

Italian sacred music of the 17th century:
some reflections and thoughts about several recent modern editions

The music of the 17th century is currently the victim of a particular situation, due to an undeniably odd manner of thinking on the part of musical scholars. It is the century of the birth of opera, of the birth (or rebirth) of accompanied monody, and of the spread of instrumental music – all fields on which the most methodologically keen researches have been and still are concentrated. Sacred music,¹ on the other hand, has not received the attention appropriate to its importance, or even just to its actual presence in the 17th century musical scene. This applies both to the musical intonation of Latin texts and to that in the Italian language, belonging to what might be called the devotional sphere (a subject that needs complete reviewing, in any case). There are very varying motives for this: prejudices of an aesthetic, religious or even confessional kind stand in the way; so does the lack of a sufficient number of preparatory works, and the romantic-idealistic notions (whether admitted or not) that seek to limit study to the great figures of an era.

Two further reasons must be added to all this. They differ from each other, but they both have a determining effect. The first, an elementary fact, so obvious that it's hard to see how it can have been overlooked for such a long time (and still is sometimes, even now), is that without a fair competence in the history of liturgy, the history of religion and the necessary methodological means, there is often a risk of misunderstandings in the comprehension of a piece, collection, or even composer. The second reason for such limited attention is that there is a lack of modern editions in sufficient numbers; those few which exist, often scattered in collections for practical use which are hard to track down, are insufficient to close the huge gap which exists.² And in this context it is just as well not to forget that an edition, in order to be such, is always (or should be) an intellectual operation which demands multiple competences of a broader cultural kind. If this is not the case, we find ourselves in the world of transcriptions, or the preliminary part of a full-scale work of editing. Certainly, in the absence of anything else, we should welcome tran-

¹ We use this terminology for what it normally signifies, without wishing to join the dispute over the legitimacy or otherwise of the use of the adjective “sacred”, and not even with any polemical intentions, but merely for practical reasons.

² The latter consideration, as we are aware, could on the contrary be read as a cause of what has been said so far; to some extent it is a matter of the cat biting its own tail.

scriptions; they are always better than nothing at all. One of the consequences of this situation is, for example, that an absolutely pioneering and deserving work, the premises of which were enough to discourage anyone, such as *North Italian Church Music in the Age of Monteverdi*³ by the insufficiently lamented Jerome Roche, has proved to be surpassed and contradicted in many conclusions where there has been basic concentration on a single aspect (problem, generic group, composer, etc.). But this was inevitable, and we can never be grateful enough to Roche for his undertaking.

The publications of this repertoire in modern editions are indispensable, but naturally the great amount that remains to be done should not mean that the prevalent viewpoint is reinforced and so the great masterpieces of the major composers are forgotten, for the new research in the field of historiography and philology must be capable of demanding more editions than the few already in existence. This is the reason why three different editions are brought together in this journal; three editions which seem to have in common only the period to which they belong. The first is a new edition of the *Vespers of the Blessed Virgin Mary* by Monteverdi, edited by one of the leading specialists of the period, the author and the work itself: Jeffrey Kurtzman (this is an edition of a masterpiece published several times by various scholars). The second is a monumental collection of twenty-five volumes dedicated to Italian sacred music of the 17th century (and thus an edition of a largely unpublished repertoire). The third is the edition of an unpublished work by a well-known but little-examined composer, Lodovico Viadana, edited by a musician and choirmaster who is also very knowledgeable on the problems of sixteenth-century music and didactics. Now, we shall have an opportunity of seeing the variety of reasons that make a less fragmentary discussion possible. Above all, these are editions, and hence there are questions of common methodology; secondly, all three aim to be both editions for the purposes of study and scores immediately use to performers. So it will be interesting to see how the various problems which arise have been resolved. We shall also see whether and how the inevitable questions of a liturgical kind are tackled – a point we believe to be fundamental. For instead of taking such tasks lightly, it would be better to abandon them altogether and turn to a specialist who could deal with them properly.

1.

The edition of Claudio Monteverdi's *Vespers of the Blessed Virgin*, published by the Oxford University Press and edited by Jeffrey Kurtz-

³ JEROME ROCHE, *North Italian Church Music in the Age of Monteverdi*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1984.

man,⁴ is a point of arrival – moreover one long awaited – of almost thirty years of study dedicated to the great composer from Cremona and his 1610 masterpiece in particular. As everyone knows, his doctorate thesis *The Monteverdi Vespers of 1610 and their Relationship with Italian Sacred Music of the Early Seventeenth Century* dates from 1972,⁵ and was later published in revised form and expanded with a chapter concerning the *Messa In illo tempore*, with the title “*Essays on the Monteverdi Mass and Vespers of 1610*.”⁶ This is therefore a work which is reaching us after very many years of reflection on the individual problems which the work presents today.

This edition has the declared aim of relating both to scholarship and to the interpreter, and for this purpose it comes with one volume including the edition of the Vespers and a separate one for the critical apparatus, termed “Critical Appendix”.⁷ But in fact things are rather more complex than might seem at first sight. The volume of the actual edition is structured in the following way:

1. a brief historical and critical introduction, in which the principal characteristics of the work are summarised;
2. the required scoring with the relative ranges;
3. the criteria used for editing;
4. various facsimiles;
5. the comprehensive edition of the *Vespers*, and also of the *Magnificat* for six voices (in which the psalm *Lauda Ierusalem* and the two *Magnificats* transposed to the fourth tone are included; this is the subject of a well-known dispute to which it is not our intention to return here);
6. antiphons in plainchant for the main Marian feasts;
7. suggestions for the addition of improvised embellishments, also including a diminished version of *Nigra Sum*;
8. a sort of limited apparatus, termed “Performance notes”. This deals with choices made within the critical apparatus, which are held to be “of particular interest to performers”.

⁴ CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI, *Vespro della Beata Vergine. Vespers (1610), Performing Score*, ed. by Jeffrey Kurtzman, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999.

⁵ JEFFREY KURTZMAN, *The Monteverdi Vespers of 1610 and their Relationship with Italian Sacred Music of the Early Seventeenth Century*, PhD. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1972.

⁶ ID., *Essay on the Monteverdi Mass and Vespers of 1610*, Rice University Studies, Texas, 1978 (Monograph in Music, vol. 64, n.4).

⁷ CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI, *Vespro della Beata Vergine. Vespers (1610). Critical Appendix. Bassus Generalis. Critical Notes*, ed. by Jeffrey Kurtzman, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999.

The volume of critical apparatus is for the most part concerned with the semi-diplomatic transcription of the Bassus generalis (pp. 1-43). This is followed by the editorial criteria already present in the edition itself, with the sole addition of the description of the sources (the print of Amadino dated 1610 and Kaufmann's 1615 anthology, containing the *Deus in adiutorium* and the *Dixit Dominus*), and the list of libraries which possess more or less complete copies. Finally we have the actual critical apparatus, this time complete (thus also including the "Performance notes" of the other volume). The division of the material carried out in this way, though designed for the double use of both study and performance, will not be found to be particularly easy, and perhaps will not be all that satisfactory either. A certain sense of uneasiness is added by the fact that from the introduction onward, reference is constantly made to the ponderous monographic volume which Kurtzman part-published; namely *The Monteverdi Vespers of 1610. Music, Context, Performance*, also for the Oxford University Press (it should be noted among other things that although the edition was published in March 1999, this volume has only been available since the beginning of 2000). This is not the place to review this work (to which we shall refer from now on as "the monograph"). But it will be unavoidable to make frequent reference to it over certain editorial questions, because to have a complete picture of the choices made by Kurtzman, and of his edition, it is indispensable work with an eye on all three volumes.

As may be expected of a scholar who has dedicated many years to the repertoire of Italian sacred music of the 17th century, this edition has very many good qualities; in the first place, such a detailed and specific critical apparatus (at times it seems even redundant, but better to have information in excess than not enough!) is far more complete, for instance, than the one present in the edition edited by Jerome Roche, which was published – posthumously, unfortunately – in 1994 (in other ways an exemplary edition).⁸ There has been greater checking of all the surviving evidence and, above all, a broad view of individual questions. However, it is problematic for such a complex work as the *Vespers* to find a definitive edition, one which clarifies all the problems. The editor himself stresses in the Introduction that "No critical edition is ever definitive, and many of the practical performance issues of the Monteverdi *Vespers* may never be resolved". Certain aspects, as well as some of Kurtzman's decisions, are neither satisfactory nor convincing.

Turning first to the edition itself: this edition has the aim "to serve both the performer and the scholar" (p. VI), for, as Kurtzman rightly maintains, "an

⁸ CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI, *Vespro della Beata Vergine*, Urtext Edition, ed. by Jerome Roche, London, Eulenburg, 1994.

accurate edition is only the beginning, since 17th-century notation represents only partially what Monteverdi and other early Baroque musicians would have expected a performance of this music to sound like” (p. VI). This is the viewpoint from which the lower-register versions of Psalm 147 and the two *Magnificats*, the appendices with the diminished version of the *Nigra sum* concerto, and suggestions for other types of embellishment and diminution have all been conceived, together with the plainsong antiphons and in general the whole third part of the monograph (“Performance practice”), divided into as many as thirteen chapters dedicated respectively to a “philosophical” discussion on the concept of historic executive praxis (ch. 11, which our own discographic critics describe as ‘philological execution’), to basso continuo instruments (ch. 12); to the organs and their registration (ch. 13), the realization of the continuo (ch.14) the use of the solo voice and of choruses (ch. 15), the vocal style (ch. 16), pitch and transposition (ch. 17), obbligato instruments (ch. 18), the practice of doubling or substituting some of the instruments (ch. 19), metre and time (ch. 20), vocal and instrumental ornamentation (ch. 21), temperament (ch. 22), and even the pronunciation of Latin in the first half of the 17th century (ch. 23 – a question on which reference is made to a bibliography of two or three titles exclusively in English). All this material, when the aim of the work is taken into account, should in my opinion form part of the second volume of the edition (of comment and apparatus), in order to avoid too much dispersion in consultation. Again for the same reasons the edition includes a full version of the basso continuo; its criteria are explained in ch.14 of the monograph (we should remember that the bassus generalis present in very different printed versions has been transcribed apart from the volume of apparatus). In his key address at the Monteverdi conference held in Mantua in 1993,⁹ and later published in the Proceedings, Kurtzman was careful to stress: “Any edition of music with a basso continuo, should, in my view, also provide a realization of the continuo part according to seventeenth-century style” (p. 7). This is a considered opinion, and one worthy of respect, and this choice certainly allows non-professional musicians or those who are not experts in the 17th century to give a more or less stylistically correct performance (even though there are so many things to be taken into account apart from this aspect).

Moreover, we are well aware that harpsichordists and organists are not fond of reading scores produced in extended form, and prefer to improvise while keeping the score before their eyes. With respect to the significance of

⁹ JEFFREY KURTZMAN, “Monteverdi’s Sacred Music: the State of Research”, in *Claudio Monteverdi. Studi e prospettive*, Atti del Convegno (Mantova, 21–24 October 1993), edited by Paola Besutti, Teresa M. Gialdroni & Rodolfo Baroncini, Firenze, Olschki, 1998 (Accademia Nazionale Virgiliana di Scienze Lettere e Arti, Miscellanea, 5), pp. 3–29: 7.

this operation for the edition in itself, we should remember the radically opposing opinion of Dahlhaus, who considered that one of the essential characteristics of basso continuo is precisely the:

possibility of various forms of realisation. To the degree in which the experts – who consider the realisation of the basso continuo as an obstacle and not as an aid to the imagination - become the predominant type in the practical performance of baroque music, the most historically correct procedure (that of not writing out a basso continuo) would also seem to be the most practical. A practical performance which has moved on from an essentially amateur phenomenon to an essentially professional one is matched by a philology which, instead of disguising the historical distance, brings it to the fore and thus enables the aesthetic sense to overcome it.¹⁰

In the same context, it is stressed that a critical edition “must present an accurate version of the original musical notation, altering neither note values nor mensuration signatures” (p. 7); and in fact this is done. We certainly do not seek to question the legitimacy of this decision (though we shall come back to this point later); what we must ask is whether in this context the **C** is regularly divided from the semibreve instead of the breve (something which is found in the Monteverdi printed version only in the *Deus in adiutorium*, and occasionally at other moments). A separation at the semibreve, with an indication **C**, could possibly mislead the inexpert musician, who might interpret the original indication of tempus imperfectum by the modern indication of 4/4. A deviation from this way of proceeding - the only one of its kind - is found in a famous and much-discussed passage of the *Sonata sopra Sancta Maria*, when all the instruments are noted by semibreves, but above all minims and blackened crotchets (which become identical to crotchets and quavers in the notation) with the indication of the figure 3 for each triple-time group, while the soprano who sings the invocatory litany is given a notation of **C** (bb. 130-141 of the Kurtzman edition). According to the editor, we are faced with that situation which Brunelli, among the few (not to say the only one) defines as a situation of meliola, and his correct interpretation obliges the

¹⁰ CARL DAHLHAUS, “Zur Ideengeschichte musikalischer Editionsprinzipien”, *Fontes Artis Musicae*, XXV, 1978, pp. 19–27: 22: “zu deren Wesen gerade die Offenheit für wechselnde Realisierung gehört. In dem Maße aber, wie die Kenner, die eine Aussetzung nicht als Stütze, sondern als Hindernis der Phantasie ansehen, zum herrschenden Typus in der Aufführungspraxis alter Musik werden, erscheint das historische adäquatere Editionsverfahren, der Verzicht auf Aussetzungen, zugleich als das praktischere. Einer Praxis, die aus einer primär hausmusikalischen zu einer primär professionellen geworden ist, entspricht eine Philologie, welche die historische Distanz nicht verdeckt, sondern sie bewusst und gerade dadurch für das ästhetische Gefühl überbrückbar macht”.

soprano who, we repeat is singing in C , to diminish her values by half. Kurtzman's notions on this point (briefly summarised in the apparatus, and more extensively discussed in the monograph) are two: the fact that it is defined by Praetorius as *sextupla o tactus trochaicus diminutus* on the one hand, and the awareness on the other hand that without the diminution, the invocatory litany would be performed at a faster rhythm than all the other items. While this latter point can certainly be defended, with regard to the former it should be noted that Brunelli, in his *Regole utilissime*, does not in fact speak of diminution with regard to the meliola, which is completely and in all respects assimilated to the hemiola:

The meliola may be assigned whatever tempo is required; that which refers to black minims can be given two downbeats and an upbeat, and it is customary to do this as the following example will shows, and each time it does not follow the three escape from the meliola, which may come out either in black or in white [a musical example follows].¹¹

There is a lack of clarity, therefore, in the observation that “the diminution created by blackening minims, to which Praetorius refers, is confined by the cantus part-book, which contains both the vocal part and the basso continuo” (monograph, pp. 461-462); the only certainty in the separate Cantus partbook seems to be that what seem to be crotchets are in reality darkened minims, and nothing else. Moreover, Praetorius seems to refer to a genuine proportion, in which the relative sign always appears (6/1 or 6/2, for example) with darkened notation as necessary (and it could be debated whether Praetorius has not perhaps mixed up the different situations in which they occur, found for the most part in the instrumental repertoire. But this, is quite another issue).

Setting this problem aside, however, in my view another one arises here. The absolutely exceptional character of the 1610 collection is to be observed at every level, and not only the musical: the opposition between observed counterpoint and the concertato style; between monody and polychoral writing; the refined and absolutely decisive use of the instruments, the different concepts of basso continuo and ‘score’ within the same part-book; the semi-graphy of an obviously traditional kind with new meanings attributed to the tactus. The oscillation to be found at times within the same piece makes the tactus very roughly from semibreve to crotchet, but the notation always and invariably adopts the mensuration sign C (and it is obvious: it would be superfluous to add it). According to the principle mentioned above, it is clear that one of the aims of the critical edition is that of providing a reliable mirror of

¹¹ ANTONIO BRUNELLI, *Regole utilissime per li scolari che desiderano imparare a cantare, sopra la pratica della musica*, Firenze, Timan, 1606, cap. 22, pp. 19-20.

Monteverdi's notation, even despite all its uncertainties and ambiguities (though in this context the clefs do not play a part). So the intervention in the *Sonata* is rather incoherent, since only at that point do we become aware of an semiographic incongruity (real or imaginary), and it is resolved directly in the text. So here we do not have "an accurate version of the original musical notation". In all the other cases, whether duple or triple, the mensuration signs and values are rigorously and faithfully maintained. Kurtzman, however, does not abstain from their interpretation completely, but gives one in the monograph, in ch. 20, where he arrives at more or less convincing and acceptable conclusions on the basis of the actual notation, and not with regard to merely theoretical considerations (the dispute with Roger Bowers in *Music and Letters* is well-known).¹² It is no accident that his conclusions coincide with those of another scholar whose primary attention was directed towards the issue of notation: Uwe Wolf.¹³ Thus the performer finds that he has, in his "performance edition", a realisation of the continuo part, a transposition of certain pieces, and various suggestions on ornamentation. For all other questions, above all the most important one of what tempi to adopt for a correct performance of the work, the player is referred to the monograph. This situation should have made a different distribution of the material even more essential, partly because (it may tiresome to refer to it, but it is fact) the edition was published on 25th March 1999, as the O.U.P. Catalogue indicates, while the monograph containing the explanation about how to make correct use of that edition, was not available until January 2000. Since editions in which Monteverdi's notation is faithfully and correctly maintained already exist (i.e. that of Bartlett,¹⁴ and above all that of Roche), and since Kurtzman's concern to provide a text useful to the performer is clear, and several times repeated, it might have been worth the effort to try to provide a text in which the semiographical problems were resolved.¹⁵ I am aware that we are faced with one of the crucial issues about the criteria to be adopted in publishing music that uses a different system from the current one, and that this has always led to radically different positions. Just to take the case of Monteverdi, it is worth reading the debate which followed Claudio Gallico's paper, between Gallico him-

¹² ROGER BOWERS, "Some Reflections upon Notation and Proportions in Monteverdi's Mass and Vespers of 1610", *Music & Letters*, LXXIII, 1992, pp. 347-398; reply by JEFFREY KURTZMAN in LXXIV, 1993, pp. 487-495, and rejoinder by ROGER BOWERS in LXXV, 1994, pp. 145-154.

¹³ UWE WOLF, *Notation und Aufführungspraxis. Studien zum Wandel von Notenschrift und Notenbild in italienischen Musikdrucken der Jahre 1571-1630*, 2 vols., Kassel, Verlag Merseburger Berlin GmbH, 1992.

¹⁴ CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI, *Vespro della Beata Vergine*, ed. by Clifford Bartlett, Huntingdon, King's Music, 1986 (revised ed. 1990).

¹⁵ Cf. e.g.: CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI, *Vesperae Beatae Mariae Virginis (Marien-Vesper) 1610*, hrsg. von Gottfried Wolters, Wolfenbüttel, Mösel Verlag, 1966².

self and Nino Pirrotta, in the historic Monteverdi Conference in 1968.¹⁶ More recently there have been the works of Feder,¹⁷ Caldwell,¹⁸ and Grier,¹⁹ and the collection of various essays edited by Maria Caraci Vela. We refer readers to the introduction of this last-mentioned work for a comprehensive picture of the problems and the methods proper to musical philology.²⁰ Dahlhaus, in the essay already mentioned, starting from the idea that the simple transliteration of ancient notation can violate “not only the intended sound, but also the written intention of the original”, reached the conclusion that a modernised edition “which supplements the text with a hypothesis on the tempo is in reality nearer to the original than an edition which conceals a dimension of the original written text for fear of taking a decision which would not be fully justified” (p. 67). And this is fully understandable in the context of an edition that is specifically aimed at the performer, while at the same time acting as a critical edition. However, it is also true that the contact with the original notation, the actual visual aspect of the original, is a need felt by many scholars as indispensable for the edition itself (I would point, for example, to the exchange of letters between Feininger and Lowinsky, mentioned in Lowinsky’s obituary dedicated to of Feininger himself),²¹ and sometimes by some performers. The problem for me, and I have not yet reached a conclusive answer to it (if indeed one can ever be given), is whether an edition can respond to the needs of both the scholar and of the performer. Or if, taking account of the diversity of methods that these demands require, it is not necessary to contemplate a plurality of editions, as happens, in the case of Classical texts – the Teubner edition being one thing, and an edition for scholarly use quite another, based though it may be on the former. This has always happened, it is true, but rarely within the same publication. I am referring to something which could be likened to a translation with the original text (a critical text, not a facsimile reproduction of a piece of evidence) also in front of one. I realise that there are also financial reasons which stand in the way of such a solution. But the new possibilities provided by computerised means,

¹⁶ *Congresso internazionale sul tema Claudio Monteverdi e il suo tempo. Relazione e comunicazioni*, (Venezia-Mantova-Cremona, 3-7 maggio 1968), ed. by Raffaello Monterosso [Cremona], 1969.

¹⁷ GEORG FEDER, *Musikphilologie. Eine Einführung in die musikalische Textkritik, Hermeneutik und Editionstechnik*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1987.

¹⁸ JOHN CALDWELL, *Early music*, Oxford, Clarendon Press 1998.

¹⁹ JAMES GRIER, *The Critical Editing of Music. History, Method, and Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

²⁰ DAHLHAUS, “Zur Ideengeschichte musikalischer Editionsprinzipien”.

²¹ EDWARD LOWINSKY, *Laurence Feiniger (1909-1976): la vita, l'opera, l'eredità spirituale*, in *La biblioteca musicale Laurence K. J. Feininger*, edited by Danilo Curti and Fabrizio Leonardelli, Trento, Provincia Autonoma di Trento, Servizio Beni Culturali, 1985, pp. 8-36.

appropriately used, could perhaps give quite substantial assistance in this (though naturally a change in outlook would also be needed).

From the typographical standpoint the edition is quite accurate and clear, though one may ask why the decision was made to print the staves for the instrumental parts in smaller print than the vocal parts. We have only noticed one printing error: in the concerto *Nigra sum*, b. 73, basso continuo part, in the sharp next to the F, square brackets are missing, since this is a suggested alteration, and not present in Amadino's printed edition (an error is obviously possible, but it is odd that it happens specifically in the case of an alteration, since in the introduction [p.V], we find: "Many [editions] contain editorial alterations and additions that are not clearly distinguished from Monteverdi's original notation. Although most have been conceived as performing editions, all have certain deficiencies in that regard"). Kurtzman gives and justifies his own interpretations on various famous points of the *Vespers* (such as the chord in b. 144 of the *Dixit Dominus*, major or minor according to the differing editions and performances). And as, for a corrupt point, the final bars of the *Nisi Dominus* (bb. 211-215, Fifth of the 1st chorus and Tenor of the 2nd Chorus), he provides his own original interpretation, based on certain manuscript corrections present in the Wroclaw copy. In what we might call the traditional solution, the basic melodic-rhythmic motif is maintained (crotchet/dotted quaver) constantly augmented (minim/dotted crotchet) in all the voices in the extension of the cadence (Ex. 1).

In Kurtzman's version the two basic and augmented interpolations are placed side by side with each other (obviously only in the two voices where the error occurs) (Ex. 2), while in the critical notes a version is offered in which no augmentation of the melodic structure appears (Ex. 3).

It is certainly not possible to say with any certainty which is the more correct: I would only remark that the traditional solution is that which requires fewest changes in the text and that in the two versions given by Kurtzman, the melodic and rhythmic structure found at the beginning of the psalm is used, but not the imitative technique by which the individual interpolations differ by a crotchet.

When one moves on to examine the final point of the edition (final only in our subject under discussion) a certain cause for frank perplexity arises; i.e. the indispensable consideration of the liturgical context in which the work must be placed in order to understand its correct interpretation and placement. The first surprise comes when we read the following words in the critical notes with regard to the *Deus in adiutorium* (p. 47):

The versicle and response do not appear in early 17th-century breviaries or psalters; the version of the versicle given here is the solemn tone for Ves-

pers of solemn feasts drawn from *The Liber Usualis with Introduction and Rubrics in English* [...].

Two questions arise immediately. First of all, one asks why it was necessary to try to find this melody in a breviary, since that is certainly not a book which contains music. Subsequently, when the editor adds to the edition the plainchant antiphons taken from an Antiphonal of 1607 (edition, pp. 255-262), we realise that the terms breviary and antiphonal are used indiscriminately (“the antiphons given below are derived from a breviary published in Venice in 1607”, with a reference in the note to the above-mentioned antiphonal) – something which leads to a certain perplexity, and cannot be put down to a deficiency in the English language (which is well aware of the difference). Secondly, we have to ask whether one should still use the *Liber Usualis* when dealing with a musical repertoire prior to the end of the 19th century, and above all with a liturgy differing from that present in the *Liber Usualis*; i.e. the reformed liturgy introduced by Pius X in 1911 (but this, as we shall see later, is unfortunately a constant problem, and one of the unifying motifs of the present review).

One source of reference could, for instance, have been the *Directorium chori* of Giovanni Guidetti, to which John Whenham, for one, turned in his essay “Monteverdi: Vespers (1610)”, published in Cambridge in nel 1997 (not used by Kurtzman because it was, published too late, he says). Unfortunately – and I have to say this regretfully and unwillingly – it is precisely on historical-liturgical questions that Kurtzman shows himself to be too hasty. For example, if we read the chapter dedicated to the Vespers liturgy and the ‘problem’ of the antiphons in the monograph, we at once come across the following statement (p. 56):

The Pius V breviary was the sequel to the deliberations of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) and replaced the reform(ed) breviary of Cardinal Quiñones, which had served the Roman liturgy from 1535 to 1568.

In fact this is not how things were at all. The Quiñones breviary, also known as the Breviary of Santa Croce, was printed with the authorisation of Paul III in 1535, and revoked by Paul IV (1555-1559), then re-approved by Pius IV (1559-1565). Above all, however, it was designed for private recitation, and its use was also optional (hence it was never the official Roman text, which always remained the so-called ‘Curial Breviary’ of Franciscan origins). This essential information is present in summary form in one of the texts to which Kurtzman refers, the “Liturgy of the Hours in the East and the West” by Robert Taft, which has now become a classic. Similarly, a little further on, in the discussion of the use of Marian antiphons in the various hours as

described in the Breviary (p. 58 footnote 3), it is hard to understand the reference to the monks, who followed the *cursus regolare*, and certainly not that of the secular clergy. Once again, I am sorry to have to note these things: possibly they are an indication of a certain carelessness in dealing with the history of the liturgy, which we will unfortunately encounter again later on.

2.

Kurtzman's edition of the Vespers was reviewed, among others, by Paul McCreesh in *Early Music*, XXVIII, 2000, pp. 658-660, which is interesting because it presents the viewpoint of the performer (as is well known, McCreesh is the director of the distinguished Gabrieli Consort). He opens by pointing out that a great deal of the music of the 17th century continues to remain unpublished, and even unknown. In order to fill this gap, a series of publications has been produced by Garland, dedicated specifically to "Seventeenth-Century Italian Sacred Music". This is a series of twenty-five volumes divided into three main headings: music for the Ordinary of the Mass (vols. 1-10), music for Vespers and Compline (vols. 11-20), and motets (vols. 21-25). So far all the volumes of the Mass and almost all those of Vespers are already available, while in 2001 the first two volumes of motets are planned – both dedicated to Alessandro Grandi. The publishing scheme is imposing – and is such as to make this collection of vital importance to anyone wishing to study 17th-century music. In some ways it could be combined with another collection from Garland: *Solo motets from the Seventeenth Century*, but it stands on its own as an autonomous work. The editors of this volume are Anne Schnoebelen for the Masses, Jeffrey Kurtzman for the Vespers and Compline, and Elizabeth Roche for the motets. Each volume contains a common section, or the "General Introduction" and the "Editorial Methods", the specific introduction, divided into various parts, which we shall discuss later, and the modern transcription of the music.

Naturally, it is impossible to review all of the volumes, at least in the context of a general discussion like the present one, but it is certainly possible to note the totality of the work and its characteristics. While it is essential to stress once again the importance of this work, which is in fact the first serious attempt to give an overall picture of the repertoire of Italian sacred music of the 17th century, it nevertheless seems right to raise a few doubts which inevitably arise when faced with a work of this dimension. The reasons for doubt appear when we examine the general plan of the work, since it is possible to detect a certain imbalance in its overall division: while it is true (as is stressed in the General Introduction which begins each volume) that the motet is "the first genre in which the church composer experiment-

ed with the new styles”, it seems strange, then, that the editors decided to publish only five volumes dedicated to the motet as opposed to the twenty dedicated to the Mass and to Vespers and Compline. The chronological contexts also seem to place further stress on the separation between the two blocks: for the Masses and Vespers and Compline, the chosen composers occupy the whole of the 17th century (1600-1700), while for the motets they are only from the first half of the century (1600-1650). The choice of composers, obviously, is purely a matter of opinion, above all for those musicians who are almost completely unknown today, except for the great figures (though a major figure such as Lodovico Viadana is represented only in some of the volumes dedicated to Vespers and Compline). Inclusions and omissions could lend themselves to many critical observations, and this is all part of the rules of the game, but it remains difficult to explain certain incongruous elements which we might summarise as follows:

- the volumes dedicated to motets seem to leave out (at least for the present, unless some future change of direction occurs) the first decade of the century – thus excluding, apart from Viadana, composers such as Leone Leoni, Antonio Burlini, Arcangelo Crotti or Severo Bonini, to mention just a few chosen at random. Moreover, the range of musicians presented is quite restricted (Grandi, Rigatti, Rovetta, Capello, Caprioli, Donati, Crivelli, Merula, Marini, Tarditi, Fontei, Casati, Capuana). Again, there is a lack of collections of motets from the Roman environment (the printed collections of Agazzari, Giovanni Francesco Anerio, or Giovanni Bernardino Nanino);
- no musician from the Milanese circle is taken into consideration (Cima, Baglioni, Grancini etc., not to mention the important anthology of Lucino); I would not like to think that this is a matter of reiterating the same old commonplace about the presumed conservatism of Milan (which, if it existed at all – and that is still to be proven – only affected the Cathedral);
- composers working in Rome are almost entirely absent; some of them are considered only in the volumes dedicated to Vespers and Compline, and almost fleetingly in the those dealing with the Mass (Graziani and Foggia, i.e. musicians active in the second half of the century). But Benevoli, for example, is completely absent;
- more generally, there is a lack of any reference to music written and printed south of Rome;
- the so-called ‘antique style’ (I use the term used in the general introduction, avoiding any discussion of the legitimacy or otherwise of its use) is to a great extent left out; in this case too I fear there may be a basic prejudice deriving from a somewhat partial view of composition during the course of the 17th century;
- finally, we might ask why not dedicate volumes 11-20 more generally to the music for the Divine Office, thus also including transcriptions of collections

of the Lamentations and the responsories for Holy Week, for example?²²

The resulting picture is thus quite clear: the collection takes into consideration sacred music in the concertato style composed by composers working for the most part in the area of the Po Valley and the Veneto (I forgot to mention that Florentine composers are also largely ignored). It is an absolutely legitimate choice to make, and in some respects invites agreement; but it is hard to understand why this could not have been stated clearly and honestly, at least in the General Introduction.

The introductions to the individual volumes are divided into various points, and contain both historical information and questions more strictly affecting the philological aspect, as is shown by the presence of a critical apparatus (“Editorial Comments and Corrections”) in which errors in the original editions and questions concerning accidentals are pointed out, and the various changes of clef in the basso continuo parts are dealt with in minute detail. The context-setting is necessarily summary: a portrait of the composer and the work chosen, some illustration of the characteristics of the composition, some analytical notes, and some very limited bibliographical references. Unfortunately there are also certain passages which tend to embarrass the reader (and even more the reviewer). I will just cite a couple of emblematic cases, though we could find many, mainly in a bibliography that is exclusively based on the sources in English and completely excludes studies in Italian (and, to a lesser though still significant extent German), following a custom that is becoming increasingly common. To ignore the works of Maurizio Padoan on Santa Maria Maggiore in Bergamo,²³ for instance, and refer exclusively to the pioneering 1966²⁴ essay of Roche means giving a restrictive and outdated interpretation of the musical repertoire of that important institution (cf. vol. 3, p. XV). It is also worth noting that modern editions are hardly ever mentioned – and not everything found in these volumes is previously unpublished.

²² We are also baffled by the decision to ignore completely the Requiem Mass, motivated by the purely quantitative assertion that “Printed Requiem masses are few”. There are at least fifty printed Requiems, not all that impressive a number perhaps but certainly significant, if we think of the role that these compositions played in the fifty years prior to the 17th century.

²³ MAURIZIO PADOAN, *La musica in S. Maria Maggiore a Bergamo nel periodo di Giovanni Cavaccio (1598–1626)*, Como, AMIS, 1983; ID., “Sulla struttura degli ultimi mottetti di Alessandro Grandi”, *Rivista internazionale di musica sacra*, VI, 1985, pp. 7-66: 8-13; ID., “Un modello esemplare di mediazione nell’Italia del Nord: S. Maria Maggiore a Bergamo negli anni 1630-1657”, *ibid.*, XI, 1990, pp. 115-57; ID., “Giovanni Legrenzi in Santa Maria Maggiore a Bergamo”, in *Giovanni Legrenzi e la Cappella Ducale di San Marco*, atti dei convegni internazionali di studi (Venezia, 24-26 May 1990, Clusone, 14-16 September 1990), edited by Francesco Passadore and Franco Rossi, Firenze, Olschki, 1994 (Quaderni della Rivista italiana di musicologia, 29), pp. 9-27.

²⁴ JEROME ROCHE, “Music at S. Maria Maggiore, Bergamo, 1614-1643”, *Music & Letters*, XLVII, 1966, pp. 296-314.

In volume 14, dedicated to compositions for Vespers and Compline for four voices, there is a *De profundis* by Lodovico Viadana, taken from his *Officium defunctorum* of 1600. At a certain point, the editor, Kurtzman, observes that the psalm is composed “in the fourth tone, rather than in the eighth, where the plainchant version is found in the *Liber Usualis* (p. 1774). Indeed, in the 16th and early 17th centuries, *De profundis* was often set polyphonically in the fourth tone, which was typically associated with texts of lamentations and anguish” (p. XV). Apart from the fact that the affective characteristics were associated with the ecclesiastical modes and not with the psalm tones, why again was it necessary to refer to the *Liber usualis*? Even more so, because in the post-Tridentine liturgy, the tone designated for Psalm 129 is the seventh, not the eighth (and it could also be mentioned that among the officiating rites for the dead, the designated 7th tone is almost always used for this psalm. On this point, may I refer to my own contribution on the polyvocal *Officia defunctorum*, which appeared in the *Rivista internazionale di musica sacra*, XI, 1990, pp. 156-213).

Embarrassment reaches mammoth proportions with the next example. Volume 2, edited by Anne Schnoebelen, is extremely interesting since it publishes some of the first Masses to make use of independent obbligato instrumental parts, and in particular the compositions of Giovanni Francesco Capello (1615), Amadio Freddi (1616) and Ercole Porta (1620; a full complement could have been obtained by including the *Apparato musicale* of Amante Franzoni dated 1613). In the introduction there is a brief reference to the various uses that are made of the instruments (reinforcing, substituting, introducing, etc.) in certain works and composers (such as the movements present in the *Symphoniae sacrae* part II of Giovanni Gabrieli). It also mentions that “Adriano Banchieri, in 1609, described a mass by one Bastiano (the work no longer exists) in which instruments were used to replace some voices in the four-choir work”. This observation had already appeared in an article which Schnoebelen herself published in 1990;²⁵ but the celebrated passage by Banchieri, taken from the *Conclusioni nel Suono dell’Organo* (Bologna, 1609) says something rather different (the italics are mine):

Hora ritrovandomi (si come ho detto) io colà [ovvero a Verona, nel monastero di Santa Maria degli Organi] fui richiesto dal M.R.P.D. Carlo Malabbia Abbate allhora di quel luogo, componere una Messa per tale occasione [la cosiddetta festa della Muletta per la Domenica delle Palme], ond’io più per obediencia, che sufficiencia mi addorsai tale carico, & con la norma datami R.D. Bastiano detto il Musico Bavierante, composi una Messa in

²⁵ ANNE SCHOEBELEN, “The Role of the Violin in the Resurgence of the Mass in the 17th Century”, *Early Music*, XVIII, 1990, pp. 537-542.

concerto, a quattro Chori, la quale faceva effetto di otto Chori, il primo erano tre Violini da braccio, & una voce in tenore, secondo Choro altre quattro Viole con voci a quelle appropriate, il terzo quattro Viole da Gamba con altre tanti voci humane, & appresso l'ultimo tre Tromboni, & una voce in contr'altro.

It seems to me that Banchieri is here describing something far more complex than the normal practice of substitution (the presence of favoured choirs and choirs with full vocal and instrumental complement, it should be noted, make use of terminology which from then onward was to become customary, as well as the crossed disposition which we later find in the German composers such as Schütz, for example). As regards the paternity of the Mass, I do not think it is necessary to make any further points or comments.

In more strictly philological terms the work shows quite a few deficiencies and incongruities. First of all, let us say at once that we are not here dealing with critical editions, but with editions based on a single source, usually represented by the first edition. If the latter is missing or lacking some of the part books, use is made of the first usable reprint. The repertoire used for reference is evidently only and exclusively the RISM; otherwise, it cannot be understood why, when publishing a fauxbourdon for voice and continuo by Viadana taken from the very famous *Cento concerti ecclesiastici*, no reference is made to the *princeps* of 1602, which has come down to us complete and is now preserved in Krakow, in the Berlin archive (and hence not in the *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales*, hereafter RISM) but to the reprint of 1605 (vol. 11). A decision of this kind is perhaps inevitable, given the character of the series, and above all the fact that we are not here presented with the work of a team; however, the choice of a copy for publication does not always seem to reveal that there has been some preliminary check on the copy itself. I will give an instance: in Volume 2, already mentioned above, because of an evident error, perhaps only in the final pagination, the references to the sources and the libraries which preserve them are completely missing, which means that reference must be made to the repertoire. A check in RISM tells us that the only surviving example copy of the Motets and Dialogues of Capello containing the *Missa ad votum* (which, by the way, is not exactly a “parody mass”, as I sought to show in a contribution published in the miscellany *Intorno a Monteverdi*, Lucca, LIM, 1999) is conserved in the Biblioteca Capitolare of Verona, and that this is therefore the “source” cited in the critical notes; in the latter, however, no mention is made of the fact that all the concluding part of the Kyrie of the basso continuo, corresponding to bars 86-99, is handwritten on a stave stuck on to the printed copy, on which is annotated the same reading of the chitarroni part. In Krakow, however, again of Berlin provenance, there is another complete copy, which allows us

to verify how at various points the basso continuo and chitarroni by no means coincide; for the most part, the basso continuo is notated an octave above (and this could be the reason why an unknown musician felt the need to rewrite the passage), and has a crotchet instead of a rest at b. 94 (Ex. 4). There is also a rhythmic variant in the penultimate bar (Ex. 5).

If there were any need for it, here is yet further proof that even the decision to make use of one copy of one source should be assessed critically and not made lightly, as happens all too often (something which also applies, or should apply, to facsimile editions). The original printed collections are never described, and the list of written testimonies is limited to the indication of the example used for the transcription.

The editorial criteria are listed under “Editorial Methods”, and they are of a critical-diplomatic kind: values and mensural notations are maintained (but even in this case the compositions in **C** are always divided at the semi-breve), and there are various indications concerning *musica ficta*. The individual editions have the aim of being “both practical and faithful to the original sources”; while a good deal could be said about the notion of fidelity (and we have already said something about it), it is hard to gather what the ‘practical’ side of these transcriptions can be said to be. There is a complete absence of any discussion or indeed indication (even simple bibliographical information) concerning the *tactus* and its oscillation from one case to another between *semibreve* and crotchet; nor is the problem of the correct interpretation of the *tiple-time* sections dealt with – the semi-graphy of these is usually referred to a customary notation linked to the traditional *ordo mensuralis* (and hence produces problems of possible misunderstanding), and the decision to transcribe instrumental parts (specified or not) in the octave G clef is somewhat curious, as it is a clef which no instrument uses. In the Porta’s mass (vol. 2) we find the two tenor trombones given this form of notation, while in instrumental melodies inserted into the *Messa Liquide perle amor* by Milanuzzi both the viola and the alto trombone are similarly transcribed in the octave G clef (nor does I find it appropriate to transcribe the mezzo-soprano viola in the G clef, since the “violetta” currently adopts this clef). In other cases, on the other hand, as in the masses of Cazzati, the C clef is left; but we do not know if there is any criterion, or if so, what it is.

The importance of the series is undeniable, as we stated at the outset, but there are many shadows which obscure the individual volumes. Perhaps it is yet another missed opportunity regarding a repertoire which is too neglected, for the most varied reasons, sometimes ignored and viewed with hostility by the very people who should be its primary defenders (and I am referring to liturgical music as a whole, not just that of the 17th century).

3.

We move on now to the last edition in this review. It concerns, a composition published in the early 17th century. The work is not in concertato style; it is dedicated to the Divine Office but not to Vespers, and is by a quite well-known composer, Lodovico Viadana. The figure of Viadana is still, even today, indissolubly linked with the *Cento Concerti Ecclesiastici*, but it suffers from a strange paradox (as is the case, in fact, with many other composers): he is a musician mentioned by everyone, but one whose music is hardly available in terms of modern editions. Even his most famous work has not had the fortune to find a complete edition (Gallico's 1964 edition stopped at the end of the first volume), and only a minimal, though important, part of his production (the *Sinfonie musicali* for eight voices of 1610, the Psalms for four choirs of 1612 and little else) is available to the modern scholar and performer. We must greet the edition of the *Lamentationes Hieremiae prophetae a quattro voci pari* and the *Responsoria ad Lamentationes Hieremiae prophetae a quattro voci*, with great enthusiasm and lively expectation. These were published in two distinct but complementary volumes in 1609; the volume edited by Giovanni Acciai, is published by Suvini Zerboni in the series "Quaderni della Cartellina – Polifonia Sacra", directed by Acciai himself.

The edition is divided into an Introduction for the presentation and description of the context of the work, a Note to the musical edition, the transcription of the texts, and the edition itself, in which the pieces are appropriately arranged not according to the order of the printed versions, but according to the real liturgical succession. Unfortunately, the volume, apart from having an inordinate number of typographical errors (together with some omissions of sentence-ends, which leaves the argument in mid-air; e.g. the beginning of p. VIII) – is open to a series of observations of a general kind, in my view all the more relevant in that the edition is not aimed at the specialist but more broadly and, I would say, at a more popular audience, in the proper sense of the term. In the introduction we are already taken aback by the almost total lack of bibliographical references, either taken for granted or simply ignored. The by now classical monograph on Viadana by Federico Mompellio (one of the masters of Italian musicology whom it is frankly distressing to find referred to merely as "a Genoese musicologist": perhaps this is yet another sign of our ungrateful and memoryless times) is assumed but not explicitly cited.²⁶ The name of Giuseppe Vale (p. IX) should refer to the essay article (written with Luigi Asioli): "Il P. Lodovico Viadana maestro di cappella a Portogruaro e a Fano", published in 1924 in the never sufficiently

²⁶ FEDERICO MOMPPELLIO, *Lodovico Viadana musicista fra due secoli*, Firenze, Olschki, 1967.

appreciated journal *Note d'archivio*, which is also used abundantly without the bibliographical details being given. Among other things, some statements are made which do not entirely correspond to the truth, or have lacunae:

1. it is not strictly true to say that there are no original documents relating to Viadana, since a handful of letters in his own hand do exist;
2. the exact year in which he stayed in Rome is not known (but on p.VIII part of the text is missing);
3. before moving on to Reggio Emilia he was vicar in Cremona, at the Convent of San Luca; and with regard to the period in which he was in the city in Emilia, it would have been useful to consult (and cite) the essay of Giancarlo Casali on music in the Cathedral of Reggio Emilia in the final decade of the 16th century and the first of the 17th. This essay contains interesting observations about Viadana.²⁷

I am genuinely puzzled by the decision not to cite at least the studies which most closely concern the Introduction itself, and in some ways have been used for its compilation. A choir director might also be curious to know something more.

Turning to the way in which the work is placed in its exact context, in other words the liturgy of Holy Week and the sacred three days of the Passion, the “imprecisions” (to put it mildly) begin to appear almost at once. What meaning, for instance, has the following statement: “The liturgical text of the three days of the Passion is that proposed by the Council of Trent (1548–1563). The Tridentine version diverges at some points from the *Editio Vaticana* in use until the 2nd Vatican Council” (p. IX)? The official liturgical text subsequent to the Council of Trent was that introduced in the Breviary promulgated by Pius V in 1568 (of which, moreover, a very recent facsimile reprint exists),²⁸ and any further modifications or corrections should be sought in the revisions which the Breviary underwent subsequently, especially in the Clementine edition of 1602. The term *Editio Vaticana* is simply related to the books with music which carry the melodic versions re-established by the monks of Solesmes, not to an official text (no liturgical book with music has ever, in fact, been official). Certainly, the liturgical texts are those present in the Breviary, but in the first place the two things should not be confused, and

²⁷ GIANCARLO CASALI, “La cappella musicale della Cattedrale di Reggio Emilia all’epoca di Aurelio Signoretti (1567-1631)”, *Rivista italiana di musicologia*, VIII, 1973, pp. 181-224.

²⁸ *Breviarium romanum. Editio princeps (1568)*, facsimile reprint with introductory notes and appendix by Manlio Sodi, Achille Maria Triacca, and Maria Gabriella Foti, Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1999 (Monumenta liturgica Concilii Tridentini, 3); *Caeremoniale episcoporum (1600)*, facsimile reprint with introductory notes and appendix by Manlio Sodi, Achille Maria Triacca, Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2000 (Monumenta liturgica Concilii Tridentini, 4).

secondly the *Editio Vaticana* which is commonly referred to, or the selections made by the *Liber Usualis*, is based on the reform of the Divine Office carried out by Pius X in 1911.

The reader is even more baffled when faced with the following observation (p. IX): “After the final prayer the faithful made a certain amount of noise and disorderly crashing to represent the convulsions of nature at the death of Jesus: when the racket ceased the candle lit behind the altar was taken up again, as a sign of the resurrection and placed on the altar and then snuffed out.” As in all the rest of the text, no indication is given of the source of such information: the *Caeremoniale episcoporum* of 1600, Book II, ch. XXII, is quite clear on the matter, but not exactly in the way that has just been stated:

Qua oratione finita [Respice quaesumus], caerimoniarius manu scabellum, seu librum percutiens per breve spatium strepitum, fragoremque fecit, & a caeteris fit, donec caerimoniarius cereum praedictum accensum, qui fuerat absconditus, in medio profert, quo prolato, omnes cessare debent a strepitu. Finito strepitu, Episcopus, & omnes surgunt, & recedunt eodem modo, & ordine, quo venerant.

The “caeteri” of which mention is made here are, naturally, those who are taking an active part in the rite (Bishop, canons, cantors, etc.) not the gathering of the faithful present at the rite. One of the risks of Acciai’s statement, of which, I repeat, the source is unknown, is that of superimposing actual practice and liturgical customs which are in fact very different and distant in time from one another.

The apparent problem of liturgical texts in part rendered into music in their entirety (those of the Responsories) and in part substantially reduced, as with the Lamentations, is not tackled. The choices made by Viadana respond to an extremely symmetrical design (for each *lectio*), three solo sections introduced by the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and the conclusion “Jerusalem, Jerusalem”, apart, naturally, from the introduction to the first reading of the day). But they are such as to abbreviate the original *lectiones*, as can be seen in the majority of the polyphonic Lamentations (and this is even mentioned by Acciai himself on p. XI, but once again basing the comparison only on the *Editio Vaticana*). It should perhaps be remembered that, by a custom going back at least to the 15th century, the nocturnal service of Mattins on the Three Days was anticipated on the evening of the day before, in order to make the presence of the faithful possible. Chapter XXII of the previously mentioned *Caerimoniale Episcoporum* is, significantly, entitled: “De Matutinis Tenebrarum quartae, quintae, & sextae feriae maioris hebdomadae”, because the bishop enters the church “quarta feria hora vigesima prima,

vel circa” (and traces of this are also to be found in the printed music: cf. for example, the Lamentations, Benedictus, and Miserere to be sung on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in Holy Week in the evening, in the Mattins by Giovanni Francesco Capello, published in Verona in 1612). Without entering into the complex problem of the paraliturgies of Holy Week in Latin and in the common tongue, within which the Lamentations and other parts of the Divine Office find a place, it is enough to note that just for reasons of ordinary practice, it would have been fairly obvious that the texts were not intoned musically in their entirety (a great deal of time would have been needed); and above all it should never be forgotten that polyphonic music, even when it is composed for a liturgical text, matches it but never substitutes it.²⁹ On this point too, one cannot help noting the total lack of bibliographical indications, including the very recent contribution by John Bettley specifically dedicated to these important aspects of the text.³⁰

I do not wish to comment on the editor’s observations on the music, since these are personal opinions, though perhaps a little too general and aesthetically based. However, it could be said that the reasons for a comparison with Palestrina are far from clear, since we are in quite a different geographical, cultural, expressive and stylistic context. (Viadana mainly uses a declamatory form of polyphony), and the question of poetic music would deserve quite different consideration. But at least on two or three points one may be permitted some observations.

The description of the historical context and compositional quality of Viadana clearly presented by Mompellio is far more complex than Acciai acknowledges on p. XIII. Among other things, after expressing a flattering judgement on the expressive results attained in the Lamentations, (in p. 70 of his monograph), Mompellio expresses serious doubts about the results attained in the Responsories: “in the almost absolute homorhythm of this book, lazy writing in the fauxbourdon recurs frequently, and does not contribute to diminishing its musical poverty” (p. 71).

On p. X we read the following statement: “This ponderous body of music destined for the liturgy of Holy Week, for the first time gathered together in a modern edition, was composed by Viadana following the dispositions issued by the Council of Trent concerning sacred music”. We may legitimately ask

²⁹ On this fundamental aspect, which affects all liturgical music, it will be enough to refer to the clear words of Lorenzo Bianconi, *Il Seicento*, Torino, EdT, 1987 (Storia della musica a cura della Società italiana di musicologia, 4), pp. 111-112.

³⁰ JOHN BETTLEY, “‘La compositione lacrimosa’: musical style and text selection in north-Italian Lamentations settings in the second half of the sixteenth century”, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, CXVIII, 1993, pp. 167-202.

what were such dispositions – but here too, there is no bibliographical reference. Without bothering to cite works which have become virtual classics (Lockwood, Fellerer, but also Fabbri, Besutti e Borromeo in the Proceedings of 1989),³¹ we limit ourselves to referring to a very recent contribution, and one in Italian, by Giacomo Baroffio. Here the distinguished scholar, commenting on the very few passages in the Tridentine Decrees in which music is mentioned, (two, in effect), clearly that “it is thus necessary to distinguish the historiographical knowledge from the collective imagination which is always in search of scapegoats to demonise and condemn, or of heroes to admire and in whom it sees its own ideals reflected”.³² The discussion which took place and which we know about from various sources is one thing; the official dispositions published in the Decrees are quite another. And these contain only deliberately general references to the dignity of sacred music, without even the much-cited, and not always relevant, “*verba ab omnibus percipi possint*” (this celebrated passage is part of the text prepared in the general meeting of 10th September 1562, but it has no place in the final decree relating to the 22nd session of 17th September).³³ Evidently we are here faced with a commonplace which will not lie down, despite the various writings on the matter in more or less recent times.

This volume, it should not be forgotten, is substantially a modern edition; so it is now time to pass on to the more specifically scholarly part. The intention of the editor is twofold: practicality and scholarly rigour. In the first case the editor has sought to render “clear and comprehensible the original written text, eliminating, as far as possible, the majority of the interpretative problems at a semiographic level”. In fact, since all the compositions are in *tempus perfectus diminutum* (♩), there are not so much problems of a semiographic type as of a semiological or semantic type. The editor, as is his custom, has adopted indiscriminately the modern indication of 2/♩ (sometimes substituted by

³¹ *La cappella musicale nell'Italia della Controriforma*, atti del convegno internazionale di studi nel IV centenario di fondazione della Cappella Musicale di S. Biagio di Cento (Cento, 13-15 ottobre 1989), ed. by Oscar Mischiati e Paolo Russo, Firenze, Olschki, 1993 (Quaderni della Rivista italiana di musicologia, 27).

³² GIACOMO BAROFFIO, “Il concilio di Trento e la musica”, in *Musica e liturgia nella riforma tridentina*, Catalogue of the exhibition (Trento, Castello del Buonconsiglio, 23 September - 26 November 1995), edited by Danilo Curti and Marco Gozzi, Trento, Provincia Autonoma di Trento - Servizio Beni Librari e Archivistici, 1995, pp. 9-17; pp. 19-29. Reference can also be made to OSCAR MISCHIATI, “Il Concilio di Trento e la polifonia. Una diversa proposta di lettura e di prospettiva bibliografica”, *ibid.*, pp. 19-29, equally useful for the understanding of the real problems of the material, even if vitiated by some basic prejudices, and old-fashioned in its approach, especially when compared to Baroffio's essay.

³³ See for example FIORENZO ROMITA, *Ius musicae liturgicae. Dissertatio historico-juridica*, Torino, Marietti, 1936, pp. 59-60.

1/♩ or by 3/♩ to indicate a shortening or a broadening of the mensura), and has halved the values, indicating the equivalent at the beginning of each piece (but without making explicit mention of them in the criteria). This is something which perhaps for the compositions published in 1609 would have required at least some kind of observation. The discussion concerning the meaning of the tactus is confined substantially to a note (p. XVI note 5, line 6). In this, general reference is made to a dogmatic teaching of the fifteenth and sixteenth century, but in my opinion (and not only mine) above all in the years at the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th century it would be better to keep the concepts of tactus and mensura separate, as the former, influenced more and more decisively by the new rhythmic demands required by the concertato style, fluctuates comfortably between the semibreve and the minim, and sometimes even the crotchet, while the latter, at least at the level of metrical organisation visible in the barlines placed in the scores, in the basso continuo parts and often in the instrumental parts, remains mainly tied to the understood value of ♩ and ♪ or the tempus, and hence the breve. It is certainly true that the tactus indicates a maximum ‘non-clockwork’ speed (as Acciai stresses): it is a given fact, of which theorists have much to say, and is to such an extent an accepted datum that it should not require any further specification. In support of it, Acciai quotes certain passages of the *Musicae praecepta* by Eucharius Hoffmann, to arrive at the conclusion that from this evidence “it is evident that in the very period in which the Lamentations and the Responsories saw the light of day, there was a progressive abandonment in progress of the concept of the agogically fixed tactus in favour of a differentiated rhythmic scansion, changeable according to the mensurae to which it refers” (p. XVI). Sometimes doubts can arise as a result of over-summary formulations, and these are even more serious if the destination of a work is not strictly specialist in character. We know very well how the tactus was interpreted in an absolutely rigid and binding manner (to confine the argument to one case, we need only mention the question of the succession ♩ - ♪). But even if this were true, would it be enough for us to take as a model the evidence of a single theoretician, a German, who published in Wittemberg in 1572, to explain subsequent more complex phenomena which occurred in the area of Italy? Would it not have been more appropriate to refer to some Italian theorist and composer of the end of the 16th or beginning of the 17th century, such as Banchieri or Rossi or Pisa, not to mention Brunelli? And are we so sure that the differentiated and changeable rhythmic scansions are in some way suggested by the mensurae and not rather by the notation? Just to take an example, Monteverdi, in his Marian Vespers of 1610, uses simply the ♩ for pieces that are quite different from one another, such as the *Ave maris stella* on the one hand and the *Duo seraphim* on the other. And to confine ourselves to Viadana and the work in question, we could bear in mind that

the ♪ is adopted in both the printed versions, but its significance is quite different. The composer gives an interesting warning before the Lamentations to ‘musical virtuosi’, which unfortunately (and we don’t know why), is hardly considered by the editor. But, although included in the Mompellio monograph on pages 149-151, we think that it is worth reproducing in its entirety, including the parts omitted by Acciai in italics:

No basso continuo has been made for these Lamentations, because to speak the truth this sort of Music which recites will always create a better effect (with) only four good voices, which sing with gravity and without adornment, than being accompanied by instruments. But placing themselves always at the barline with wide measure, singing clearly and distinctly, will produce great results: and where some affect in the music is found, exclaim with grace, holding the measure somewhat in the air, and at the same time making the cadenza languish with pity. The fauxbourdon has not been omitted because this place has already been occupied by others, but also because all the words are never sung equally. In this way, therefore, I am sure that by regulating things as I have explained above, at the same time one will do service to God and give great feeling to the hearers, holding their officebooks in their hand, in hearing those sacred words distinctly, which invite them to weep for their sins.

The Responsories declaimed at the Lamentations should be sung allegro, with a hasty measure, and clamorously, *accompanied by four, and five singers per part*. The fauxbourdon verse should be sung more largo, and by four solo singers, then making the response even with a great deal of din, for by going from one extreme to the other, this variety will be beautiful to the ears. *So let anyone who buys these Lamentations of mine, not be negligently, and buy my Responsories as well, which run along with the tone of the Lamentations. And the Lord our God be with you.*

The composer’s wish to differentiate the *tactus* of the Lamentations distinctly from that of the Responsories is quite clearly expressed here; perhaps in a practical edition such as this one seeks to be, a diversified transcription of the ♪ should have been necessary, or it would have been possible to add (obviously between square brackets) a clear and unequivocal tempo indication capable where necessary of taking account of and stressing the “musical affects” expressly desired but not indicated in the musical text. Moreover, in the parts omitted by the editor, there are also some slight, though interesting hints on the performance practice of the whole ensemble, and on the alternation between soloists and tutti. We are left with the curiosity to see whether such authoritative indications of tempo and ensemble have been considered in

the overall recording, edited by Acciai himself, mentioned on the title-page of the volume: given the premises we doubt it, but we should be pleased to be found wrong.

Other the decisions taken by the editor also raise doubts. For example, it is hard to understand why the Tenor of the Lamentations of Maundy Thursday and Holy Saturday has been transcribed in the bass clef, when both by context and by clef the Alto and Tenor parts are completely similar. A different choice for a similar ensemble is made for the Lamentations for Good Friday, which for modal regions occupy the high clefs; in this context it is a pity that none of the numerous studies, even recent ones, which deal with the question have been cited. They may not be definitive, but they have certainly extended the field of study and are acute in their methods (e.g. the study by Patrizio Barbieri). A modern performer might also be interested in this aspect.

The criteria adopted for the accidentals are fairly simple: in the text the accidentals present in the original printed copy, alongside the note in round brackets are those made for completion, precaution or warning; those above the note are those of uncertain application. While it is understandable that the criterion for differentiating in some way the various phenomena, often due to the addition of the barline (e.g. cases of equal pitch across the barline) (Ex. 6).

I do not understand how cases like the following can be held to be “of uncertain application” as in example 7 and 8), and why certain identical situations should be treated differently (Ex. 9 and 10).

The practical aspect of the work is also repeated for the Latin text, in which the typographical slips are tacitly corrected, and (this is a disputed criterion) “discordant readings” are made uniform in relation to who knows what criteria (discordances between the individual voices? discordances with the official liturgical text?).

As we said before, the second aim of the editor was that of scholarly rigour, or “maximum care in the research, study and analysis of the sources”. The original printed editions are never described, nor is any reference made to library repertoires or catalogues, or more simply to the bibliographical indications in Mompellio’s monograph. It is not even mentioned in which book the *Miserere*, the *Benedictus* with its related antiphons, and the *Christus factus est* are to be found. The list of the surviving copies (with specific details of their state of preservation) is only made for the Lamentations and not for the Responsory, of which two examples remain, respectively in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale of Bologna (in complete form) and in the Biblioteka Uniwersytecka of Warsaw (with Cantus missing). A reprint of the Lamentations was made, dated 1610 (according to the editor, a sign of the great sales success which the work encountered in the religious institutions for which it was intended), but it does not seem that these reprints have been collated with the *princeps*. On the other hand, there is no proper critical appa-

ratus but only occasional references in the footnotes beneath the music concerning details of Renaissance semiography (such as the sharp before the G without any alteration in clef to avoid the application of the F above A (“fa supra la”), and consequent lowering of the note, pp. 18 and 19. This is an important information for the modern performer, who in my opinion, would require some explanation (as with the sharp wrongly retained on p. 11, or the modification of the Alto proposed on p. 207). In these cases, reference is simply and solely made to an “Orig.,” and it is impossible to find anything about the reprint. It could well be that it is in every way and all respects identical to the first edition, but this should in any case be stated (otherwise it is pointless to invoke scholarly scruple).

Finally, the last section really defies understanding: “The intonations and the Gregorian versicles, expressly provided for by the Ludovician press, serve the mere function of recognition of a consolidated usage, differentiated according to places and times, and should in no way be taken as ‘reconstruction’ of a specific executive performing practice” (p. XVII). What does this mean? That the psalm intonations for the *Miserere*, the *Benedictus* and the antiphons to the canticle and, above all, the missing versicles to alternate with the polyphony are present in the original printed version? Obviously not. In the print there are the intonations for the antiphons, the first hemistich of the *Benedictus*, and verse 2 of the psalm *Miserere* (which in the printed version follows the *Benedictus*, since it is perhaps not viewed as the first psalm for Lauds but more probably as its repetition at the end of the Office. But it is obvious that both these options are possible). For practical reasons, which can be completely comprehended, the editor has added in both all the even versicles, but why does the *Benedictus* have the polyphonic verses in Tone I, with differentia D, and the verses in Gregorian chant in Tone I with differentia G (and the polyphonic versicles begin with triads of D, F and A)? Why was no check made between the versions of the antiphons set to music by Viadana (which can sung in full, because the melody is present in its entirety in the bass line, according to a compositional technique of which this composer was very fond), and the versions in use in the period (for example those transmitted in the printed antiphonals from Venice)? And can simple psalm tones be taken as models for knowledge of “«usages consolidated and differentiated according to times and places”?

In 1983 the “C.A. Seghizzi” Choral Association of Gorizia dedicated its 14th European Congress on Choral Music to the theme “Renaissance Musical Semiography. Critique and practice of semantic interpretation”. The proceedings of the congress were edited by Italo Montiglio and published in 1986. On that occasion, Acciai, speaking on the subject of “The theory of the tactus: differing interpretations in modern editions of the vocal semiography of the sixteenth century”, said the following (the essay can be found on pp.

23-45, the quotation on pp. 24-25):

The common opinion, for example, that the polyphony of the sixteenth century presents, at the level of exegesis and interpretation, fewer problems than other later musical expressions, should be firmly rejected. A motet by Brumel or a madrigal by Marenzio are no “easier” than a Mozart symphony or a Chopin prelude [...] In the same way it is simply absurd to think that we can approach the performance of a motet or a madrigal of the Renaissance while setting aside completely the historical, philosophical, social and cultural climate of the times in which they were composed. The further back we go in the course of the centuries, the more indispensable it becomes to know in depth the cultural world, the *Weltanschauung* of the era, of which the music is an expression. There is no other way of explaining certain “performances” - which we will term such only by way of euphemism - in which the language of the sound is travestied in vulgar fashion. [...] Have we ever asked ourselves what a devastating effect, I would almost say a debasement of taste, performances of this kind can provoke? All those who have no specific competence in the field, and thus not immune from such interpretative epidemics, will be fed misleading information and led to consider early music (Renaissance polyphony included) as something which in reality it is not” [The essay can be found on pp. 23-45, the quotation on pp. 24-25]

Every single word here is to be welcomed (perhaps without the polemic, present in the omitted part of the text, against interpreters from “across the Alps”, but that is quite another matter). But should the same criteria not apply to an edition of ancient music? In certain respects an edition of a text included in a widely circulated series (such as “*I quaderni della Cartellina*”) requires greater commitment and greater responsibility than a scientific edition, because the user of the work is quite a different person. We could make a parallel with the care taken in the paperback editions of the classics of literature, we see no reason why a musician should have less claim than a reader of Aeschylus or Dante or Marino when he approaches an unfamiliar repertoire. Furthermore, in my view, the question is even more serious when it concerns sacred music, because of the radical liturgical changes brought about by the Second Vatican Council, and by the absolutely subordinate role which music has come to assume in the liturgy, the blame for which is not so much to be ascribed to the Council’s dispositions (which in their intention are absolutely clear) as to the bad interpretations for the sake of convenience which have been made, in many cases from a populist standpoint.

A final note to conclude: the 3rd and 4th paragraphs of the introduction

have already appeared in No. 4 (April 1996, pp. 10-12) of the journal *Orfeo*, monthly of an informative character dedicated to ancient and baroque music (with a CD included), which can be found on the news-stands. Again, there is no mention of this earlier appearance of part of the text.

(Engl. trans. Brian Williams)