, 413 pp. ISBN 0-19-316125-7 (hardcover)]. *Canadian University Music Review / Revue de musique des universités canadiennes*, (15), 169–175.
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1014403ar>

Robert Schumann, harmonic considerations in Hugo Wolf, counterpoint in Johannes Brahms, etc.) throughout the rest of the book.

Do not mistake my intent. Gorrell's writing is clear and the non-specialist will find her narrative to be engaging. While there is much material that will benefit the young singer, the cursory nature of much of the book will limit its usefulness at the university level. While it can be recommended for use in introductory courses, the instructor would be wise to consider supplementing this source with more rigorously analytical materials.

Mario J. S. G. Champagne

Susan Rankin and David Hiley, eds. *Music in the Medieval English Liturgy. Plain-song and Medieval Music Society Centennial Essays*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. viii, 413 pp. ISBN 0-19-316125-7 (hardcover).

The last decade and a half has witnessed a few excellent publications of essay series on medieval and Renaissance music, among them Christian Meyer's edition of *Jérôme de Moravie: un théoricien de la musique dans le milieu intellectuel parisien du XIII^e siècle* (Paris: Éditions Créaphis, 1992), Iain Fenlon's edition of *Music in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Patronage, Sources and Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), and Stanley Boorman's edition of *Studies in the Performance of Late Medieval Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). Susan Rankin's and David Hiley's edition of *Music in the Medieval English Liturgy* constitutes a first-rate addition to the series of essay publications, and must be viewed as a seminal work in the area of British musical studies. This text marks the centennial year of the Plain-song and Medieval Music Society's practical and scholarly activities, since the Society's founding in 1888. Dedicated to the memory of Frank Ll. Harrison, Chair of PMMS from 1986 to 1987, and recognized as one of the giants in the field of medieval English musical research, the volume is a collection of essays, whose contents discuss diverse aspects of the monophonic and polyphonic medieval repertoires in British sources, with a primary focus on chant. Following a prefatory remark by Susan Rankin, David Hiley provides a brief outline of the Society's purpose—one of reflecting musical, theological and scholarly interests, initially underlined by a desire to incorporate the wealth of the plainchant of the Roman Church into the worship of the Church of England. Hiley also provides a summary account of the Society's history, tracing from the surviving documents information concerning early membership lists, administrative management, and publishing activities from Walter Howard Frere's pioneering monumental contribu-

tions to the more recent and substantial publications, such as Terence Bailey's *The Ambrosian Alleluias*, published in 1983 and the Society's first major hardcover book since the *Anglo-Sequelae* in 1934, and Mark Everist's facsimile edition, entitled *French 13th-Century Polyphony in the British Library*, the first such text since Frere's full facsimile edition, the *Pars Antiphonarii* of 1923, and Dom Anselm Hughes's partial facsimile edition, *Worcester Medieval Harmony* of 1928.

David Hiley's introduction is followed by a series of eleven essays, arranged chronologically under three separate headings: I. Liturgy and Liturgical Music in the Eleventh Century; II. Liturgical Uses and Genres in Medieval England; and III. Liturgical Polyphony in Later Medieval England. Three indices respectively of sources, incipits and titles, and names are also provided. Rather than striking the reader as simply a group of individual articles, with either peripheral or direct connections within a larger common subject area, the essays cohere into a solidly integrated book – a veritable whole that is, in every respect, the complete and absolute sum of its parts, with consistent footnote references to internal material as additional reinforcements of the unity of the subject matter.

The first essay by Ritva Jacobsson deals with the *unica* tropes in the English troper, London, British Library, MS Cotton Caligula A. XIV (hereafter London 14), a manuscript which consists of three unrelated fragments, collectively dating from the second half of the eleventh to the late twelfth centuries. Jacobsson discusses the relationship between the London 14 *unica* and the remainder of the contents in the manuscript, with appropriate references of comparison to the two Winchester Tropers. The author provides a detailed textual analysis of the *unica* tropes, with respect to versification, metaphors, style, rhetorical devices, theology and liturgical function. Her method of procedure involves a study of the items from feast to feast, in the order in which the unique tropes have been preserved in London 14. Jacobsson concludes that the repertorial aspects of the *unica* tropes indicate close ties with the Winchester Tropers, that the style, structure and linguistic character of the unique trope texts collectively tend to suggest more than one origin, that the content and function of the *unica* tropes exhibit various techniques and approaches in terms of the relation of the troped versions to their liturgical base chants, and that the relation of London 14 to the Winchester and continental repertories points to a source which probably preserves fragments of repertories older than that of the Winchester books, in addition to including French, East Frankish and Italian material. Finally, Jacobsson speculates about the preparation of London 14, which, partly on the basis of paleographical and codicological features, she believes was copied and compiled from several books from various places.

Michel Huglo's essay, "Remarks on the Alleluia and Responsory Series in the Winchester Troper," follows nicely on the heels of Jacobsson's study. In an attempt to determine the 'base repertory' of proper mass and office chants from which the Winchester tropes derive, Huglo concentrates on the series of alleluias for summer holidays, and on a group of responsories for the office, intended to be performed in two-voice organum. Drawing upon concordant English and continental sources of least divergence, and whose origins indicate close historical associations with the Winchester Troper, Huglo establishes for the alleluias and responsories in question a primary connection with what he refers to as the 'archaic Saint-Pierre-de-Corbie – Saint-Denis group', which, in turn, is reinforced by historical events that confirm and imply related activities between the south of England and the north of France preceding the Norman Conquest of 1066.

In the third essay, "Winchester Polyphony: the Early Theory and Practice of Organum," Susan Rankin takes to task the notion, generally perpetuated by modern accounts of early organum, and transmitted, for example, in the highly prescriptive approach in the *Musica Enchiriadis* and less stringently so in other more or less contemporaneous treatises, of a theory-dominated view of practice, leading some present-day scholars to confine practical evidence to theoretical examples, with no consideration of the musical character of extant practical examples. Rankin challenges not only Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht's belief that there are no practical examples that can be said to extend beyond the boundaries of theory, but also Eggebrecht's conviction that, as theoretical guidelines suggest, no evidence of creativity is discernible in early organum.¹ On the basis of a selective group of treatises, with Guido's *Micrologus* (circa 1030) as the main referential text for comparison, and acknowledging the cultural differences that may account for any seemingly unconventional melodic treatments, Rankin provides a detailed examination of two Winchester organa, noting the structural significance of textual and musical divisions, the relationship of the *vox organalis* to the *vox principalis*, the implications of the procedures of movements for holding tones and the *occursus* cadential figure, and speculating as to the reasons for certain stylistic deviations. The degree of musical flexibility apparent in Rankin's findings leads her to conclude that the Winchester singers of organa not only had a standard set of formulas from which to choose, but also introduced more unusual patterns for more effective means of articulation.

The following essay, "Stylistic Layers in Eleventh-Century Polyphony:

1 Hans H. Eggebrecht, F. A. Gallo, M. Haas and K.-J. Sachs, *Die mittelalterliche Lehre von der Mehrstimmigkeit*, Geschichte der Musiktheorie, 5 (Darmstadt, 1984), p. 86.

How can the Continental Sources Contribute to our Understanding of the Winchester Organa?," by Wulf Arlt is a tidy *sequitur* to Rankin's study. Arlt focusses on seven continental sources, copied between *circa* 1051 and 1100. The first part of his discussion deals with the paleographical and codicological aspects of the manuscripts, which contrast sharply with the Winchester collection by virtue of the latter's size and systematic arrangement into fascicles by genre and function. The second part of the study concentrates on the musical nature and historical position of the continental organa in comparison with the Winchester collection. The governing questions posed by Arlt in the course of a detailed analysis of several continental organa, pointing up the stylistic and structural differences and similarities between the latter and the Winchester collection, are, first, what is the relationship of a notated piece to the realm of written and oral musical practices, and, second, to what degree is this relationship an indicator of a continuation of older, simpler practices or of a development of new and changing techniques? On the basis of the comparisons made, Wulf concludes that the prime motivation behind the Winchester collection was to produce a written record of a 'special performance practice'.

By way of contrast with the five essays above, which deal pivotally with some aspect of the Winchester Troper, the next five essays, whose subject matter is not specifically connected with the Winchester repertory *per se*, are presented under heading II or the second large division of the book. In the opening essay, a preliminary stemmatic study, "Post-Pentecost Alleluias in Medieval British Liturgies," David Hiley uses the post-Pentecost alleluias to establish relationships between English and continental sources. Through what is a virtually exhaustive examination of a substantial number of manuscripts within a very short space, Hiley succeeds in extracting four series or groups of closely related series in English manuscripts, while, at certain junctures, additionally speculating about some of the points on the alleluia series raised in Michel Huglo's essay *supra*.

The following essay, "Marian Antiphons at Cluny and Lewes," by Ruth Steiner discusses the relationship between the repertory of Marian antiphons at Cluny and its daughter house at Lewes, tracing the development of the Marian chants from the earliest (eleventh century) known Cluniac breviary, through to the known Cluniac office chant books, and culminating with the Lewes manuscript, compiled in the late thirteenth century. Through a systematic assessment of seventeen antiphons grouped in three series, based on the texts and sources, on certain aspects of musical style, on liturgical placement and function, Steiner demonstrates a pattern of initial flexibility in chant use, which was later superseded by specific liturgical assignment. The author additionally observes that some degree of freedom was exercised at Lewes in liturgical

matters by the end of the thirteenth century, although two later Cluny breviaries indicate that the the Lewes manuscript provides a faithful record of the liturgy of Cluny. Furthermore, based on the corresponding (with slight adjustment) arrangement of twelve of the antiphon texts in a fourteenth-century breviary of Saint-Benigne de Dijon with that in the Song of Songs, Steiner proposes William of Dijon, whose liturgical compositions were widely disseminated, as a possible composer for at least eight of the twelve Marian antiphons.

The next essay by David Chadd presents a discussion of an English noted breviary of *circa* 1200 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. liturg. C. 36; hereafter Oxford C. 36), particularly of the antiphoner contained in the manuscript, with a focus on the Offices for Benedict and for Mary Magdalene. Through a comparative study of the contents and their arrangements in other similar books, Oxford C. 36 emerges as a source, initially reliant on monastic models, but altered for secular use, and one whose liturgical contents point to independence from known liturgical uses. Further, based on the information provided by the *kalendar* which appears behind the Sanctorale in the manuscript, combined with the evidence of the source's selection of collects for English saints, Chadd proposes Bath diocese as the provenance for the antiphoner in Oxford C. 36.

Andrew Hughes's essay on the British rhymed offices constitutes an excellent reference tool. It is a catalogue and commentary on approximately thirty-eight saints and fifty offices, with descriptions provided for thirty-two offices, for which all or a considerable amount of music has survived. The time frame is from *circa* 930, with the office for St. Cuthbert to *circa* 1457, with the canonization and translation of St. Osmund. In an introductory section, Hughes provides editorial commentary, and discusses and substantiates the methods of classification in conjunction with the types of problems posed by items, whose features are not always clearly or easily decipherable with respect to structural irregularities between text and music, rhyme schemes and syllable count. The author also provides an analysis of two of the more controversial cases, illustrating not only the nature of the difficulties encountered in the repertory, but also rationalizing his interpretation of the chant and text for purposes of classification. The catalogue listing is followed by a chronology of offices for which dates are known or can be surmised. In a general closing remark, cursorily based on the information presented, Hughes points to East Anglia and the south-eastern region of England as the prominent areas where office manuscripts were used.

In his essay, "Relations between Liturgical and Vernacular Music in Medieval England," John Caldwell illustrates the close ties that existed between popular plainchant and vernacular interpretations, with a focus on the two-voice setting, *Glad and blithe*, from the Selden manuscript (Oxford,

Bodleian Library Arch. Selden B. 26); the work is a musical and textual paraphrase of the Nativity sequence, *Letabundus exultet fidelis chorus alleluya Regem regum*. After briefly outlining the problems of terminology and functional ambiguity associated with such genres as the carol, the conductus, the motet, and the so-called cantilena of the fourteenth century, Caldwell provides a comparative analysis of the paraphrase with the plainchant version in the Dublin Troper (Cambridge, University Library, Add. 710), and, as a result, suggests the strong possibility that the Selden paraphrase and other similar examples were used in the liturgical positions of the chants which they paraphrase. The author concludes that linguistic distinctions do not justify terminological ones, and, by extension, do not necessarily indicate function.

The next two essays are grouped under the third and final heading in the book. The first in this group is a posthumous publication, "Plainsong into Polyphony: Repertories and Structures *circa* 1270–*circa* 1420," by Frank Ll. Harrison. This lengthy but comprehensive overview, presented in Harrison's inimitable style, draws upon the musical material published in volumes XIV to XVII of the *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century* series, and can be viewed as an updated extension of Harrison's classic *Music in Medieval Britain* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958). The contents of the essay are organized into no fewer than twelve headings, the majority of which deal separately with the compositional procedures in diverse types of polyphonic chant settings as well as freely-composed liturgical compositions. Works, whose dating has been the source of considerable controversy, in this case, J. Alanus's *Sub Arturo plebs*, are given special attention, with new historical light shed on the dating and composer of the motet. Finally, relying in large part on Roger Bowers's archival research, Harrison elucidates the issues of chronology, identities, associations of composers, and the provenance of the Old Hall manuscript.

The second essay in this group, "The Manuscript London British Harley 1709," and the last in the series, by Nick Sandon, is a fitting ending to what emerges as a history of medieval English liturgy from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries, notwithstanding that the author's discussion transcends the limits of what is generally regarded as the *terminus* for the Middle Ages. The essay deals with the function and usage of devotional polyphony in early Tudor England, particularly as evidenced by the manuscript, London, British Library, Harley 1709, a partial, paper source of unknown date and provenance, preserving single voices from votive antiphons composed during the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII. Sandon deals with issues of chronology and dating, the latter particularly intriguing in view of the fact that Harley 1709 is the only known source to preserve Tallis's music with compositions concordant with the Eton choirbook, while no source was known to survive with Tallis's music before

1540. Further, taking into account textual structure and musical setting, the author focusses on two works, which provide explicit information as to their context, function and manner of performance.

The value of the studies in this edition cannot be overestimated. The book provides the reader with a wealth of technical and historical information. Several essays are presented as works in progress, with both explicit and implicit suggestions as to the directions that need to be taken, and the amount of work that is yet to be accomplished in order to bring early music specialists to a fuller and more accurate comprehension of the styles and functions of as well as the connections between sacred and liturgical, Latin and vernacular medieval and early Renaissance repertoires. In this respect, the essays also serve a rather practical and convenient function for the young scholar in search of a dissertation topic, in that they stress those areas that require further exploration and excavation.

Only a few minor criticisms need to be made with respect to the edition itself. An editorial slip occurs in the explicit in table 6 on p. 329—"chart" should read "chant". Also, short, single notes, occupying one line at the foot of a page (for example, pp. 99, 103, 113, 139, 181, 250, 255) should not be centred, but, for the sake of consistency, be indented in the same manner as in cases where several footnotes of one line or more in length appear on a page. Labels for "figures" would be better grasped visually, if they appeared above rather than below (for example, p. 68) the material to which they refer. References to melodic pitches above middle *c* would be more easily detectable if italicized rather than presented in conventional typescript, in which case the higher-case letters used to refer to pitches below middle *c* might also warrant italicization. Finally, in some instances, the presentation of musical examples, with the intention to illustrate melodic variants between concordant versions, requires more accurate alignment, as, for example, on pp. 254 and 259.

In sum, this rigorous text offers challenging insights and provides stimulating reading. Despite the somewhat regrettable price, no medieval library should be without it. *Capite!*

Olga E. Malyshko

Peter Williams. *The Organ in Western Culture, 750–1250*. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1993. xx, 397 pp. ISBN 0-521-41843-7.

The history of organ building often begins with a brief reference to the hydraulis known in Greek and Roman times and flits lightly through time to the Gothic