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THE PRACTICE OF MUSIC THEORY IN ENGLAND BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the earliest extant works of music theory printed in England, beginning in the 1590s and continuing into the 1630s. I focus on commercially available writings on music that were sold to a growing group of middle- and upper-class customers, placing the well-known writings of authors like Thomas Morley and Thomas Campion in dialogue with lesser-known authors like Thomas Ravenscroft or the anonymous author of *The Pathway to Musicke*. The goal of this project is to deeply situate these writings and their authors into the cultural, religious, and political climate from which they emerged. By doing this we gain a view of these treatises as engaged with the larger world of music and society. Through this approach, the divergent aims, genres, and intended audiences of this varied body of writing come to light. We are no longer left with a homogenous group of treatises that is uniformly practical in focus. Instead, a diversity of authorial claims and educational projects emerge.

One of the major themes that I develop in this research is the contested and changing nature of *musica practica* in England. This category is neither straightforward nor uniform. It is also remarkably slippery, concealing as much as it reveals. If these treatises are focused on practical music (as they are often taken to be), it is only in a qualified and highly context-dependent sense. For many of the authors studied here, the category of practical music contains elements that have little to do with the actual practice of writing or performing music and more to do with other projects such as professional self-fashioning. By focusing on the individuality of these writings, we gain a more complete and more complicated picture of the work of music theory in early modern England.

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Introduction

Infinite is the sweete varietie that the Theorique of Musicke exerciseth the mind withall, as the contemplation of proportions, of Concords and Discords, diversitie of Moodes and Tones, infinitenesse of Invention, &c. But I dare affirme, there is no one Science in the world, that so affecteth the free and generous spirit, with a more delightfull and in-offensive recreation, or better disposeth the minde to what is commendable and vertuous.

—Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622)[1]

Writing in the third decade of the seventeenth century, Henry Peacham devotes an entire chapter in his conduct manual *The Compleat Gentleman* to the importance of music. (The title page is shown in Figure 0.1.)[2] He writes in praise of both vocal and instrumental music, of English and Continental composers, of sacred and secular music. Peacham stresses the importance of being able to sing and play at sight, and also provides a brief historical and ethical defense of music. He concludes emphatically: "since it [music] is a principall meanes of glorifying our mercifull Creator, it heigthens our devotion, it gives delight and ease to our travailes, it expelleth sadnesse and heavinesse of Spirit, preserveth people in concord and amitie, allaieth fiercenesse and anger; and lastly, is the best Phisicke for many melancholly diseases."[3] In this one chapter, Peacham touches on most of the key issues surrounding music in England at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries while underscoring the importance of music theory.

[1] Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman Fashioning Him Absolute in the Most Necessary & Commendable Qualities Concerning Minde Or Bodie That May Be Required in a Noble Gentleman* (London: Imprinted at London for Francis Constable, 1622), 103.
[2] Note that Scientia is depicted as holding an open music book in her right hand (along with an olive branch).
[3] Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman*, 104.

Figure 0.1 Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman*, title page

As Peacham indicates, the moral and religious acceptability of music was one of those burning questions debated in England in his day. Peacham, of course, comes down firmly in support of music, but he acknowledges that there are many who disagree with his views. The debate would only grow to greater prominence in the coming years with the political ascendency of Puritanism.

The study and performance of music is also viewed as a necessary component of the complete gentleman's life. Reflecting the increasing availability and popularity of string instruments, Peacham notes the importance not only of being able to sing but also to be able to play the viol or lute. He additionally encourages the prospective gentleman to imitate the works of famous composers from England and Italy. As is to be expected from a courtesy manual, Peacham does not go into detail about the music-theoretical minutiae that a gentleman should know, but, as the opening quote implies, the young gentleman needs to have an understanding of "the Theorique of Musicke," which is to say, to understand how music works, both in order to properly perform it and for his own moral edification.[4] The young gentleman of early seventeenth century England would have found himself in a place with unprecedented access to musical instruments, printed music, and books about music. It is this last category that is the topic of this study.

[4] Peacham was neither the first nor last writer to make such a claim. Like many other writers he was careful to treat music as an important amateur recreation and not a suitable profession for a gentleman, both because of the lower status associated with laboring for a living and because of the presumed moral laxity of musicians. As early as 1531 Thomas Elyot wrote in support of music in the education of young statesmen but cautioned against its excesses. He writes, "It were therfore better that no musike were taughte to a noble man, than by the exacte knowledge therof he shuld have ther in inordinate delite: and by that be illected to wantonnesse, abandonyng gravitie and the necessary cure and office in the publike weale to him comitted." Thomas Elyot, *The Boke Named the Governour Devised by Thomas Elyot Knight* (London: In edibus Tho. Bertheleti, 1531), fols. 23r–23v.

Scope and Aims

This dissertation focuses on the earliest vernacular music treatises printed in England, starting at the end of the sixteenth century and stopping at the outbreak of the English Civil War. Table 0.1 gives a chronological list of the treatises studied in this dissertation. To be sure, important writing on music had been produced in the British Isles for centuries, but much of it concerned the shared musical practices of Christian Europe.[5] After the Reformation in England (which began in the early sixteenth century and took decades to do, undo, and then redo), English music increasingly diverged from Continental practice. The rise of a uniquely English music culture combined with a growing middleclass market for printed material, an explosion in the number of music prints, and an increasing acceptance of writing in the vernacular meant the time was ripe for a wave of printed music treatises in English.

1596	Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*
1596	Anonymous, *The Pathway to Musicke*
1597	Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*
1609	Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus*
1614	Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point*
1614	Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse*
1636	Butler, *The Principles of Musik*

Table 0.1 Timeline of Major Music Treatises

What motivated people in England to write about music at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries? What exactly did they write about, and what forms did it

[5] For example, the treatise of Theinred of Dover (twelfth century), the treatise of Coussemaker's Anonymous IV (*De mensuris et discantu*) (late thirteenth century), the treatises of John Hothby (fifteenth century), or even the writing on music attributed to John Dygon (early sixteenth century).

take? For that matter, what kind of people were these writers? The overwhelming majority seemed to be made up of educated men who were either musicians or members of the professional class. Writers on music included professional musicians, professors, entrepreneurs, clergy, and doctors, often existing in surprising combinations of these professions for a single writer. At a time when literacy was expanding but far from universal, anyone who published anything was likely to be at least moderately educated. Musical training had long been an important part of the education of elites, but after the dissolution of most of the choral institutions in the aftermath of the English Reformation in the middle of the sixteenth century access to high quality music education became even more difficult for ordinary people to acquire. Many of these writers who were born outside the capital eventually found their way to London, the nation's social and political center.

Even though they might sound homogenous, the educated professional men of London were hardly a uniform group. This is reflected in their writings on music, which took on a variety of forms and foci. These ranged from apologies for music filled with historical and theological sources to lengthy treatises on the nature and practice of music to short primers on playing an instrument. Writing on music was by no means the exclusive domain of musicians or those we might term "music theorists." Everyone from theologians to the authors of conversation manuals seemingly had something to say about music. The main focus of this study, however, is a body of writings that deal directly with the technical aspects of music: how it works, how to sing or play, and how to compose. In other words, these writings concern what may be termed *musica practica*. But, as this dissertation will show, the precise definition of *musica practica* can be quite messy. Importantly, these treatises are not divorced from the contemporaneous moral and

ethical treatments of music; rather, they come from the same cultural milieu and often engage directly with the same debates on the proper place and uses of music in society.

Precisely what motivated individual authors to produce their works is often difficult to ascertain, especially when considering the general lack of information about the lives of most of the authors. Even for writers like Thomas Morley and John Dowland about whom much is known, little evidence exists concerning the genesis of their writings on music. In most cases the published treatises themselves are the best (if not the only) sources on the motivations and aims that their authors had. The situation facing the modern reader is not all that different from the one that an early modern reader would have encountered: the author's reputation precedes him, as might a knowledge of some of his compositions, but beyond that the reader is left to mostly rely on what is contained within the pages of the book.

This study primarily focuses on individual theoretical texts and treats them as unique works that are part of a broader body of theoretical thought. Previous accounts of English music theory at this time have focused on individual elements that a number of treatises share and have attempted to provide a synthetic description of a general English approach to music theory, for example by comparing systems of solfege or how the scale was theorized. Two of the clearest examples of this approach were written by Barry Cooper and Rebecca Herissone.[6] Cooper gives a quick description of each of the major theoretical sources before spending the majority of his study seeing how this mass of theorists treated various elements of music. Herissone, who drew heavily on Cooper's work, structures her entire study around a highly detailed comparison of

[6] Cooper covers the main sources treated in this dissertation but also continues into the eighteenth century. Herissone limits herself mostly to the seventeenth century. Barry Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert," in *Entstehung Nationaler Traditionen: Frankreich-England*, ed. Wilhelm Seidel and Barry Cooper, vol. 9, Geschichte Der Musiktheorie (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1986), 141–314; Rebecca Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

how English theorists conceptualized various musical parameters. While useful, the downside of this approach has been its tendency to homogenize all writers on music regardless of genre or audience. Under this method the teachings and arguments in an instrumental tutor and an erudite treatise are often treated as equivalent. My focus will instead be on individual texts and authors. The analysis resulting from my approach reveals a divergent group of writings on music that addresses different audiences, is marketed towards different goals, and suggests unique solutions to musical problems. This is true even when these writers are in general agreement about some of the more important music-theoretical issues of their day. In short, I hope to recover some of the complexity and differentiation that distinguishes these writings and their authors.

Even though relatively little may be known about the authors of some of these treatises and the circumstances surrounding their publication, it is possible to recover the place in society these writings occupied and the work they accomplished for their readers and the wider public. It is precisely this context that is often absent from studies of early modern English treatises. The connections and disconnections between theoretical ideas and written music have been explored, but the ways in which music-theoretical writings engage with broader ideas throughout early modern England have been investigated much less.[7] This project begins with the earliest extant printed works of music theory in English and puts them back into the rich and varied contexts from which they originally emerged. While acknowledging the often broad consensus shared by writers, I concentrate on the unique goals of individual writers to show the breadth of a body of English musical thought that is often deemed "practical."

[7] The importance of a sophisticated understanding of music to art and poetry, for example, has been studied, but these studies tend to concentrate more on the spiritual and ethical properties of music than the details of how it was theorized. For example, see the classic study by John Hollander, *The Untuning of the Sky: Ideas of Music in English Poetry, 1500–1700.* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961).

England in Contrast to Continental Theory

The problems that motivated much music theoretical writing in continental Europe throughout the sixteenth century were often not taken up in earnest by English writers. Much of this resulted from England's split with the Catholic Church and the subsequent changes to liturgical music in England following the Reformation. For example, in Catholic Europe the question of modal classification (especially mode in polyphony) was one of the leading issues that occupied the attention of music theorists. This is clear to see in two major continental treatises of the sixteenth century: Heinrich Glarean's *Dodecachordon* (1547) and Gioseffo Zarlino's *Le istitutioni harmoniche* (1558). These treatises were hugely influential well into the seventeenth century on the continent, yet they inspired almost no discussion of modal theory among English writers. This is true even among English writers who had direct knowledge of such works. Authors like Thomas Morley and Charles Butler at most treat this modal theorizing as an interesting footnote about a practice that is no longer relevant.

The training of musical beginners in Continental *Lateinschulen* led to the publication of large numbers of manuals of musical rudiments. Because they were aimed at teaching Catholic choirboys, these manuals would seem to have little use in England, especially after the dissolution of the major monastic and cathedral choirs during the English Reformation.[8] In a move that runs somewhat in parallel with developments on the Continent, the English market, too, produced a large number of publications aimed at musical beginners. The major difference is that the English publications were marketed to students as ways to learn to sing and play an

[8] The major exception to this is John Dowland's translation of Andreas Ornithoparchus's *Micrologus*, which is discussed at length in Chapter 3.

instrument in the absence of a teacher while the Continental manuals were textbooks to be used in classrooms.[9]

Starting in the late sixteenth century, when the first music treatises were printed in England, they were almost exclusively written in English. Books on music followed a larger trend in English publishing that increasingly focused on works in the vernacular.[10] England was hardly the only country that saw growth in prints in the vernacular language.[11] For example, during the sixteenth century, Italy saw the production of a number of important music treatises written in Italian, such as those by Pietro Aron, Zarlino, and Vincenzo Galilei. The dominance of the English language in English books on music was a logical, if not inevitable, outgrowth of structural changes to musical training in the sixteenth century. The switch to an English-language liturgy following the Reformation decreased the need for Latin, and the dissolution of the monasteries and their choirs eliminated most of the centers of music education. At the same time, the middle class experienced real growth and increased access to musical instruments. That is, the center of music education moved from training choir boys to sing liturgical music in Latin to training middle- and upper-class amateurs to sing and play instruments at home. Writers and publishers were eager to satisfy the demands of this new and growing market.

[9] Penelope Gouk views the changes in musical training in England as having a substantial impact on the types of theoretical writing produced in England. She writes, "The lack of any systematic writings on music theory by professional musicians in seventeenth-century England mainly came about because they did not go to university, and there was no institutional context (unlike the case of Continental choir schools, for example) where such learning was recognized as valuable. Their socially inferior status as professionals precluded them from having any pretensions as philosophers, even though they might achieve artistic excellence." Penelope Gouk, *Music, Science and Natural Magic in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 68.
[10] Unsurprisingly, Latin was the second most common language represented among publications in England.
[11] Indeed, publication in the English language had been occurring for over a century before a music treatise was published in English. (William Caxton printed the first book in the English language around 1475.)

The Sacred, Secular, and Social Worlds of Music Theory

The period from the end of the sixteenth century up to the outbreak of the English Civil War was marked by intense change in many areas of public and private life. By this point the major work of the Reformation had made England into a solidly Protestant nation, but exactly what this Protestant England would look like was far from settled. This was also a time when the middle class was growing increasingly wealthy and literate and was becoming an incrementally more important force in the market. In the intellectual realm, the first moves towards empiricism and the modern scientific method were being developed. A century later, many of these changes would become settled and the transformations taken for granted, but at the end of the sixteenth century these developments and their effects on society were at the forefront of public debate.[12]

By the late-sixteenth century, the Elizabethan Religious Settlement (beginning with the Act of Supremacy of 1558) had firmly established a Protestant England with the monarch serving as head of both church and state.[13] Given this reality, there could be no real separation between religious and political life, to the extent that anyone in early modern England would even conceive of the present social arrangement in those terms.[14] There remained a small but

[12] Unsurprisingly, the many causes and effects of the Reformation era and what they might mean for Modernity have been the source of continuing scholarly debate. For example, Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) gives the classic account of this time period that privileges the development of movable type. Other writers have focused more on the secularizing potential of the Reformation. For example, see Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983); Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007); Brad S. Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012).

[13] For the by now classic account of the time period leading up to and including the English Reformation see Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c.1400–c.1580*, 2nd ed. (Yale University Press, 2005). For more on the politics of the Reformation see Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

[14] Patrick Collinson, Arnold Hunt, and Alexandra Walsham, "Religious Publishing in England, 1557–1640," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. John Barnard, D. F. McKenzie, and Maureen Bell, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 29.

significant number of recusant Catholics along with a loud and growing number of Puritans, whose prominence would only rise leading up to the Civil War.[15] The political realities of the time meant that complete uniformity of belief and practice could not be enforced.[16] The increasing power of Puritans and their very public denunciations of the use of music in churches provided an added urgency for some musicians to defend their craft.[17] The precarious position of Catholics in Protestant England complicated the lives of a number of musicians, including John Dowland.

The expansion of a literate middle class was an obvious factor in the growth of music publishing and the printing of books on music. Without a sizeable number of people who were both literate and had money to spend, the circulation of music and treatises would have continued to have been confined to the narrow circles of aristocrats and working musicians who had access to these specialized materials.[18] London was the center of English publishing and literacy, with the London Stationer's Company controlling printing in England. However, there was a significant distribution network to sell books throughout England. At this time, the literacy rate of men in London was approximately twice as high as in rural areas; this was likely due to

[15] A. G. Dickens referred to these as the "residual problems" of the Reformation. He also states, "The Elizabethan Settlement was less a pacification than a compromise between contending forces which Elizabeth and her Stuart successors failed to reconcile." A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), 307.
[16] Even twenty-five years after Elizabeth had attempted to solidify the Church of England, there still existed substantial variety of belief in England. The nineteenth-century clergyman G. G. Perry notes, "In an attempt to produce conformity to the legal settlement of the Church of England, the rulers of the Church had to contend—first, against the Nonconformists declared and open; secondly, against the Conformists who sought to evade the law, and under cover of it to establish a system of their own." This former category consisted mainly of Brownists (followers of the Noncomformist Puritan Robert Brown), the Familists (a mystical Dutch Anabaptist group), and the Anabaptists, who Perry claims "were distinguished from the other sects of enthusiasts by holding some especially dangerous *civil heresies*." G. G. Perry, *A History of the Church of England from the Accession of Henry VIII. to the Silencing of Convocation in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1880), 315.
[17] For the classic account of Puritanism in this era see Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1964).
[18] Although manuscripts did not spread as quickly or widely as printed books, there were still robust networks of manuscript transmission that remained in place long after the widespread adoption of the printing press. See Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

the better education available in London and educated people being drawn to greater opportunities in the city.[19]

The treatises studied here were written at the same time as new scientific methods were being developed.[20] For example, the philosophical and scientific writings of Francis Bacon neatly overlap with the same timeframe covered by the earliest English music treatises.[21] At this time Bacon proposed a new inductive method that relied on sensible experience to arrive at truth.[22] To this end, Bacon undertook a series of experiments and investigations into acoustics and the construction of musical instruments.[23] Bacon self-consciously styled his method as a new innovation; he argued for an empirical method of scientific investigation and verification.[24] It is easy to see a similar ethos running through the music treatises of this time, be it Bathe's rationalized method of composition or Campion's iconoclastic approach to vertical composition. These parallels should not be taken too far, but they do point to the general spirit of reform and

[19] Vanessa Harding, "Reformation and Culture 1540–1700," in *The Cambridge History of Urban Britain*, ed. Peter Clark, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 280–81. The right to publish music was covered by two royal patents, one for Psalm books and the other for music in general. For an overview of the history of these patents, see D. W. Krummel, *English Music Printing, 1553–1700* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1975), 10–33.

[20] For an overview of the long development of modern science that shows that its modern development was highly contested and anything but foreordained, see Stephen Gaukroger, *The Emergence of a Scientific Culture: Science and the Shaping of Modernity, 1210–1685* (Oxford University Press, 2006).

[21] Indeed, Penelope Gouk sees the flourishing of English music at this time as closely linked to part of Bacon's project. "Bacon's desire to enquire into acoustics thus arose in the context of the enormous expansion of the world of sound which was taking place in England in the early seventeenth century." Penelope Gouk, "Music in Francis Bacon's Natural Philosophy," in *Francis Bacon: Terminologia e Fortuna Nel XVII Secolo: Seminario Internazionale, Roma, 11–13 Marzo 1984*, ed. Marta Fattori (Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1984), 140.

[22] Michel Malherbe is quick to point out the Bacon's scientific method is not the same as the modern scientific method, but "once one has accepted the idea that Bacon's induction is not the method of modern science, one can discover that this induction, although it is an alternative way which leads nowhere, expresses the real and lasting problems of the method of modern science." Michel Malherbe, "Bacon's Method of Science," in *The Cambridge Companion to Bacon*, ed. Markku Peltonen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 75–76. For a discussion of how the New Science advocated by Bacon and others related to humanism and previous scientific developments see Anthony Grafton, *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450–1800* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991).

[23] See Gouk, *Music, Science and Natural Magic in Seventeenth-Century England*, 158–62, 166–69.

[24] Bacon's inductive method was hugely consequential, influencing generations of British thinkers (including Newton). For more on the long-term impacts of his thought see Louis K. Dupré, *The Enlightenment and the Intellectual Foundations of Modern Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 19.

empiricism that was taking hold in England at the end of the sixteenth century. The publication dates of Bacon's works, however, make it difficult to claim direct influence on many of these music treatises.[25] Bacon did write some about music, but the fullest statement of his views was not published until the *Sylva Sylvarum* (1626); therefore, his views on music were not widely available to the authors of most of the treatises covered in this dissertation. But, importantly, Bacon's work assuredly expressed a more empirical attitude that could increasingly be seen in other areas, including music.

Music and science would see important changes following the Restoration. This period saw the second great flowering of English publications on music resulting from the industriousness of John Playford and his family. The year of the Restoration (1660) is also the same as the chartering of the Royal Society and the birth of what would become institutional science in England.[26] Penelope Gouk claims, "most of the people who wrote about the theory of music in the seventeenth century were not professional musicians, but rather belonged to what historians of science think of as the scientific community of the period."[27] Much like the interest in music publishing, the interest in science would only grow throughout the seventeenth century.

[25] See, for example, the dates of some of his major works: *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), *Novum organum* (1620), and the posthumous *Sylva Sylvarum* (1626).

[26] This marked a major departure from the science of Bacon. As Paolo Rossi notes, "Sometimes, when we speak of science in reference to Bacon or Mersenne or Galilei we are drawn to forget that that which we call science (in the form in which *we* know it) did not exist in the first half of the seventeenth century. The two great historic processes which gave life to *our* science, and which sociologists have called *institutionalization* and *professionalization* of science, took place between the middle of the seventeenth and the middle of the nineteenth century." Paolo Rossi, "Bacon's Idea of Science," in *The Cambridge Companion to Bacon*, ed. Markku Peltonen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 25.

[27] Gouk, *Music, Science and Natural Magic in Seventeenth-Century England*, 23.

An English School of Music Theory?

Given the shared circumstances that surrounded their writing, do English music treatises form a cohesive school of thought? Do they take a particularly pragmatic or empirical approach that sets them apart from their contemporaries on the Continent? As I noted, English writings on music are quite literally insular; they were produced by writers from the island of Great Britain and aimed at a British audience.[28] They also were written in English, a language that at that time had a very small number of readers and speakers outside of Britain. By the late-sixteenth century the English language had achieved a level of respectability within the British Isles where it had become common to produce serious work in it, with Latin no longer being the sole language of intellectual inquiry. That being said, when writers from England produced works on music in Latin, the focus tended to be different from the works produced by Englishmen in English.[29] It should not be particularly surprising that a group of treatises produced by a number of men congregating in a geographically discrete area would share a number of similarities and sensibilities. But the claim that these writers form a uniform English school of music theory obscures as much as it reveals.

Perhaps the greatest harm of generalizing a single English school of music theory is how much it homogenizes the individual writings and writers into an amorphous authorless mass of

[28] This should not be taken to mean that these English writers were completely cut off from Continental Europe. For example, John Dowland worked as a European court lutenist for a number of years before returning to England. Many of the authors studied here were acquainted with the latest developments in music theory throughout Europe, even when these developments had limited bearing on English music. This exchange of ideas was not limited to an educated group of writers. Italian songs were very much in vogue in England at the end of the sixteenth century. It is helpful to remember that at around the same time Thomas Morley produced his *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* he had already composed a number of volumes of songs in the popular Italianate style.
[29] The portions of Robert Fludd's *Utriusque Cosmi, Maioris scilicet et Minoris, metaphysica, physica, atque technica Historia* that deal with music are a prime example of this.

thought on music.[30] Even though many English writers had similar or complementary ideas about how music worked, they chose to present them in a variety of different genres, styles, and formats. Some of this amalgamation of writings on music is due to the similarities of terminological usage. Jessie Ann Owens cautions us, "In casual parlance, everyone who writes about music is a 'theorist,' every text is a 'treatise,' and every topic is 'theory.' Tellingly, the editions and facsimiles of everything from schoolboy trots to learned tomes sit side by side in our libraries, under the Library of Congress subject heading 'MUSIC—THEORY—History—Early Works to 1800.'"[31] Even though at times I do refer to a wide variety of texts on music as being "music theory" or written by "theorists," my aim is to highlight the heterogeneous and variegated nature of these texts without forcing them into narrowly conceived notions of what constitutes music theory or, worse yet, English music theory. As this dissertation will continually demonstrate, the category of "music theory" and its constituent parts of "practical music" and "speculative music" are often quite fluid and contested.

If English music theory is not one narrowly defined object, what is it? We might begin by defining music theory as any text that deals with the technical aspects of making, composing, or analyzing music under the rubric of music theory. Yet this definition is both too broad and too narrow. It is too broad in that it includes basic primers on reading music, treatises on composition, and learned discussions of tonal organization, among a number of similarly varied topics, in the same category. Yet it is also too narrow in that it excludes an extensive body of

[30] Another downside of this approach is that it tends to exaggerate the differences between the contemporary music of England and the Continent. These differences are real and meaningful, but they also exist throughout different parts of Europe. For a useful study of some of the regional differences in approaches to an emerging tonal practice that also places these divergent approaches in dialogue see Megan Kaes Long, *Hearing Homophony: Tonal Expectation at the Turn of the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).
[31] Jessie Ann Owens, "You Can Tell a Book by Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Russell E. Murray, Susan Forscher Weiss, and Cynthia J. Cyrus (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 347.

work on the moral, ethical, and religious aims and uses of music from being counted as music theory. At another level, this definition is artificial in that it presupposes that writing on music falls neatly into two distinct categories that do not overlap: technical descriptions of music (that are perhaps accessible only to musical insiders) and general discussions of music (that are perhaps more easily understood by the average reader who lacks specific, technical knowledge). This division is both unnatural (or at least not strictly necessary) and needlessly limiting, but it does point to an important disciplinary division in how different types of writing have been categorized. Broadly speaking, the overtly technical writings on music have been the domain of music theory, and information about composers, performers, institutions, and more broadly "cultural" aspects of music were the domain of musicology or music history. One of the unintended downsides of this division is that the more broadly cultural aspects of overtly theoretical writing have tended to be investigated less frequently.[32]

Generally speaking, this dissertation studies works that fall into the broad category of music theory but does not limit itself only to the plainly music-theoretical discussions in these writings.[33] The paratexts in these treatises are often as rich as the main bodies of the works. Investigations of these materials help to yield insights beyond the theoretical systems that are constructed or discussed. While this dissertation focuses on works that more easily fit into the

[32] This division is not hard and fast, and exceptions to it do exist. In general, though, this distinction does describe much of the work on writings on music in early modern England. Only within the last decade or so has more cross-fertilization between the approaches become more common. For example, compare the approaches found in Mark Lindley, *Lutes, Viols and Temperaments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), which concentrates solely on the technical details of tuning and temperament in a way that is completely removed from any real sense of time or place, and Christopher W. Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), which deeply situates music-making within English culture.

[33] For example, Thomas Ravenscroft's and Charles Butler's treatises deal with technical theoretical issues but are also deeply concerned with history and the proper role of music. They are therefore put in dialogue with apologetic literature like the anonymous *The Praise of Musicke* (1586) and John Taverner's Gresham lectures on music (first delivered in 1611) which do not delve into the technical aspects of music but represent one of the dominant approaches to thinking about music.

category of "music theory," these works are put in dialogue with other writings that discuss music in a variety of less technical ways. The goal is to resituate technical works about music into the rich cultural contexts from which they emerged.[34] To that end, this study remains agnostic about what constitutes "English Music Theory" but chooses instead to investigate how various authors and works engage with and influence musical thought in England, reframing their own positions within society and the world of music. What emerges is a much more expansive view of *musica practica* that is responsive to the shifting needs of writers and students.

Outline

I have organized my dissertation both chronologically and thematically. Each chapter concentrates on one or two treatises and explores the themes of each book and how they relate to broader issues in music theory and society in general. In the half century or so that spans from the end of the sixteenth century until the outbreak of the Civil War a number of complementary and conflicting trends developed in writing on music. This was also a period over which compositional styles evolved in a number ways, giving theorists the opportunity to assess new music and composers. The place of music, musicians, and musical performances were also hotly debated over these years, and increasingly so with the rise of Puritanism that occurred before the start of the Civil War.

Chapter 1 explores two of the earliest extant writings on music published in England: William Bathe's *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* (1596) and the anonymous *The*

[34] Linda Phyllis Austern has recently employed the flipside to this approach, in this case adding in more of the technical theoretical information into a study that is primarily concerned with musical culture more broadly. Linda Phyllis Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind: Thinking about Music in Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020).

Pathway to Musicke (1596). At the center is the birth of a particularly English approach to writing on music that is overtly practical yet curiously innovative. Chapter 2 covers Thomas Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597). This is the most thoroughgoing and lauded early modern English treatise. It is difficult to overstate its influence, yet the treatise is also a testament to music-theoretical roads not taken and contains a great deal of complexity and speculative theory that its title belies. This chapter challenges the notion that early modern English music theory was as practical as it is often portrayed.

Chapter 3 continues this line of inquiry by focusing on John Dowland's *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus* (1609), a translation of the German theorist's treatise from 1517. This chapter situates Dowland's translation and his other short theoretical writings as important aspects of a multifaceted professional project that highlights the unique demands that professional musicians faced at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In Chapter 4, I consider Thomas Campion's *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point* (1614) and Thomas Ravenscroft's *A Briefe Discourse of the True (but Neglected) Use of Charact'ring the Degrees* (1614). At first blush these might look to be updated versions of didactic treatises like Bathe's and *The Pathway,* but upon closer inspection these treatises are engaged in remarkably different intellectual projects that tell us much more about the social ambitions of their authors that extend well beyond teaching the fundamentals of music and composition. Finally, in Chapter 5 I place Charles Butler's *The Principles of Musik* (1636) into the ongoing debate over the propriety of church music and the need to properly educate musicians. The treatise is both backward- and forward-looking and provides a unique encapsulation of the many conflicting trends that English writers on music contended with in the half century before the Civil War.

The writings discussed here form a constellation of interrelated ideas about the basic knowledge needed to perform and compose music. Their collective attention is skewed toward the practice of music and the amateur musician. But from within this general focus, a surprising diversity of methods and competing systems can be found. Just as calling something a constellation of stars tells us more about the mind of the observer and their own location in the universe than it does about the stars, so emphasizing the uniform practicality of this group of English treatises obscures as much as it reveals. Let us instead try to look at this same body of treatises from a new vantage point and draw new connections between its points of light. We will begin this exploration by analyzing two of the earliest publications of English music theory from the late sixteenth century.

Chapter 1 The Birth of English Music Theory in the Late Sixteenth Century

The publication of Thomas Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Music* in 1597 stands as a watershed moment in the history of music theory in England. Morley's treatise provides comprehensive coverage of the fundamentals of music and composition along with ample reference to historical sources. It gives the reader a wealth of useful information packaged in an easily digestible format. However, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* was not the first English-language treatise published in England: William Bathe's *A Briefe Introductione to the True Art of Musicke* (1584) along with his *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* (1596) and the anonymous *The Pathway to Musicke* (1596) were published in the years before Morley's treatise.[1] While these earlier writings do not match the scope of Morley's treatise (which will be discussed in the next chapter), they do point towards an increased interest in music theoretical writings in England at the end of the sixteenth century. Pamela F. Starr writes, "Morley might have inferred the putative market for his treatise from the testimony of the courtesy and conduct manuals that were rolling off the press at this time. Within their covers could be found the 'why' that prompted Morley's 'how-to' book."[2] A large number of courtesy manuals that stressed the importance of musical literacy were available in England in the 1590s, but there were few printed resources available in English that would actually help the would-be student gain this desired literacy. In the first half of this chapter, I explore the late-sixteenth century context in which music was discussed. In the second half, I examine Bathe's *A Briefe Introduction to the*

[1] A useful chronological list of treatises published in England is provided in Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 249–52.
[2] Pamela F. Starr, "Music Education and the Conduct of Life in Early Modern England: A Review of the Sources," in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. Russell E. Murray, Susan Forscher Weiss, and Cynthia J. Cyrus (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 194.

Skill of Song and *The Pathway to Musicke*, two of the most practical entry points into musical literacy available at this time.

It is due in part to treatises like Bathe's and *The Pathway to Musicke* that music theory in England in the decades surrounding the turn of the seventeenth century is often treated as being overtly pragmatic and insular in focus.[3] To be sure, the broadly practical focus of these treatises is not in doubt. For example, English writers rarely engage with the debates on modal theory that were a driving force in Continental music theory at this time.[4] (On the Continent, modal theory was still of great practical importance and was stressed in pedagogy.) Most writers seemed content to describe a Protestant English practice that was becoming increasingly divorced from the modal legacy of Catholic Europe. It made little sense to describe the intricacies of a system used almost exclusively for Catholic liturgical music in a country where the celebration of Catholic masses was illegal.[5]

However, there are some notable exceptions to this general characterization of practicality and insularity in England, mainly in lengthier treatises with broader scopes. Some of these treatises will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters including Morley's (1597), John Dowland's translation of Andreas Ornithoparchus's *Micrologus* (1609), and

[3] Barry Cooper provides one of the clearest statements of this view in his essay on English music theory in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. "The bulk of English music theory from the two centuries treated here, and the objectives of most English music theorists, especially of the seventeenth century, can be summed up most succinctly with the help of the title formulation of Morley's great treatise: One wanted it to be simple and easy to grasp; one wanted to produce an introduction rather than a whole treatise on music; and one wanted to address practical music while excluding everything that in all probability has no use." Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie," 158. My translation.

[4] As Rebecca Herissone notes, "The only music book published in England in the seventeenth century to contain a full and accurate account of modal theory was Dowland's 1609 translation of Ornithoparcus' *Micrologus*, a book which had originally been published in 1517." Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 174.

[5] It is true that Protestant practices were repressed during the reign of Queen Mary (r. 1553–1558). However, after the ascension of Elizabeth I the primacy of Protestant religious practices in England became firmly established. While threats and fears of a Catholic monarch crept up from time to time, no serious efforts to reverse the Reformation took hold until the reign of James II (r. 1685–1688).

Charles Butler's *Principles of Musik* (1636). But in the case of truly introductory texts (again, like those of Bathe and *The Pathway to Musicke*) it is not clear why one would expect them to be anything but practical and narrow in focus. This same narrow focus is something of a hallmark of the instrumental tutors that became increasingly popular throughout the seventeenth century. Even a relatively ambitious tutor like Christopher Simpson's *The Division-Viol* (1659), with its second edition (1665) containing a parallel Latin and English text, still serves primarily to instruct the student on instrumental technique; this necessarily involves some delving into more theoretical matters but the focus remains on what is necessary for viol performance.[6]

What happened in England towards the end of the sixteenth century that allowed for this sudden flourishing of vernacular writing on music? Two major forces seemed to be at play: the growth of an increasingly literate middle class with access to printed sources of all kinds, and the continued effects of the Protestant Reformation.

Literacy and the Growing Print Market

Around the turn of the seventeenth century, English writers on music could count on an increasingly literate public that had the financial means to procure their writings. Throughout the sixteenth century, literacy rates and access to print matter in England continued to grow. Literacy rates in the first half of the seventeenth century in England were around 30% of men and 10% of women. These numbers seem paltry, especially compared to the developed world in the twenty-first century where near universal literacy and access to texts of all kinds can be assumed. These general figures can be misleading. There were significant regional differences in literacy along

[6] For a facsimile with limited commentary see Christopher Simpson, *The Division-Viol: Or, The Art of Playing Ex Tempore upon a Ground*, A Lithographic Facsimile of the Second Edition (London: J. Curwen, 1965).

with discrepancies between the number of those who could read and those who could write. In 1557 the Stationers' Company was granted a royal charter giving them a monopoly on printing in England, signaling the professional status of printing while also implementing a measure of protection against the potential subversiveness of a free and unrestricted press.[7] The growth in literacy and access to printed materials was seen as being of great interest to the state, even if a still limited segment of society had direct access to these texts.[8]

While there was a vast increase in printed musical literature throughout the sixteenth century, this literature was not the only or even primary way in which musical knowledge was transmitted. The crude metrics of literacy discussed above only measure the number of those who could read, but they downplay the significance of oral transmission and the spread of information from literate to illiterate members of society.[9] This distinction is relevant in the teaching of music, where the importance of practical musical training and knowledge conveyed orally from a teacher to pupil is not to be underestimated. As Thomas Christensen notes,

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[7] Alexandra Hill, *Lost Books and Printing in London, 1557–1640: An Analysis of the Stationers' Company Register*, Library of the Written Word (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 8.

[8] There are some inherent limitations to any study primarily concerned with printed texts, due to both the conditions of production and the survival rates of materials printed more than three centuries ago. (See Joseph A. Dane, *Blind Impressions: Methods and Mythologies in Book History*, Material Texts (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013) for a recent reexamining on the practice of book history and its basic assumptions.) Alexandra Hill's analysis of the Stationers' Company Register has shown that almost half of the titles entered into the register are now lost from the period 1557 through 1640. Hill totals 11,011 entries with 5,001 lost and 6,010 surviving. The situation is not as dire with music which has "one of the highest survival rates of any genre (83%)," though musical works without "specialist notation" (such as printed jigs) do not survive at as high a rate. The high survival rate is likely attributable to the higher cost of music books. (Hill, *Lost Books and Printing in London, 1557–1640*, 3, 162–63.) Loss is perhaps the most visible problem, but other information of interest to modern scholars may never have been recorded in the first place. D. F. McKenzie notes there are some other significant gaps in what is known. "[T]he more crippling deficiencies in our knowledge, despite the richness of the evidence we do have, are currently three: the proportion of total production represented by the books that happen to have survived; the number printed of each edition; the number of edition-sheets any one work entailed." (D. F. McKenzie, "Printing and Publishing 1557–1700: Constraints on the London Book Trades," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. John Barnard, D. F. McKenzie, and Maureen Bell, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 556.) These gaps in knowledge naturally produce difficulty in accurately situating texts in their historical contexts when much of the specific information on individual prints and their circulation is unknown. It is also important to remember that printed works of and on music were accessible by an audience of limited size, even with the massive growth in literacy and the availability of print. (Hill, *Lost Books and Printing in London, 1557–1640*, 162–63.)

[9] Hill, *Lost Books and Printing in London, 1557–1640*, 6–7.

> music education in the sixteenth century is not commensurate with the printed didactic material of the time. As influential as many of their authors may seem to us today, from Tinctoris and Gaffurio at one end of the century, to Zarlino and Morley at the other end, we would have a skewed picture of music education for a majority of sixteenth-century musicians if we only studied printed texts.[10]

While the basics of singing and reading music had long been explained in treatises and primers, they did not provide sufficient information and feedback to substitute for the student's personal teacher (nor were they designed for this purpose).

To be sure, the number of published instructional books increased throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, corresponding with an increase in domestic music making.[11] These publications, however, were typically written by teachers or composers, at least in part, to showcase their talents. Some scholars have taken the marketing claims of these authors as evidence that English music books were intended to be used without a teacher. For example, Kevin C. Karnes claims, in contrast to many Continental music books designed to be used in schools, "all the English treatises known to have been published around 1600 were intended by their authors to be used as self-contained tutors, sufficient in themselves to provide for the instruction of musical laymen who might not otherwise have the opportunity to acquire a musical education."[12] These claims to self-sufficiency are better marketing than they are pedagogy. None of these books could have provided completely sufficient instruction on their own, as each requires a competent teacher (or at the very least a more skilled friend) to explain the theory and application of the text for the student hoping to attain anything approaching mastery of the art.

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[10] Thomas Christensen, "Music Theory and Pedagogy," in *The Cambridge History of Sixteenth-Century Music*, ed. Iain Fenlon and Richard Wistreich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 415. Additionally, he notes that location also played a significant role in consuming texts on music: "It is also important to remember that the spread of printed texts of music was not even across Europe; while there were up to 100 different publications in Germany and Italy during the sixteenth century focused on musical instruction, there were far fewer in France, and scarcely a handful in England during the same period" (415).

[11] Herissone has calculated that two thirds of English music books written in the long seventeenth century were aimed at musical amateurs. Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 6.

[12] William Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, ed. Kevin C. Karnes (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 17.

(This is not always clear from the prints themselves which, make frequent claims to the contrary.) It is precisely the ephemeral details passed directly from teacher to student that are most easily lost to history. Traces certainly remain, most often in manuscripts copied as part of individual instruction or in marginal glosses written by the owner, but are often absent in published treatises.[13]

The Reformation and a Changing Society

But what about the wider social context within which these texts were written? The place of music in society was dramatically changing. The Reformation had not been kind to musical life in Britain, dissolving most of the institutions that supported the education of young singers.[14] As in so many other areas of life, the upheavals under Henry VIII (r. 1509–1547) followed by the brief reigns of Edward VI (r. 1547–1553) and Mary I (r. 1553–1558) did little to stabilize music education and reanimate musical life, even though Mary attempted to restore many of the institutions her predecessors had dissolved. The Elizabethan Religious Settlement (beginning with the Act of Supremacy of 1558) reestablished the Church of England as independent from Rome, established greater uniformity in worship (by reinstituting the Book of Common Prayer), and in general attempted to ease the religious turmoil that had been a near-constant fact of life since Henry VIII's break with the Catholic Church.[15] The Settlement, coupled with Elizabeth's forty-five year reign, helped to stabilize religious and political life in England. While there were

[13] As is shown in the following chapter, Morley's treatise far exceeds his English predecessors in modeling the dynamic interplay between student and teacher.
[14] The situation in Scotland was particularly dire after 1560 when the Scottish Parliament adopted a Calvinist confession of faith and the vast majority of singing schools were shut down. See Gordon Munro, "'Sang Schwylls' and 'Music Schools': Music Education in Scotland, 1560–1650," in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. Russell E. Murray, Susan Forscher Weiss, and Cynthia J. Cyrus (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 65–83.
[15] For a discussion of the Settlement and events surrounding it see Haigh, *English Reformations*, 235–50.

some notable musical institutions during her reign, particularly the Chapel Royal, none of them could match their pre-Reformation glory.[16] With the dissolution of the monasteries and their various choral foundations during the reign of Henry VIII, there were fewer places for singers to be trained and less demand for the composition of elaborate church music, not to mention fewer resources supporting its performance. This resulted in just a few places (namely the universities and the Chapel Royal) being responsible for producing and nurturing much of the elaborate and elite music in England throughout the second half of the sixteenth century, a situation that continued into the seventeenth century. This decrease in state support for music came at a time when major changes to the liturgy and its music were mandated.

Removing the Latin liturgy and replacing it with an English one was a significant undertaking. The reform was expedited by basing much of the English liturgy on the Sarum Rite, which was in turn amended and attacked by more radical Protestants for its relation to its Catholic model. The musical consequences of these reforms were broad. For the Reformation in England, at least, this meant an end to Latin church music.[17] Elaborate church music in the vernacular was thus needed, much of it being supplied by composers in the Chapel Royal. More modest institutions and the laity also needed music in English. *The Whole Booke of Psalms Collected into English Metre* (known as "Sternhold and Hopkins" after two of the men who began the project) proved to be the most enduring and popular English metrical psalter. The book was reprinted 200 times by 1640 and was clearly the most common version of the psalms

[16] For a delightful overview of church music in this period see Andrew Gant, *O Sing unto the Lord: A History of English Church Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), chaps. 4–7.
[17] On the Continent this was not always the case. In parts of Lutheran Germany, Latin masses were celebrated well into the eighteenth century. See Robin A. Leaver, "Bach's Mass: 'Catholic' or 'Lutheran'?," in *Exploring Bach's B-Minor Mass*, ed. Yo Tomita, Robin A. Leaver, and Jan Smaczny (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 21–38. For specific examples of the mixing of Catholic and Lutheran practices see Robin A. Leaver, "A Catholic Hymnal for Use in Lutheran Leipzig: Catholisches Gesang-Buch (Leipzig, 1724)," in *Bach and the Counterpoint of Religion*, ed. Robin A. Leaver, Bach Perspectives 12 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018), 36–62.

throughout the seventeenth century.[18] In most editions it did not include any music, but that simply allowed the psalms to be sung to a number of well-known tunes. If these metrical psalms did not represent the height of poetry or musical ambition, they did show a strong demand from the laity for psalms that they could both comprehend and sing.

It is useful to recall that the societal divisions and distinctions common in the twenty-first century that have increasingly separated religion from public life were not present to the same degree in England at this time.[19] Patrick Collinson, Arnold Hunt, and Alexandra Walsham remind us, "For the modern world, the term 'religious' marks off a more or less discrete area of life, but this is anachronistic for the period under review [1557–1640], in which the commodity which we might want to distinguish as 'religion' permeated much, if not all, of what is now secularized."[20] In England the religious activities of the church were officially actions of the government.

The Reformation was a vast and multifaceted constellation of events. As C. S. Lewis notes, "In England, as elsewhere, the Reformation was a process that occurred on three planes: firstly in the thought and conscience of the individual, secondly in the intertangled realms of ecclesiastical and political activity, and thirdly on the printed page."[21] The relation between these three planes and the breadth of their influence has been the object of some debate. Vanessa Harding succinctly states the situation:

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[18] Gant, *O Sing unto the Lord*, 110.

[19] The worldwide growth of religious fundamentalism and its rise in political power have increasingly reconnected religion and public life in the last few decades, but the difference between early modern England and the early twenty-first century is still significant. For an overview on secularization from the Reformation to the present see for example Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*; Kathleen Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty: How Ideas of Feudalism and Secularization Govern the Politics of Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation*; Taylor, *A Secular Age*.

[20] Collinson, Hunt, and Walsham, "Religious Publishing in England, 1557–1640," 556.

[21] C. S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama.*, vol. 3 [i.e. 4], Oxford History of English Literature; (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), 157.

> The extent to which the English people shared the views of prominent evangelicals and religious reformers and legislators has been one of the most disputed aspects of Reformation studies in recent years. The idea that Protestantism was the religion of the few, which they succeeded in imposing upon the many, has found wide support. In particular, it must be acknowledged that the evidence for enthusiasm for Protestant ideas and eagerness to implement liturgical and other changes may reflect only the attitudes of a small, if influential, minority within a larger community.[22]

That is to say that those most involved in the Reformation were the religious, political, and cultural elites. The opinion of the strong became state policy. It is crucial to remember that official policy and popular opinion (to the extent to which it existed) were often not in agreement, and that there were frequently differences in everyday practice that did not reflect the views of the elite. Yet it can still be claimed that the Protestant Reformation had made deep inroads into English religious observance, at least by the end of the sixteenth century. As Harding notes, "There is much evidence for the strength of belief and observance in English towns in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and indeed of the popularity of advanced Protestant ideas, while always accepting that traditional and conservative views persisted in probably all communities."[23] But as the unwavering popularity of Sternhold and Hopkins illustrates, the inertia of tradition (including relatively recent ones) was a constant factor even in times of theological change. In a parallel development, the music theory treatises produced during this period also established a new model that quickly cemented into a uniquely English tradition of their own.

[22] Vanessa Harding, "Reformation and Culture 1540–1700," in *The Cambridge History of Urban Britain*, ed. Peter Clark, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 267.
[23] Harding, 275.

The Shape of English Writing on Music before the Printing of Vernacular Treatises

What type of writing on music was available in English before the first wave of vernacular theory texts appeared at the end of the sixteenth century? The writings took three main forms: (1) poetic and literary treatments of music, (2) courtly and ethical discussions of the role of music, (3) and Continental treatises (primarily in Latin). Until the last decade of the sixteenth century, there were virtually no theoretical discussions of music in English. Yet there was a significant body of informal or nontechnical writing on music available in English (with much of it written in England) that predates the homegrown treatises from late in the sixteenth century.

The first group of texts is primarily poetic and literary in nature, and the types of argumentation and presentation are not chiefly intended to serve students of practical or speculative music; rather, their force is more ethical or moralizing in general. Music was a frequent subject of poetry, with poems often displaying a good command of technical terminology.[24] Indeed, writing in 1589 George Puttenham likened poetry to a type of music: "verses or rhyme be a kind of musical utterance, by reason of a certain congruity in sounds pleasing the ear, though not perchance so exquisitely as the harmonical concents of the artificial music, consisting in strained tunes, as is the vocal music, or that of melodious instruments, as lutes, harps, regals, records, and such like."[25] Frequent topics in poetry include the music of the spheres, the myth of Orpheus, and King David playing on his lyre, among others. Understandably, the end goal of these technical intricacies is most often some poetic conceit or the reiteration of some Classical doctrine on music; it tends not to focus on issues of

[24] The classic study of this is Hollander, *The Untuning of the Sky*.
[25] George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, ed. Frank. Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn, A critical ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 154.

contemporary musical practice or the finer points of speculative theory. That is, a poem may display some understanding of lute technique, but it is unlikely to give an account of how to actually play the instrument. There are exceptions, however.

The thirty-two quatrains that make up the Leckingfield Proverbs (c. 1520), possibly written by a certain William Peeris, offer practical and moral guidance about music along with instructions for performers. John Hollander has described these proverbs as "one of the most complete treatises on vocal, instrumental, and basic theoretical practice in English before the later decades of the century."[26] Here we learn, for example,

> A song myssowndithe yf the prickynge be not right
> So marryd is the melody for lac of fore syght
> The sownde of a trew songe makithe trew concorde
> But subtill prickynge mystymythe and causith grete discorde.[27]

This is certainly more substantial musical advice than a stock Orphean allusion, showing an understanding of mensural notation and a concern for the proper treatment of dissonance. Be that as is may, these proverbs do not provide the type of basic instruction found in most musical primers (such as how to read mensural notation and which concords were acceptable intervals in which situations); these proverbs were also not printed or widely distributed.[28] In essence they serve as reminders to the reader to recall rules and principles which were already learned; they do this without actually providing the rules, implying a rather limited audience of educated persons who had already had significant musical training.[29]

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[26] Hollander, *The Untuning of the Sky*, 96.
[27] Quoted in Hollander, 427. He provides the entire text of the proverbs (pp. 427–432) along with a useful discussion of them (pp. 96–99).
[28] For more on the Leckingfield Proverbs see Francis M. C. Cooper, "The Leckingfield Proverbs," *The Musical Times* 113, no. 1552 (1972): 547–50. Just because something was not printed does not mean it could not be widely distributed. See Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England*.
[29] A literate, but not musically trained person, could still gain something from these proverbs, but they would be less able to apply them to actual music making.

Although occurring at the end of the sixteenth century and in a play, a moment in Shakespeare's *Richard II* (1595) touches on a number of the same themes found in the quote from the Leckingfield Proverbs. Midway through his soliloquy, Richard II says

> Music do I hear.
> Ha, ha; keep time! How sour sweet music is
> When time is broke and no proportion kept.
> So is it in the music of men's lives.
> And here have I the daintiness of ear
> To check time broke in a disordered string;
> But for the concord of my state and time
> Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.[30]

Once again, the importance of proper proportion and concord is stressed, but in many ways the poetic aims could not be further apart. Whereas in the example from the Leckingfield Proverbs, proper control of proportion and concords are the end goal, in this excerpt, however, these conventional images are transformed as a metaphor to describe the brokenness of Richard II and the breakdown of the natural "musical" order of his state. Although this example is exceptional in terms of the dramatic importance of the musical allusions and their execution, it is much more conventional in its general approach to literary and poetic treatments of music in England throughout the sixteenth century.

This example also brings up the importance of music in a number of theatrical contexts. While the example from *Richard II* highlights music as a diegetic topic in a play, actual music was also frequently heard during the performances, even though little remains of the specifics of what was played when and by whom.[31] Discussions of the theater around the time of Morley's

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[30] *Richard II*, 5.5.41–48 in William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works*, ed. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005). Reference is to act, scene, and line. Also quoted and discussed in Hollander, *The Untuning of the Sky*, 148–49.

[31] Writings on Shakespearean theater tend to contain much of interest about social life in England, or at least London, around the turn of the seventeenth century. Of particular relevance is Bruce R. Smith's study of the Shakespearean soundscape. Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

writing often included some commentary on music and other elements of performance.[32] The theater in general became a major topic in the seventeenth century in the years before the Civil War as it was both popular with much of the public and despised by many Puritan reformers.[33] These debates on proper public activities had direct consequences for those invested in the performance, writing, and theorizing of music. It is not surprising that those directly involved in music were quick to point out its merits while those of a Puritanical bent were generally opposed to most varieties of public music making.[34] Debate on the theater was part of a larger constellation of thought on propriety in public and private life, a debate that also frequently touched on the role of music.[35] The moral debate over the theater (and its music) leads us to the next set of writings on music.

[32] Theater in England at the turn of the seventeenth century has been the object of substantial study due in large part to the continual and enduring legacy of Shakespeare. While the specifics of Shakespeare's plays and writings have relatively little direct relation to writing in music theory (in the narrow sense), the role of the theater and public performance more generally was of more concern to writers on music. For a cross section of recent works on Shakespeare and life in early modern England see for example Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*, The New Historicism: Studies in Cultural Poetics (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Clara Calvo and Coppélia Kahn, eds., *Celebrating Shakespeare: Commemoration and Cultural Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Christopher R. Wilson, *Shakespeare's Musical Imagery*, Continuum Shakespeare Studies (London: Continuum, 2011); David Scott Kastan, *Shakespeare and the Book* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Kenneth S. Jackson and Arthur F. Marotti, *Shakespeare and Religion: Early Modern and Postmodern Perspectives* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011).

[33] The full title of William Prynne's *Histrio-Mastix* summarizes the situation well: *Histrio-Mastix. The Players Scovrge, or Actors Tragœdie, Divided into Two Parts. Wherein It Is Largely Evidenced, by Divers Arguments ... That Popular Stage-Playes (the Very Pompes of the Divell Which We Renounce in Baptisme, If We Beleeve the Fathers) Are Sinfull, Heathenish, Lewde, Ungodly Spectacles, and Most Pernicious Corruptions ... By William Prynne* ... (London, 1633).

[34] For an overview of the Puritan position see Percy A. Scholes, *Music and Puritanism, with an Appendix on Dancing and Puritanism.* (Vevey: Säuberlin & Pfeiffer, 1934); Percy A. Scholes, *The Puritans and Music in England and New England: A Contribution to the Cultural History of Two Nations* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934). For a recent reassessment of Calvin's views on music (from which the Puritan's were largely drawn) see Christopher Richard. Joby, *Calvinism and the Arts: A Re-Assessment*, vol. 38, Studies in Philosophical Theology (Leuven: Peeters, 2007).

[35] Important in this regard is the anonymous *The Praise of Musicke*, "the first apologetic treatise on music in English." This is discussed at greater length in Chapter 5. Hyun-Ah Kim, ed., *The Praise of Musicke, 1586: An Edition with Commentary* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 3.

The second of the three groups of texts on music before the first wave of vernacular theory largely consisted of conversation manuals and courtesy books which frequently addressed music and its proper uses in polite society. In these guides, music was just one of a number of topics deemed necessary to master for the courtier or hopeful social climber. Other topics covered might also include poetry, geometry, and the importance of an educated nobility. The most famous of these was Baldassare Castiglione's *Il libro de cortegiano* (1528), which was widely read throughout Europe in the sixteenth century in translation in all the major languages including English.[36] Thomas Hoby's English translation appeared in 1561. In England this tradition of producing courtesy books was still going strong well into the seventeenth century when, for example, Henry Peacham's *The Compleat Gentleman*, containing an extensive discussion of music, was first published in 1622 but continued to appear in new editions through 1661. The treatment of music in these types of publications tends to focus on its ethical merits and repeats the views found in a variety of classical sources. Relatively little practical advice on music making is to be found. As Kevin Karnes notes, "Significantly, the authors of these books were remarkably consistent in their treatment of the subject of musical proficiency among members of the upper classes. Nearly all of them counselled, for instance, that some degree of musical knowledge is a benefit for the socially aspiring individual." This came with some significant caveats. "Nearly all of these authors, however, also cautioned their readers against becoming *overly* proficient in the musical arts, and against displaying their musical talents in public."[37] Being a skilled amateur was crucial, but being a professional musician was beneath the true gentleman.

[36] Kate Van Orden, "Domestic Music," in *The Cambridge History of Sixteenth-Century Music*, ed. Iain Fenlon and Richard Wistreich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 339, 342.
[37] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 8.

The third, and by far the largest, source of writings on music theory for those in England was the classical treatises published on the Continent. Boethius had long been a central part of the music curriculum at the universities, and the writings of Heinrich Glarean and Gioseffo Zarlino had been carefully studied by some English theorists of the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[38] But access to and knowledge of contemporary European treatises was uneven. Treatises like Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction* and Charles Butler's *The Principles of Musik* show unusually extensive and detailed engagement with contemporary Continental theory; the details of their citations evidence firsthand knowledge of their source material. At the other end of the spectrum, however, stand treatises like Thomas Campion's *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point* (1614), which only cites a single source.[39] Rebecca Herissone has claimed "there was no strong tradition of theoretical writing from the sixteenth century in England, which meant that seventeenth-century writers had few models on which to base their ideas."[40] While the first part of this claim is true in the narrow sense that English theorists throughout most of the sixteenth century did not produce a vibrant body of innovative theoretical works like that produced in Italy, the second claim is more difficult to defend. It appears to be based on the notion that English writers were only acquainted with other writings in English. An investigation into the citations of English theorists shows that many of

[38] Nan Cooke Carpenter, *Music in the Medieval and Renaissance Universities* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 77; Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 13.
[39] Citations alone do not account for all the sources a writer may have known. The genre of the treatise could also inform the extent to which it highlights its sources. This is similar to how modern textbooks tend to present information as self-evident, well-established, and not needing citation while monographs by the same authors generally show off a command of their sources.
[40] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 224. Contrast this with the opinion of Theodor Dumitrescu who speaks of a "cohesive earlier theoretical tradition" in England in the early sixteenth century from which the treatises written at the end of the century emerged. John Dygon, *John Dygon's Proportiones Practicabiles Secundum Gaffurium (Practical Proportions According to Gaffurius): New Critical Text, Translation, Annotations, and Indices*, ed. Theodor Dumitrescu (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 13.

them had more than a passing knowledge of recent developments in Continental theory.[41] It is against this backdrop of largely speculative Continental theory that many English treatises were produced. Yet the first English treatises that were written are marked by a distinctly practical outlook, an outlook that would come to be seen as a defining feature of English musical thought throughout the seventeenth century.

The Birth of English Practical Music Theory

It was only at the end of the sixteenth century that theoretical texts published in English first began to appear. Latin texts of music theory had been written in the British Isles for centuries. But the transition to vernacular texts on music was a much more recent innovation, spurred, as mentioned earlier, by improving rates of literacy as well as the rapid growth of the printing press. Add to this the increasing availability of musical instruments and a growing (middle) class of people with the leisure time and social motivation to pursue music-making, the time was ripe for the birth of a vernacular tradition of theoretical writing in England.

This section examines in detail two of the earliest publications on music in English: William Bathe's *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* (1596) and the anonymous *The Pathway to Musicke* (1596). Some consideration will also be given to Bathe's earlier treatise, *A Briefe Introductione to the True Art of Musicke* (1584), which now only exists in a seventeenth-century manuscript transcription. (Because Thomas Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597) stands in a class by itself due to its vast scope, originality, and outsized influence, it will be the subject of the following chapter.) This small group of treatises

[41] Herissone provides a thorough listing of these citations. See Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, Appendix D.

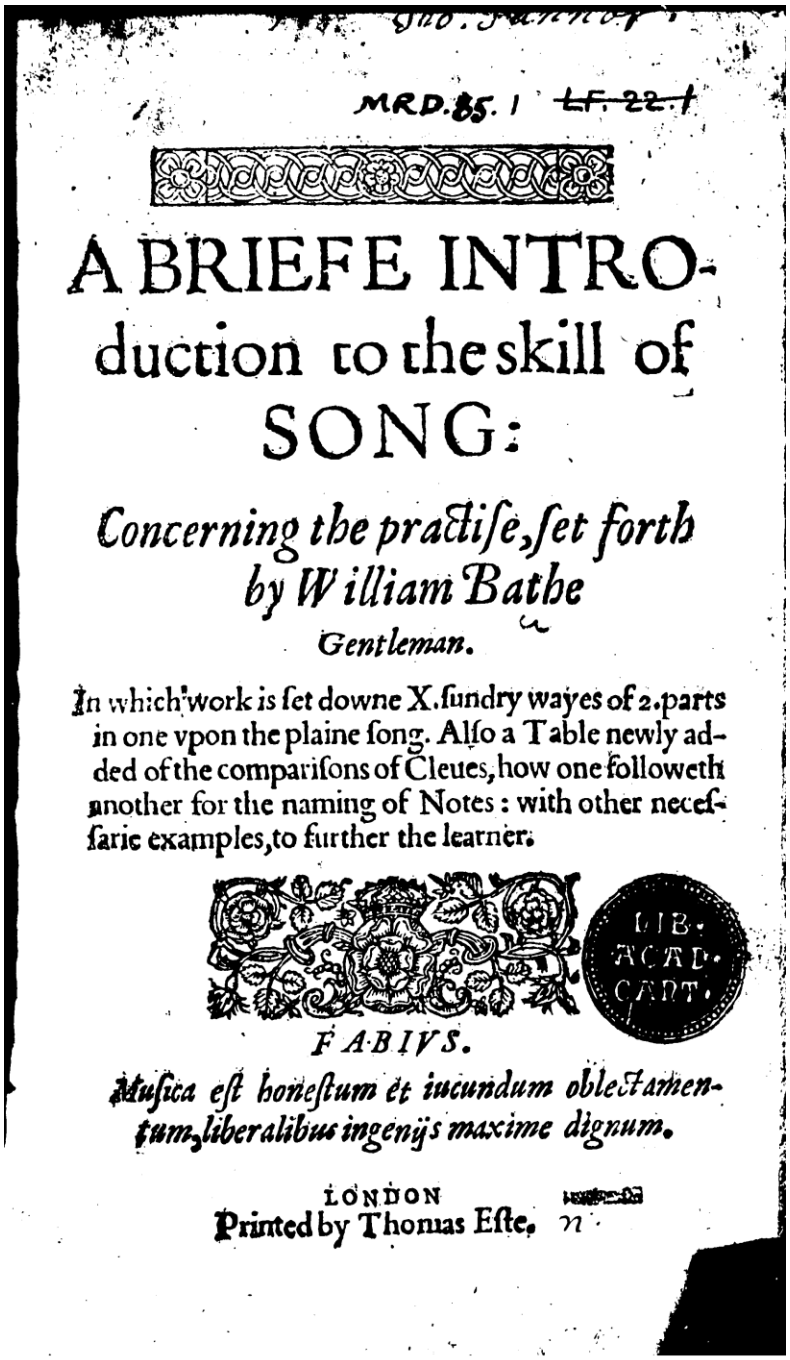
provided the model for what English writings on music would look like in the seventeenth century. Each claims to be an introductory text aimed at amateurs, yet each exhibits a surprising number of differences in terms of what they expect a beginning student ought to know. Variety in modes of presentation, the role of musical examples, or the structuring of the text, suggests a further breakdown in the surface similarities in these early attempts at commercial publications. Nonetheless the members of this group of early prints all push toward a unified idea of what specifically English writing on predominantly English music could be.

Bathe's Approach to Musical Basics

Each of the aforementioned early texts claims to offer a concise and fully practical introduction to the basics of music. The title page of Bathe's 1596 treatise (Figure 1.1) proclaims this pragmatic intention clearly; it is *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*…

> In which work is set downe X. [ten] sundry wayes of 2. parts in one upon the plaine song. Also a Table newly added of the comparisons of Cleves, how one followeth another for the naming of Notes: with other necessarie examples, to further the learner.[42]

[42] William Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song Concerning the Practise, Set Forth by William Bathe Gentleman. In Which Work Is Set Downe X. Sundry Wayes of 2. Parts in One Vpon the Plaine Song. Also a Table Newly Added of the Companions of Cleues, How One Followeth Another for the Naming of Notes: With Other Necessarie Examples, to Further the Learner.* (London, England: Printed by Thomas Este, 1596). The dating of this print is complicated by the fact that the printer left off the date of publication. For the legal context surrounding the printing of this treatise and potential reasons why the date may have intentionally been omitted, see Kevin Karnes's introduction to Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 13–15.



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A BRIEFE INTRO-
duction to the skill of
SONG:

Concerning the practiſe, ſet forth by William Bathe
Gentleman.

In which work is ſet downe X. ſundry wayes of 2. parts in one vpon the plaine ſong. Alſo a Table newly added of the compariſons of Cleues, how one followeth another for the naming of Notes: with other neceſſarie examples, to further the learner.

LIB. ACAD. CANT.

FABIVS.

Muſica eſt honeſtum et iucundum oblectamentum, liberalibus ingenijs maxime dignum.

LONDON
Printed by Thomas Eſte.

Figure 1.1 Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, title page

That is precisely what Bathe proceeds to do over the four dozen pages that comprise his treatise. The contents are summarized in Table 1.1. At the outset he writes, "Now (Reader) th'effect of

my pretended purpose, and fruit of my finished labor is this, where they [prior teachers of music] gave prolixe rules, I have given briefe rules, where they gave uncertaine rules, I have given sure rules, and where they have given no rules, I have given rules."[43] He has also given a relatively large number of examples and tables that illustrate his rules. All these so-called rules are concerned with teaching the student to sing, covering basics of note names and shapes, ligatures, durations, solfege, and a brief discussion of consonance and dissonance. Aside from the occasional bit of moralizing, this is a truly practical treatise, designed to make the novice student a competent singer in a short period of time. In order to achieve this level of focus and brevity, other aspects of music like descant and composition are not treated in any depth.[44] The possible exception is the inclusion at the end of the treatise of a table of concords and discords "for Counterpoint, Descant, and any set Song in how many parts soever."[45] The focus is entirely on teaching people how to sing mensural music.

[43] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 1596, A2v–A3r.
[44] The second part of Morley's treatise is entirely devoted to descant, which he describes as "singing a part extempore upon a playnesong." This part of the treatise consists mainly of textless counterpoint examples. Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke Set Downe in Forme of a Dialogue: Devided into Three Partes, the First Teacheth to Sing with All Things Necessary for the Knowledge of Pricksong. The Second Treateth of Descante and to Sing Two Parts in One upon a Plainsong or Ground, with Other Things Necessary for a Descanter. The Third and Last Part Entreateth of Composition of Three, Foure, Five or More Parts with Many Profitable Rules to That Effect. With New Songs of 2. 3. 4. and .5 Parts. By Thomas Morley, Batcheler of Musick, & of the Gent. of Hir Majesties Royall Chapell.* (London, England, 1597), 70.
[45] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 1596, [C4r].

To the Reader
The ante rules of Song
The Scale of Music
Clefs, note names, and solmization
Note values
Finding Ut for solmization in various clefs and scales
The post rules of Song
Naming (exceptions to solmization rules)
Quantity (Moode, Time, Prolation)
Ligatures
Time keeping/counting
Tuning and the gamut
Procedure (and table) for making canons with rules on acceptable intervals
Concords and discords
10 sundry ways of 2 parts in one upon a plainsong
Table of clefs with solmization

Table 1.1 Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, contents

That Bathe decided to write an introduction to singing in English did not appear inevitable. He was an Irishman who studied at Oxford, moved to the Continent, became a Jesuit priest, and eventually died in Spain, heading the Irish seminary in Salamanca. He did not gain great fame from his treatise. As the eighteenth-century British music historian John Hawkins noted, he was "a person scarce known to the world as a writer on music."[46] Cecil Hill flatly claims, "Hawkins did not think at all highly of him as a man or as a teacher."[47] It is with obvious disdain that Hawkins writes of Bathe, "That growing weary of the heresy, as he usually called the protestant faith professed in England, he quitted the nation and his religion together."[48] (Bathe was not the only British writer on music whose religious convictions impacted his career

[46] John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music* (London: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1875), 497.
[47] William Bathe, *A Brief Introduction to the True Art of Music*, ed. Cecil Hill (Colorado Springs: Colorado College Music Press, 1979), ii.
[48] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 497.

and publications, as will be shown in the discussion of John Dowland in Chapter 3 and Charles Butler in Chapter 5.)

The *Briefe Introduction* was actually not Bathe's first published text on music. There is an earlier publication entitled *A Briefe Introductione to the True Arte of Musicke* for which no original copy seems to have survived. It was the first English-language book on music to be published. Its title in full is:

> *Introduction to the true arte of Musicke, wherein are set downe, exact and easie rules, with Arguments, and their Solutions, for such as seeke to knowe the reason of the truth, which Rules, be meanes, whereby any by his owne industrie, may shortly, easily, and regulerly attaine to all such things, as to this Arte doe belong.* by William Bathe, Student in Oxforde, Pr. by Abell Jeffes. 1584.

Fortunately, a seventeenth-century manuscript copy of this treatise lacking all prefatory material has survived.[49] This manuscript is part of a commonplace book copied by one Andrew Melville, Master of the Song School of Aberdeen that also contains part of Thomas Ravenscroft's treatise along with a number of other items unrelated to music.[50] While little is known of Melville, he was evidently widely read and possessed an unusually large library for his time. As Karnes concludes, "That such a well-read figure as Melville thought highly enough of Bathe's 1584 treatise to copy it painstakingly into his commonplace book only confirms for us the value that Bathe's contributions to music pedagogy were considered to have had by some of his prominent contemporaries."[51]

The extant *Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* differs greatly from its precursor. Jessie Ann Owens notes that scholars have tended to view the latter work simply as a revision of

[49] The copy is contained in Aberdeen University Library, MS. 28.
[50] Melville's copy is the source for Cecil Hill's 1979 edition of the treatise. See Peter Le Huray and Bernarr Rainbow, "Bathe, William," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.02305; Bathe, *A Brief Introduction to the True Art of Music*, i.
[51] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 103.

A Briefe Introductione to the True Arte of Musicke. She argues on the contrary that they are two distinct treatises, though there is some overlap in content. Owens concludes, "In short, the titles seem to me to indicate accurately the main subjects of the two treatises."[52]

In his critical study of Bathe, Karnes sees a slightly more complicated textual history.

> Bathe's text [*A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*] consists of three distinct compositional layers: (1) material taken directly from his 1584 treatise *A Briefe Introductione to the True Art of Musicke*; (2) material newly written, which probably dates from between 1584 and 1585; and (3) material that was most likely not added until some time after 1592 – that is, after he had already moved to Belgium to undertake theological training. This third layer does not appear to consist of Bathe's own work, but rather may have been contributed by [its publisher Thomas] East.[53]

Whether or not we take the two publications as editions of the same work or as two distinct treatises, it is clear that there has been a significant change in focus and content between the two prints. Hawkins, working from the last known copy of the earlier publication, can claim, "But how highly soever the author might value his own work, he thought proper some years after the first publication to write it over again and in such sort, as hardly to retain a single paragraph of the former edition."[54] Take for example the description of the note names. In Bathe's first treatise he describes the note names as follows. (Melville's transcription using Scottish spelling is in the left column, and my transcription into modern English is in the right column.)

Albeit that ye skilfull singing man; keiping evrie not in his richt tune, may name it at his pleasour, never ye les, a learner sould heardlie come to that perfectionne, vith out learning to	Albeit that the skillful singing man, keeping every note in his right tune, may name it at his pleasure, nevertheless, a learner should hardly come to that perfection, without learning to

[52] Jessie Ann Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," in *Tonal Structures in Early Music*, ed. Cristle Collins Judd (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 233.
[53] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 5.
[54] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 497–98. Cecil Hill speculates that Hawkins may have donated his copy to the British Museum, but some two centuries later it cannot be found there. Bathe, *A Brief Introduction to the True Art of Music*, i.

nam tham aricht befor; it is thairfor to be vnderstanded that ther be bot sax severall names – that is, *ut, re, mi, fa, soll, la,* and the deficultie lyith in knaving vhether ye sax severall names ar to be atribut to evrie note; for ye solvtionne of quich deficultie, ther ar things neceassarie to be knaven, vherof, ye first is the scale of *(gam ut)* the secund is to be knaven in what place evrie not standeth, the thrid to knav in quhat plac yat not standeth quihch is named .*ut*.[55]	name them aright before; it is therefore to be understood that there be but six several names – that is, *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la,* and the difficulty lies in knowing whether the six several names are to be attributed to every note; for the solution of which difficulty, there are things necessary to be known, whereof, the first is the scale of (*gamut*), the second is to be known in what place every note stands, the third is to know in what place that note stands which is named *ut*.

The revised edition is much more succinct. "There bee sixe names, Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La. The order of ascention & descention with them is thus" after which follows the musical illustration shown in Figure 1.2.[56] As this suggests, Bathe's latter edition makes more frequent use of diagrams, letting them do more of the explanatory work than was the case in the first edition.[57] Although the importance of diagrams had been well-established by Bathe's day, he does not make much use of them until his second print. Bathe seems to have realized rather late their

[55] Bathe, *A Brief Introduction to the True Art of Music*, 2. As Hill's editorial note makes clear, "Melville's manuscript is a transcription of the original into a Scottish style of spelling, which gives it a quaintness so evocative of that nation's brogue" (Bathe, iii).
[56] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 1596, A4v.
[57] It is possible that the *Briefe Introductione to the True Art of Musicke* may have originally had more diagrams but that Melville chose to omit some of them. Melville's manuscript copy did not face the same cost constraints of printing musical diagrams as was the case with *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, which ends up with many more diagrams than the first edition. This suggests that Bathe's revision really did significantly increase the number of diagrams in his treatise. But the selective nature of commonplace books means that it is impossible to know for certain what elements Melville may have omitted. See Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 102.

pedagogical potential to clarify what is often opaque when described by language alone.[58] Morley was apparently satisfied enough with Bathe's explanation of the Scale of Music to use it almost word for word in his own treatise without attribution, as Jessie Ann Owens has shown.[59] What we are left with is a treatise that is true to its title and practical in focus. But while much of the focus appears outwardly conservative, it does contain some subtle innovation, mainly concerning the introduction of an improved system of solmization.

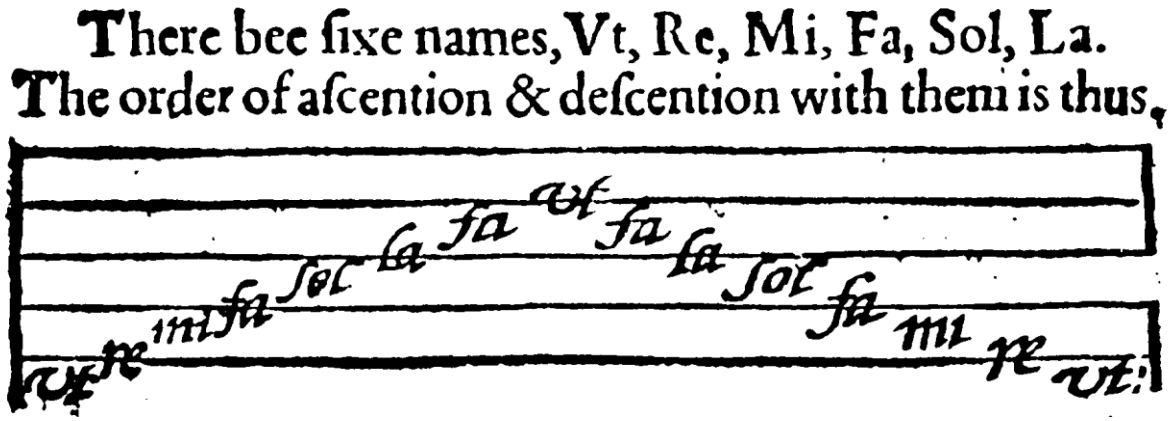


Figure 1.2 Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, A4v

Bathe's improved solmization system involves the reduction of the six *voces* of the conventional hexachord to just four.[60] This has been singled out by Kearns as his "primary

[58] For the by now classic account of diagrams in sixteenth-century music theory treatises see Cristle Collins Judd, *Reading Renaissance Music Theory: Hearing with the Eyes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). There is also a substantial literature on the use of diagrams in the early modern era more generally. See, for example, Nicholas Jardine and Isla Fay, eds., *Observing the World through Images: Diagrams and Figures in the Early-Modern Arts and Sciences* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Michael Hunter, ed., *Printed Images in Early Modern Britain: Essays in Interpretation* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010); Marcia Kupfer, Adam S. Cohen, and J. H. Chajes, eds., *The Visualization of Knowledge in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2020).
[59] Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," 200.
[60] Samantha Arten has recently argued that *The Whole Booke of Pslames* (1562, with solmized editions starting in 1569) was the likely source for Bathe's fixed-scale solmization. "[T]he *WPB* [*Whole Booke of Psalmes*] surely influenced Bathe and Morley. There has been minimal speculation in modern scholarship as to the origin of fixed-scale solmization in England, but it is clear now that William Bathe did not invent the system, even if his *c.*1596 *Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* was the first treatise to describe it fully. Fixed-scale solmization had already been highly visible in England for nearly 30 years before Bathe and Morley further developed this idea." Samantha Arten, "The Origin of Fixed-Scale Solmization in *The Whole Booke of Psalmes*," *Early Music* 46, no. 1 (2018): 157.

contribution to English music pedagogy." But it is revealed only in a single example (shown later in Figure 1.5) that potentially obscures its novelty, hiding its contribution from the usually perceptive Hawkins.[61] (One can see here the importance of printing as a technology but also its limitations and costs. Where an additional diagram would have helped to clarify Bathe's contribution, it also would have increased the cost of printing his treatise, exacerbating the printer's risk in an untried market.) As Peter Le Huray and Bernarr Rainbow argue, "As a result [of the single diagram on solmization] Hawkins overlooked the books' central feature – the replacement of hexachordal solmization with a system of movable sol-fa – and later writers accepted his inaccurate account without challenge."[62]

In essence, Bathe is the first writer to propose a four-syllable solmization system.[63] His explanation of his system is less clear than his examples. After explaining "The rule of Ut," which determines where ut should fall based on the number of flats used, Bathe is ready to explain his solmization system.

> When you have in this sort found out the *ut*, you must understand that every note that standeth in the next place above it is named *re*, every note that standeth in the next place to that is named *mi*, in the next to that *fa*, then *sol*, then *la*, then *fa*, ascending up alwaies orderly, counting the rules, and spaces: then next above that againe is *ut*: for you shall find that place, which is the eight place from that wherein your other *ut* stood, to begin with the same letter: So that if the rules & spaces were infinite, you might in this manner give every note his right name: and as you did count upward *Ut*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *la*, *fa*, and so come again to *ut*: so must you come downeward from *ut*, the same way backward, by *fa, la, sol*, *fa*, *mi*, *re*, *ut*. And so come to *fa*, againe. And in this sort the right name of every note is knowne. Two things from these rules are excepted, the one is, that every *re*, should be named *la*, when you ascend to it, or descend from it: and that every *ut*, should bee named *sol*, which two things are used *euphoniæ gratia*, and yet this name of *ut*, is most proper to the base or lowest part in the first place.[64]

[61] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 22.
[62] Le Huray and Rainbow, "Bathe, William."
[63] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 24. See also Timothy A. Johnson, "Solmization in the English Treatises around the Turn of the Seventeenth Century: A Break from Modal Theory," *Theoria* 5 (1990–91): 42–60.
[64] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 1596, A6v.

In essence, Bathe states that once ut has been determined the scale will be solmized (starting on sol instead of ut) as sol–la–mi–fa–sol–la–fa–sol when ascending and as sol–fa–la–sol–fa–mi–la–sol when descending. His relatively clear explanation is followed by four pages of objections, solutions, resolutions, and replications. Bathe's graphical presentation is clearer than his prose. We can see this in Figure 1.3 where he substitutes the first and second syllables of the conventional hexachord (ut and re) with the fifth and sixth syllables (sol and la). This produces a transposable tetrachord of one semitone and two whole tones (STT): mi-fa-sol-la. The result is fixed-scale solmization which does not vary based on the direction of the melody (unlike hexachordal solmization which does). Bathe includes a foldout page (see Figure 1.4) at the end of his treatise which includes thirty-one examples of the solmized scale in a variety of clefs and with zero, one, and two flats. The solmization example he provides a few pages after introducing his four-syllable system (Figure 1.5) shows how his system looks in practice.[65] The need to mutate between differing hexachords has been completely eliminated.

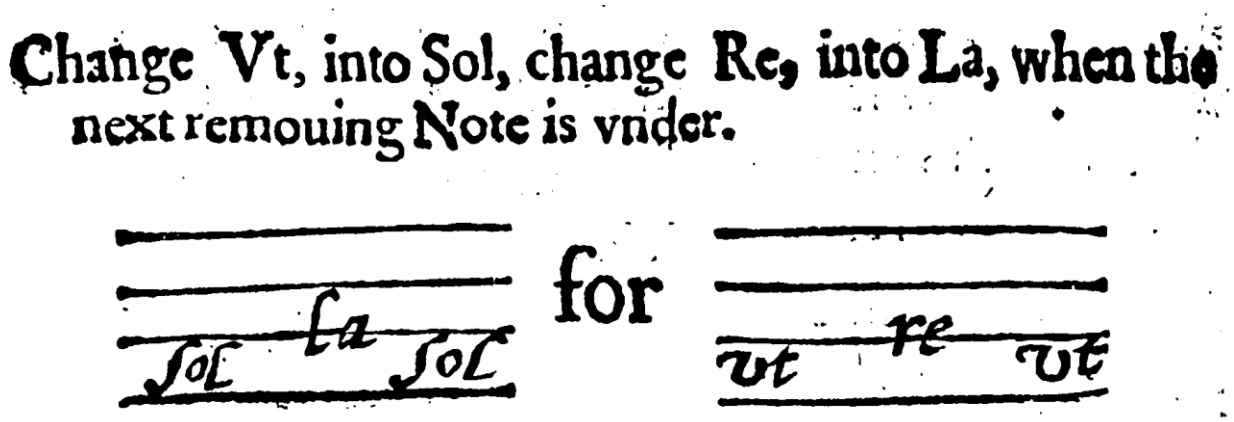


Figure 1.3 Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, A5r

[65] As Karnes notes, Bathe does not consistently follow his own advice on solmization. Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 24. The antepenultimate note A in the first system is given as re; it is not clear if this is in error and should be read as la or if re was actually intended. The line immediately preceding those shown in Figure 1.5 makes frequent use of both ut and re, contrary to Bathe's own instructions.

Karnes is correct to stress "the profound effect that Bathe's system, with its elimination of the need to think in terms of hexachords and mutations, would have had upon the thinking of a student who had earlier attempted to learn to sing according to more traditional methods."[66] Now each note has one and only one solmization syllable. Some variation on this solmization system would become the standard approach taken by English writers in the seventeenth century.[67] The reader who studies the foldout page at the end of the treatise will get a much clearer and more consistent view of how this solmization system should work than the reader who relies on the solmization examples in the main body of the text which include a number of inconsistencies and errors.

[66] Bathe, 27. For more information see his extended discussion of Bathe's solmization system, 22–32.
[67] Gregory Barnett, "Tonal Organization in Seventeenth-Century Music Theory," in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 437. Barnett (p. 438) provides a helpful table that compares the solmization systems of Morley, Campion, Butler, Playford, and Simpson but unfortunately does not include Bathe. Bathe's solmization completely matches Campion, Playford, and Simpson when there is no signature, one flat, and two flats. It also matches Morley when there is one flat. (Morley does not provide solmization for two flats.) Butler's system closely follows Morley's (which uses ut and re when there is no signature) except that Butler introduces the syllable "pha," which produces Butler's heptachordal solmization system.

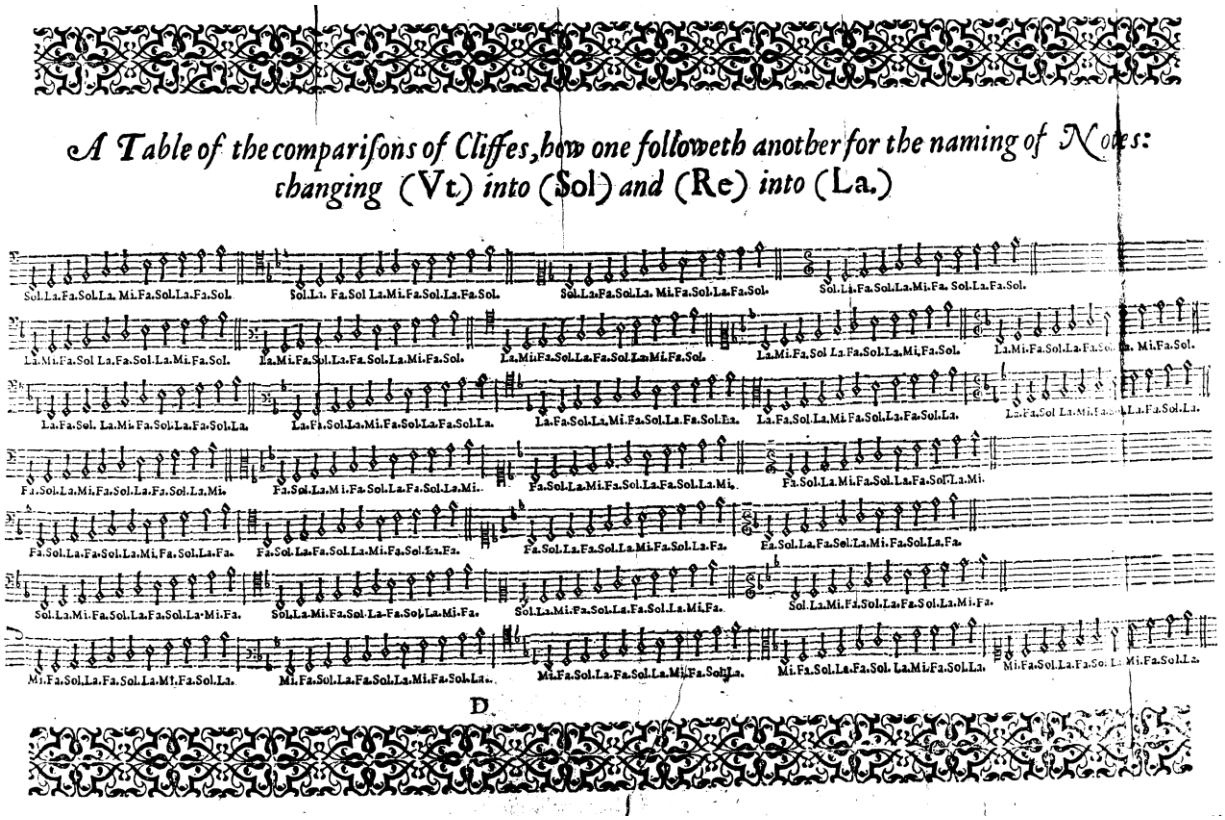


Figure 1.4 Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, D1r

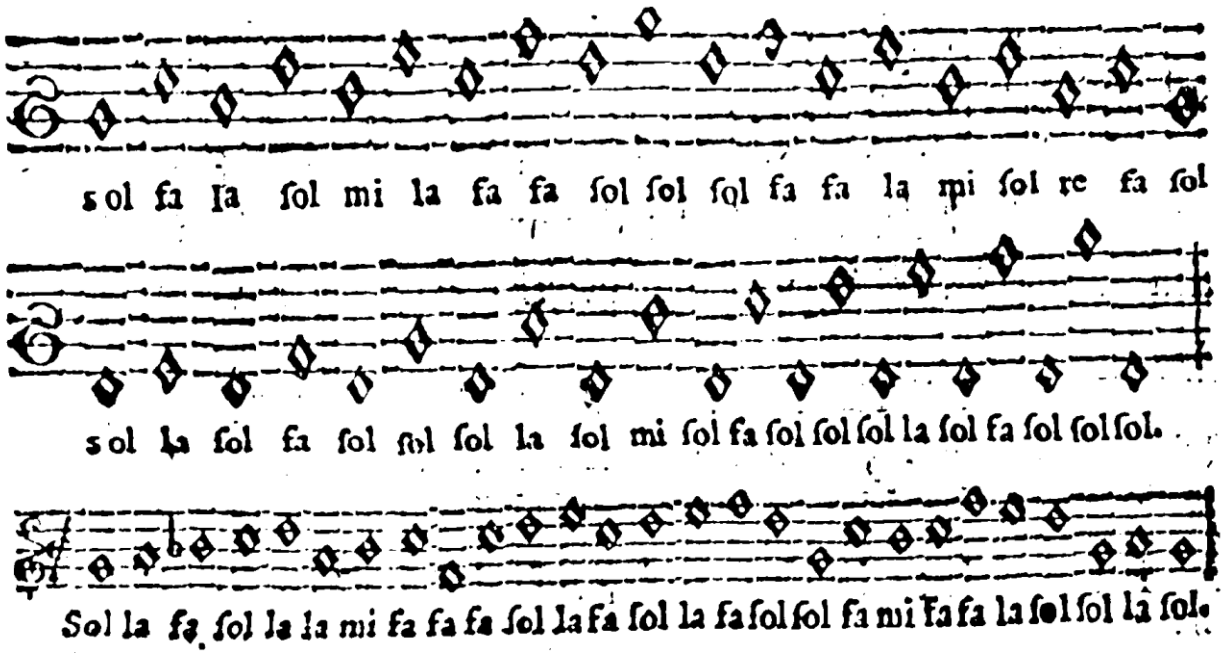


Figure 1.5 *Bathe, A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, B3v

The rhetoric that Bathe uses in *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* deserves some comment as it has negatively influenced its reception. One of the difficulties is Bathe's use of the rhetorical strategy of "*objection and answer* or *anticipation and confrontation*" in which the writer anticipates possible objections and then refutes them, a strategy that was quite common in the sixteenth century (and would have been standard in any regime of classical rhetoric and well-known to university students).[68] This technique may not have bothered Bathe's early readers, but it confused some of his later ones. Hawkins thought Bathe's instructions were no better than the complicated ones he sought to replace, a view that has continued to be held.[69] We are left with, as Karnes says, "many modern scholars who have dismissed Bathe's writings as confused, misleading about contemporary practice and in general too highly touted by Bathe himself."[70] Karnes has recently tried to rehabilitate Bathe's treatise and defend him against his critics. He carefully addresses the treatise's rhetorical strategy and how much of what appears obtuse to the modern reader was actually more commonplace. But these rhetorical difficulties are nothing compared to the more practical complications in the descriptions in the text.

For being an introductory text, it is filled with obtuse descriptions and genuine misunderstandings that diminish the treatise's practical utility. Unfortunately, these explanations often obscure the treatise's novel contribution to the understanding of solmization by creating confusion on other topics. Take for an example, Bathe's discussion of mensuration. As Herissone has shown, Bathe provides a completely inadequate discussion of mensuration, hinting (or

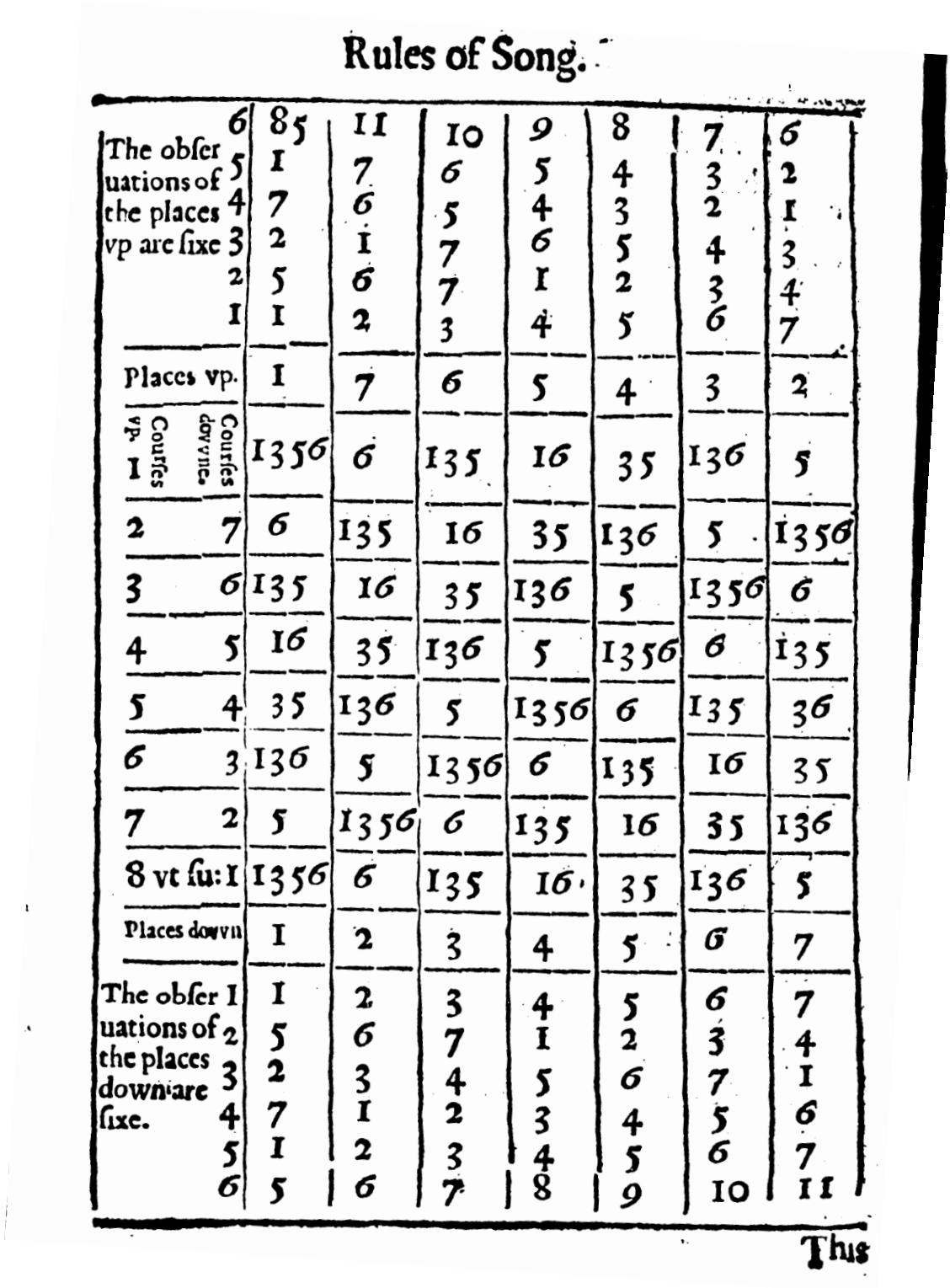
[68] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 18–19.
[69] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 498.
[70] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 16.

hoping) that "mensuration would soon be obsolete."[71] The beginner in need of instruction on mensuration will have to look elsewhere.

For another example, let us consider Bathe's method for writing "two parts in one upon the plaine song." This was presented as something quite novel. Indeed, Bathe thought this contribution was important enough to advertise it on the title page. In essence, he describes an arithmetic method for writing canons over an existing melody. All the student needs is to use Bathe's chart (shown in Figure 1.6) in order to produce perfect canons. This is not simple. Joseph M. Ortiz notes that the table's "obscurity cannot be overstated."[72] To use the chart, the student first needs to know what Bathe means by "place" and "course." He writes:

> First it is to be understanded by this word place, is ment the distance of the following part, to the former part, as the same place or unison, is called the first place, the next or second place, is called the second place, whether it be up or downe, &c.
>
> Next heere is to be understanded by this word, Course, is ment the distaunce of that which followeth just so long after, as the following part resteth to that which goeth beefore, in the plaine Song or ground, as if the following part have a Semibreefe rest, then the Note of the ground is in the first course, which hath in the same place that which followeth just a Semibreefe length after, whether it bee up or downe, &c.[73]

[71] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 28–29.
[72] Joseph M. Ortiz, *Broken Harmony: Shakespeare and the Politics of Music* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2011), 116.
[73] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 1596, C1r.



Rules of Song.

The obſeruations of the places vp are ſixe	6	85	11	10	9	8	7	6
	5	1	7	6	5	4	3	2
	4	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
	3	2	1	7	6	5	4	3
	2	5	6	7	1	2	3	4
	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Places vp.		1	7	6	5	4	3	2
Courſes vp.	Courſes downe.							
1		1356	6	135	16	35	136	5
2	7	6	135	16	35	136	5	1356
3	6	135	16	35	136	5	1356	6
4	5	16	35	136	5	1356	6	135
5	4	35	136	5	1356	6	135	36
6	3	136	5	1356	6	135	16	35
7	2	5	1356	6	135	16	35	136
8 vt ſu:	1	1356	6	135	16	35	136	5
Places downe		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The obſeruations of the places downe are ſixe.	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	2	5	6	7	1	2	3	4
	3	2	3	4	5	6	7	1
	4	7	1	2	3	4	5	6
	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	6	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

This

Figure 1.6 Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, B8v

From this definition we learn that "place" means the vertical interval of imitation between the two voices in the canon. The "course" is the melodic movement of the *dux* and is determined by checking the melodic interval at which the plainsong moved.[74] Here is how Bathe's chart is used: The student first selects from either the "places up" or "places down" row the desired interval at which the canon will occur. Once the place is chosen, all the of the following calculations will occur in the same column. The student then determines the melodic movement of the *dux* (what Bathe calls the "course") and locates the corresponding row on the chart. The box at the intersection of "place" and "course" gives the allowable intervals. Once an interval is selected, the student can then add a note at the chosen interval to both the *dux* and *comes*. In case the student finds the chart too complicated or difficult to remember, Bathe also includes a "musical sword," as shown in Figure 1.7, that is said to convey the same information in an even more hermetic way.

Bathe's explanation of the Musical Sword, however, is no clearer than the explanation of his table. In essence, the position of the words on the blade correspond to the "place" and "course," and the vowels in each word are coded to correspond to allowable intervals.[75] Nevertheless in some circumstances there will be problems. In those cases, the student is to look at the various examples appended to the treatise with very little explanation and perceive how they might eliminate the errors. The entire process is complicated to say the least. Over the course of eleven pages, Karnes painstakingly works out how the method is intended to

[74] As Karnes clarifies, "The temporal interval over which the *course* is computed is the same as the temporal displacement between the initial entrances of the canonic voices." Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 34.

[75] Karnes translates the blade of the "Musical Sword" as "I go where you are, I fall, you see me; help me, Jesus" and the hilt as "Add one; remove it; let it stand; add four." The way in which the Gladius Musicus reproduces Bathe's chart is somewhat complicated. If it is properly used, the reader can gain the same information that Bathe's table provides. Karnes gives an admirably clear (if necessarily lengthy) explanation of how to use the Musical Sword. Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 96–97.

function.[76] Bathe's explanation may be as "briefe" as the title page promised, but it is not easy or even practical. As much as this method for writing canons may be a useful endeavor, it mostly highlights just how convoluted and unsuccessful Bathe's method is.

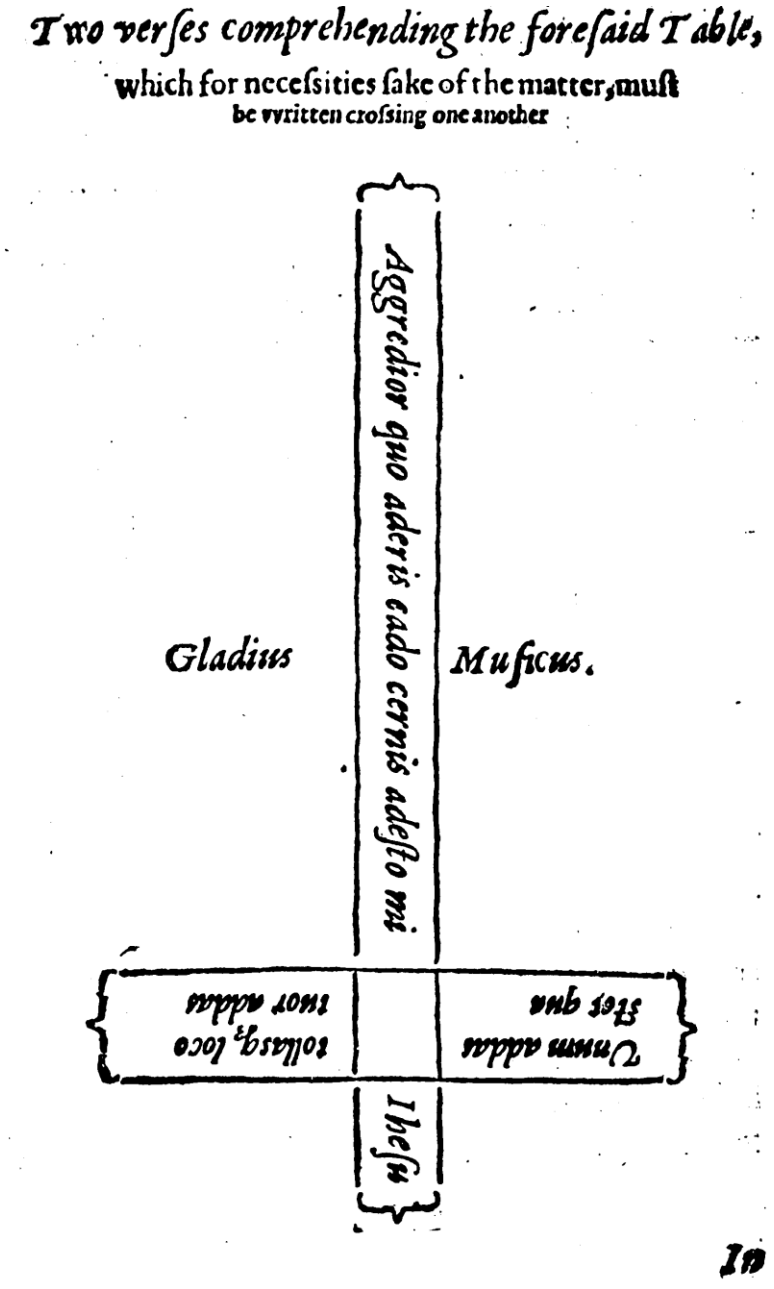


Figure 1.7 Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, C2v

[76] Bathe, 32–42.

Bathe's problematic method for composing canons is symptomatic of the treatise in general: its innovations are limited and constantly obscured by their obtuse presentation. It is an introductory text that asks much of its readers. Although many later English writers will also produce introductory texts, in general they put a much higher value on clarity, concision, and directness of presentation. (The later chapters covering Morley, Campion, Butler, and others continually demonstrate this point.)

The Practical Approach of The Pathway to Musicke

Taking an even more practical stance than Bathe, the anonymous author of *The Pathway to Musicke* employs the briefest explanations of basic musical questions coupled with illustrative examples.[77] This treatise has even less text and more examples than were present in Bathe's work. In fact, the majority of the treatise is made up of examples and figures. The treatise's contents are summarized in Table 1.2. Its scope is slightly broader than Bathe's; *The Pathway* also contains, as its title page (Figure 1.8) announces, "a treatise of Descant, & certaine Tables, which doth teach how to remove any song higher, or lower from one Key to another." These "certaine Tables" continue with the precedent set by the rest of the print: they have only a few words but contain multiple examples. Where many other authors had given speculative or ethical answers to fundamental issues about music, the author of *The Pathway to Musicke* bypasses them entirely. In answer to the opening question "What is Musicke?" we learn:

> Musicke is a science, which teacheth how to sing skilfullie: that is to deliver a song sweetly, tuneably, and cunningly, by voyces or notes, under a certaine rule & measure; to

[77] John M. Ward has shown that *The Pathway to Musicke* was originally part of William Barley's *A New Booke of Tabliture* (1596). For this reason, Barley is sometimes taken to be the author of *The Pathway to Musicke*. Owens notes, "Although the treatise is sometimes attributed to Barley, it is clear that he commissioned someone to write it." Several possible authors have been suggested. Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," 234. See John M. Ward, "Barley's Songs without Words," *Lute Society Journal* 12 (1970): 5–22; for further comment see Owens, "You Can Tell a Book by Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" 352–53.

> the obtaining of which, first of all it is needful for him that will learn to sing truely, to understand his *Scale*, or (as they commonly call it) the *Gamma-ut*.[78]

Music, in this definition, is a practice rooted in the performance of actual music, with no need for the student to be concerned with ethical or highly speculative approaches.[79] With this focus in mind, it is understandable that the next section proceeds to the scale and note names. At no point does this treatise get bogged down dwelling on speculative aspects of music.

Definition of music
The Gamma-ut, scales of music, and solmization
Melodic intervals
Clefs and note names
Note values
Ligatures
Degrees of music (Moode, Time, Prolation) and mensuration signs
Pricks (dots) and their various meanings
Proportion
Descant in two voices (covering rules of consonance and dissonance)

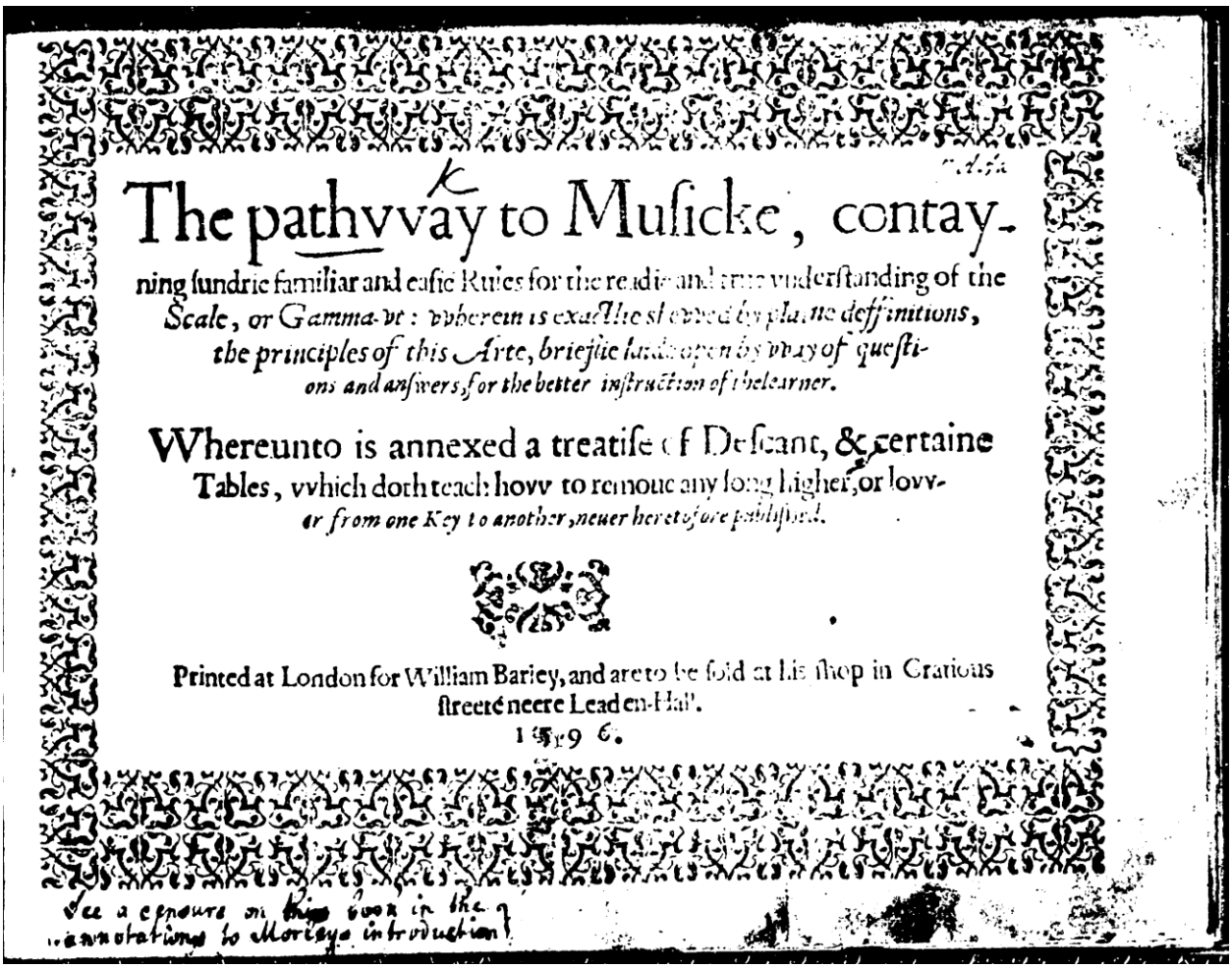
Table 1.2 *The Pathway to Musicke*, contents

The practical aspects of music in *The Pathway to Musicke* should have been its strengths, but they were severely criticized by Morley for a host of reasons, chiefly that what the anonymous author wrote did not make sense and demonstrated his true ignorance of music. Morley's attack on this text in *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* occurs in a section of wide-ranging criticism where the author of *The Pathway to Musicke* is just one of a number of "ignorant pretenders to skill in music," to use John Hawkins's memorable phrase.[80] A typical

[78] *The Pathway to Musicke Contayning Sundrie Familiar and Easie Rules for the Readie and True Vnderstanding of the Scale, or Gamma-Ut: Wherein Is Exactlie Shevved by Plaine Deffinitions, the Principles of This Arte, Brieflie Laide Open by Way of Questions and Answers, for the Better Instruction of the Learner. Whereunto Is Annexed a Treatise of Descant, & Certaine Tables, Which Doth Teach How to Remove Any Song Higher, or Lower from One Key to Another, Never Heretofore Published.* (London, England, 1596), A2r.
[79] This matches the approach found in Bathe, though Bathe does not provide a formal definition of music.
[80] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 492.

jibe from Morley was: "If he had understoode what he said, he would never have sette down this for an example."[81] Morley elsewhere comments sarcastically on the tautological nature of the author's definitions:

> Also, defining what *diatessaron*, or a fourth is, he saith, *a fourth is the distance of the voice by a fourth*. And likewise, *a fift the distance of the voice by a fift*. Notable definitions: as in the play, the page asking his maister what a *Poet* was, he, after a great pause & long studie, answered that it was a Poet.[82]


The pathvvay to Muſicke, contay-

ning ſundrie familiar and eaſie Rules for the readie and true vnderſtanding of the Scale, or Gamma-vt: vvherein is exactlie ſhewed by plaine deffinitions, the principles of this Arte, briefelie laide open by vvay of queſtions and anſwers, for the better inſtruction of the learner.

Whereunto is annexed a treatiſe of Deſcant, & certaine Tables, vvhich doth teach: hovv to remoue any long higher, or lovver from one Key to another, neuer heretofore publiſhed.

Printed at London for William Barley, and are to be ſold at his ſhop in Gratious ſtreete neere Leaden-Hall.

1596.

See a censure on this book in the annotations to Morley's introduction

Figure 1.8 *The Pathway to Musicke*, title page

[81] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, [∗3r].
[82] Morley, [∗3v].

Morley can barely restrain his overall disdain for the *Pathway*: "Take away two or three scales which are filched out of *Beurhusius,* and fill up the first three pages of the booke, you shal not finde one side in all the booke without some grosse errour or other." His conclusion is damning: "But it should seeme, that whatsoever or whosoever he was, that gave it to the presse, was not the Author of it himselfe, else would he have set his name to it, or then hee was ashamed of his labour."[83]

Morley's extended attack on *The Pathway to Musicke* centers on its misunderstanding and mistakes about proportion, which are significant. While Morley concedes that the use of proportions has fallen out of English practice, he justifies the need to study them in order to understand older works.[84] For many readers, however, *The Pathway to Musicke*'s egregious errors and lack of originality might not actually have been a significant problem. The worst errors relate to obsolete practices and were unlikely to significantly impede the beginning student. The lack of originality which bothered Morley so much need not bother the reader. While borrowing of this type might offend the authorly ambitions of some, it might be asking too much of an introductory text aimed at the musical amateur to be truly original. None of this is to claim that the many errors in *The Pathway* are insignificant, only to note that they might not have been as apparent to its readers as Morley insinuated. Herissone has argued that "the *Pathway to Musicke* set the trend for English theory during the following century" in the sense that it "was more clearly aimed at a specific and lucrative market of would-be amateur performers who wished to acquire the minimum skills necessary for them to be able to participate in one of the most popular pastimes of the era."[85] This stands in contrast to Morley's more comprehensive

[83] Morley, [∗3v].
[84] Morley, 183. See also Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 37.
[85] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 7.

treatise. While Morley's treatise is certainly a better source of information on music, *The Pathway to Musicke* (and the rudiments manuals that followed it) served a much larger portion of the market, a group of consumers that was not as concerned with the intricacies of music as Morley might have wished.

Conclusion

The overview of Bathe's *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* and *The Pathway to Musicke* shows the marked differences between the two treatises. As previously alluded to, Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* (the topic of the following chapter) greatly expands upon the practical basis of these two works. These three treatises do not all belong to the same genre of writing on music even though they all concern *musica practica*. Yet these writings tend to all be considered "music theory" and their writers "theorists." Writing on the terminological issues surrounding "music" and "music theory" Jessie Ann Owens states,

> we need to be able to distinguish the range of writing in the early modern world—to differentiate, for example, textbooks from the equivalent of scholarly monographs or journal articles. Instead of catch-alls like 'theorist' or 'theory,' we need to find words that are specific to the particular activity and reflect the character of the audience and social function of the text(s) under consideration.[86]

And Penelope Gouk has noted how any catch-all usage and assumption about what "music theory" is serves to "unnecessarily constrain what can be said about these texts, which were written by authors from a variety of different backgrounds."[87]

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[86] Owens, "You Can Tell a Book by Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" 348.
[87] Penelope Gouk, "Review of *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*. By Rebecca Herissone," *Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music* 8, no. 1 (2002), https://sscm-jscm.org/v8/no1/gouk.html, also quoted in Owens, "You Can Tell a Book By Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" 348. Gouk's original claim is in regard to Rebecca Herissone's *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*. Her broader conclusion is worth quoting: "Like most of the people who will read this book, Herissone takes for granted (i) that 'music theory' is a body of knowledge about music's structure and nature that is generated chiefly for and by composers and musicians, and (ii) that the term 'music theorist' can be used unproblematically for anyone who contributes to this body of

Gouk's and Owens's terminological admonishments are certainly prudent, but in practice it can be somewhat more complicated to deeply situate these works, authors, and audiences. It is one thing to note that authors came "from a variety of different backgrounds" and another to meaningfully draw conclusions based on their backgrounds. The surviving information is often scant. The writer of *The Pathway to Musicke* is unknown. Some details are known of Bathe's life (he was an Irish landowner, musical inventor, and eventual Jesuit priest), but information surrounding the publication of his treatise is murky.[88] His first treatise appears lost.[89] In cases where little is known about the writer, the text itself becomes increasingly important. Only possessing the text and knowing next to nothing about its writer was surely the situation of many sixteenth-century readers, having little to go on except what appears in the introduction and other paratexts. Although it would be ideal to have robust biographical information on all the writers of these books on music in order to more properly situate their work in the manner that Owens and Gouk propose, the surviving texts themselves often contain information that allows for deeper contextualization.

Genres and goals of writings can sometimes be slippery, blurring the boundaries between the practical and speculative or theoretical and ethical. In the case of Bathe's *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* and *The Pathway to Musicke*, this is perhaps less the case. Both prints set out to provide basic instruction in singing in the English language and both deliver on that promise. These treatises showcase the practicality, concision, and empiricism that would come to characterize English music theory in the seventeenth century. In general, these treatises

knowledge, regardless of their actual occupational or social identity. These assumptions unnecessarily constrain what can be said about these texts, which were written by authors from a variety of different backgrounds."

[88] For a thorough discussion of its compilation and publication history see Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 2005, 3–15.

[89] Le Hurray and Rainbow bemoan the fact that "[n]o original of this, the first music textbook to appear in the English language, is known to exist." Le Huray and Rainbow, "Bathe, William."

eschew the speculative abstraction that was common on the Continent and instead aim for direct instruction in practical music. But Bathe and *The Pathway* are not as simple as they claim to be. Under the guise of concision, the two treatises introduce novel and simple solutions to old problems along with adding in confounding complexities that obscure and contradict their stated aims. Perhaps most importantly, these treatises laid the practical yet sometimes contradictory foundation on which English theory would be built.

In terms of scope, length, and approach there is one looming exception to which we must now turn. As the following chapter will demonstrate, Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction* pushes beyond his two English predecessors and greatly increases what could be included in a book of practical music. This is true in terms of the topics he covers and the substantial length of his treatise. Morley's treatise is certainly practical in that it is directly related to the practice of singing and composing music, but it also expands on what it means for a text to be introductory.

Chapter 2 Thomas Morley and the English Practical Tradition

Thomas Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597) is by far the most famous English music treatise of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The only possible challenger to Morley's supremacy is found in the highly popular publications of John Playford that appeared after 1650. But Playford's commercially successful compendia could never fully compete with Morley's treatise in terms of scope or depth.[1]

Many commentators, from the seventeenth century until modern times, have stressed the originality of Morley's treatise. In 1662 Playford himself wrote that it was one of only two English works on music worth reading: "what have been printed in this Nation worthy of perusal are only two, *viz*. Mr. *Morley's Introduction*, & Mr. *Butler's Principles of Musick*, both which are very rare and scarce to be had."[2] That the influence of Morley's treatise was still widely appreciated two centuries after its publication can be seen in John Hawkins's casual remark that "the most valuable of all of his works is his *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, so often referred to in the course of this work."[3] Hawkins takes Morley's treatise to be not only of considerable theoretical worth but also an enduring influence on the history of music, calling it "a work for which all who love or practice the science are under the highest obligations to its

[1] Compare, for example, the capacious title of Morley's treatise with the more modest claims of the 1662 edition of Playford's compendium. Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke set downe in forme of a dialogue: devided into three partes, the first teacheth to sing with all things necessary for the knowledge of pricksong. The second treateth of descante and to sing two parts in one upon a plainsong or ground, with other things necessary for a descanter. The third and last part entreateth of composition of three, foure, five or more parts with many profitable rules to that effect. With new songs of 2. 3. 4. and .5 parts. By Thomas Morley, Batcheler of musick, & of the gent. of hir Majesties Royall Chapell.*; John Playford, *A Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick in Two Books: First Book Contains the Grounds and Rules of Musick, the Second, Instructions for the Viol and Also the Treble-Violin / by J. Playford, Philo-Musicæ ; to Which Is Added a Third Book, Entituled, The Art of Setting or Composing Musick in Parts, by Dr. Tho. Campion, with Annotations Thereon by Mr. Chr. Simpson.* (London, England: Printed for J. Playford and are sold at his Shop in the Temple in Fleet street, 1662).
[2] Playford, *A Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, [A4r].
[3] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 489.

author."[4] Charles Burney in 1789, however, could only manage halfhearted praise. "If due allowance be made for the quaintness of the dialogue and style of the times, and the work be considered as the first regular treatise on Music that was printed in our language, the author will merit great praise for the learning and instruction it contains."[5] The status of Morley's treatise remained high into the twentieth century. Nan Cooke Carpenter has called it "the most important Renaissance treatise" published in England.[6] Joseph Kerman states, "In learning and scope this book stands head and shoulders above any other musical treatise published in Elizabethan England, and it was a standard didactic text for many years."[7] Barry Cooper writes, "Morley's book was the first significant English treatise in a hundred years…For a long time, Morley's *Introduction* remained the standard book of English music theory, and no other theoretical work of the seventeenth century is comparable in quality and thoroughness."[8]

Part of Morley's enduring legacy comes from the fact that his treatise transmitted a significant amount of knowledge from Continental authors to an English-speaking audience. Many of the source materials cited by Morley were not easily available to later writers in England. While Boethius was taught in the universities and the writings of Zarlino and Glarean were known to a few in England, these remained specialized texts that were difficult to get one's

[4] Hawkins, 494.
[5] Charles Burney, *A General History of Music, From the Earliest Ages to the Present Period (1789) with Critical and Historical Notes by Frank Mercer* (New York: Dover Publications, 1957), II: 86. Burney continues his criticism, mostly stressing that the 1597 treatise does not cover material that had become common by 1789. "Upon the whole, though the book is curious, and full of information concerning the Music of the sixteenth century, it must be owned, that the language in which it is written, is at once uncouth and affected; and that neither the melody nor harmony it recommends and teaches, is of this world, at least, of this age; no certain scale is given of major or minor keys; nor is the modulation he uses, that of the present times. Indeed no keys are determined except F major, and D and A minor; and though so much is written concerning the *moods* or measure, yet nothing is said of *accent*, or the *preparation*, *use*, and *resolution* of *discords* in general." Burney, II: 87.
[6] Carpenter, *Music in the Medieval and Renaissance Universities*, 369.
[7] Joseph Kerman, *The Elizabethan Madrigal: A Comparative Study*, American Musicological Society. Studies and Documents 4 (New York: American Musicological Society, 1962), 131.
[8] Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie," 160. My translation.

hands on.[9] Then again, they also required reading knowledge of Latin and Italian. A degree of facility in Latin could be assumed among an educated elite. But it was hardly common knowledge for most performing musicians outside of the church.[10] This is one of the reasons publications in Latin were so rare in England in the seventeenth century.[11] For many readers, Morley's treatise would have been the easiest (if not the only) way for them to access detailed discussions of classical and Continental music theory from the sixteenth century in English. The fact that Morley's treatise was reprinted in 1608 suggests that from a reasonably early date readers recognized that it offered something useful and different that went beyond the other treatises available in English.[12]

Published shortly after Bathe's *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* (1596) and the anonymous *The Pathway to Musicke* (1596), Morley's text might at first glance appear as the heir to the English practical theory tradition. But, if it is a practical treatise, it is one of a unique

[9] According to Herissone's survey of the sources of information in English treatises from Bathe (c. 1596) to Roger North (c. 1728), only Morley and Butler draw from Glarean and Zarlino. René Descartes's *Compendium musicae* (translated into English in 1653 as *Excellent Compendium of Musick*) also contains mention of Zarlino. Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, Appendix D.

[10] This last point is underscored by the case of John Bull, who was made professor of music at Gresham College in 1597 upon the recommendation of the queen. Because he was unable to read Latin, a provision was made that allowed him to give his lectures in English. John Hawkins, with his characteristic wit, casts some doubt on the appropriateness of his appointment. "In this instance it seems that the queen's affection for Bull got the better of her judgment, for not being able to speak Latin, it may be presumed that he was unable to read it; and if so, he must have been ignorant of the very principles of the science, and consequently but very indifferently qualified to lecture on it even in English." Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 480.

[11] To be sure, there was at least a small market for Latin works published in England in the seventeenth century. But the fact remains that if any continental work in Latin was to find a large market in England, it needed to be translated into English. (Gordon Braden, "An Overview," in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English: Volume 2 1550–1660*, ed. Gordon Braden, Robert Cummings, and Stuart Gillespie (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 8–9.) This is certainly why John Dowland, or at least his printer Thomas Adams, believed that the only way to make Ornithoparchus's *Micrologus* marketable to an English public in 1609 would be to translate it into English. It is notable that the Latin music publications of the Englishmen Robert Fludd were all published on the Continent. During this time period, there was an English market for the importation of books published abroad, known as the Latin Trade regardless of the actual language of publication. For more on this see Julian Roberts, "The Latin Trade," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Vol. 4, 1557–1695*, ed. John Barnard, D. F. McKenzie, and Maureen Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 141–73.

[12] The fact that Morley's treatise was out of print after 1608 confirms Burney's point that much of its material had become dated not long after its publication.

type. His work greatly expands upon that of his English predecessors to move beyond the narrow confines of practical instruction and sets a variety of precedents that English theorists would build on in the following decades. Even then, however, it is quite unlike those seventeenth-century writings that were inspired by it. Morley's treatise is substantially longer, significantly broader in scope, and more deeply engaged with Continental music theory than any English treatise that follows it. At times Morley's writing seems highly progressive and prescient, while at other times, it sounds resoundingly regressive, wedded to a musical practice and intellectual tradition that was rapidly receding.

In this chapter, I hope to show how his text, despite its many conservative qualities, was a driving force in changing English ideas about music by exposing fault lines in the conceptualization of music theory that writers would contend with in the following decades. At the core of this is an interrogation of what a practical approach to learning music is and the degree to which Morley's treatise represents this.

Situating Morley and His Treatise

Thomas Morley's influence on English music at the end of the sixteenth century can scarcely be overstated. He was a well-known composer and Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. He was an important figure in music publishing (especially after William Byrd's monopoly on it expired in 1596), printing a significant number of his own works and those of others.[13] Morley was involved in almost every facet of musical life in England (and with a good deal of success

[13] For more on Morley's biography see Tessa Murray and Philip Brett, "Morley, Thomas," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.19147; Tessa Murray, *Thomas Morley: Elizabethan Music Publisher* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014). For more on Morley's publishing activities see Jeremy L. Smith, *Thomas East and Music Publishing in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 76–95.

throughout), which made him a central figure in so many of these areas. Despite this, he was not always remembered as a great composer; this is an area where Hawkins had less praise for Morley. He writes

> As a practical composer he has doubtless shown great abilities; he was an excellent harmonist, but did not possess the faculty of invention in any very eminent degree. His compositions seem to be the effect of close study and much labour, and have in them little of that sweet melody which are found in those of Bennet, Weelkes, Wilby, Bateson, and some others; nor in point of invention and fine contrivance are they to be compared with those of either Bird or Tallis.[14]

However, Morley's reputation as a composer has improved in more recent years. Joseph Kerman called him "the first and most important of the English madrigalists."[15] More recently Megan Kaes Long has drawn attention to the importance of Morley's *balletti* and their innovations in tonal structure.[16]

Morley implies that he was a student of William Byrd, but direct evidence of this training and when it may have occurred is lacking.[17] In 1588 Morley received a Bachelor of Music from Oxford University. However, he may not have ever actually attended the university; it was also possible to be awarded the degree by having practiced music for seven years and by writing a vocal piece that was then performed at Oxford.[18] Based on his education, compositional output, and prestigious position as a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, Morley was ideally qualified to make a significant contribution to English writing on music.

[14] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 494.
[15] Kerman, *The Elizabethan Madrigal*, 130.
[16] Long, *Hearing Homophony*, 148–58, 163–65.
[17] Due to the nature of individual instruction and the passage of time, lack of surviving records of this teaching is hardly surprising. The stylistic influence of Byrd on Morley is well-documented. See Murray, *Thomas Morley*, 13.
[18] Murray, 29.

Certainly, much of Morley's reputation is due to his treatise.[19] For all of *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*'s importance and influence, however, it is useful to remember that Morley's treatise was only one of a number of writings on music by various authors that appeared in the 1590s purporting to provide an introduction to music for the novice.

Yet, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* was different in kind than its precursors. It was the first English music treatise published in the folio format. (*The Pathway to Musicke* was printed in oblong quarto, and Bathe's *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* was in octavo.) The folio format was typically reserved for the most prestigious (and expensive) productions of scholars and theologians. Jessie Ann Owens explains that "Morley seems consciously to be setting his book apart" from *The Pathway* and Bathe by using a format that "need[s] to be seen as somewhat rarified."[20] By itself the format would help the reader to understand the myriad differences between Bathe's octavo print and Morley's folio, differences that are often more meaningful than the apparent similarities announced on their title pages. This is to say that Morley's treatise is more formidable than its contemporaries not just in content but also in form; the physical object of the print marked it as something different.[21] While the posturing of format alone may not account for the success of *A Plaine and Easie Introduction*, it does suggest Morley's elevated ambitions for his treatise.

[19] Indeed, Christensen has called it "perhaps the most representative book of sixteenth-century compositional pedagogy." Christensen, "Music Theory and Pedagogy," 428.
[20] The folio format was also conventionally used for prints of lute and other instrumental music due to practical constraints with typesetting tablature. Owens, "You Can Tell a Book by Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" 368, 371, 376–77.
[21] Complete pricing information for these treatises is difficult to come by. The surviving booksellers' catalogues tend to be late, incomplete, and often lacking in prices. The cost of paper was a major factor in the cost of a book. The length of Morley's treatise and the added complexity of having to produce the numerous musical examples and figures indicate that this was likely a relatively expensive print. See Owens, 349–51.

Morley's Dialogue

The rhetoric of the book also sets it apart from its predecessors. One of the many charms of Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction* is the way he uses dialogue to mimic individual instruction in an appealing and accessible manner. To be sure, dialogue had been used since antiquity by writers for pedagogical purposes. In the Renaissance, there was a remarkable revival of interest in the format, as several scholars have noted.[22] In particular, Peter Burke has identified a variety of types of Renaissance dialogue corresponding to the subjects covered.[23] Cristle Collins Judd shows that this format was common in writings on music throughout the sixteenth century (especially in Italy), with Anton Francesco Doni, Gioseffo Zarlino, Vincenzo Galilei, and a number of others all writing dialogues on music.[24] Judd adds, however, that Morley's treatise "seems not to have originated in direct response to Italian dialogic tradition." She further notes, "Nor does it seem to have English predecessors that deal with the subject of music, although didactic dialogues in general were as common in England as on the continent."[25] For example, in 1561 Thomas Hoby published his translation of Baldassare Castiglione's famous dialogue *Il cortegiano* (1528) in London as *The Courtyer*. Hoby's translation and the many editions it went through in the sixteenth century not only show a robust market for books in dialogue format, but its success also points towards a growing English middle class with social aspirations.[26]

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[22] For more on dialogues in the Renaissance see Virginia Cox, *The Renaissance Dialogue: Literary Dialogue in Its Social and Political Contexts, Castiglione to Galileo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
[23] Burke identifies "four main types of dialogue, or at least four positions on a spectrum: the catechism, the drama, the disputation, and the conversation." Peter Burke, "The Renaissance Dialogue," *Renaissance Studies* 3, no. 1 (1989): 3.
[24] Cristle Collins Judd, "Music in Dialogue: Conversational, Literary, and Didactic Discourse about Music in the Renaissance," *Journal of Music Theory* 52, no. 1 (2008): 43.
[25] Judd, 59–62.
[26] For more on the English market for courtesy and music books see Murray, *Thomas Morley*, 52.

Such social aspirations are found in the opening of Morley's treatise. Part I begins with a conversation between Polymathes and Philomathes.

> *Polymathes*. Staye (brother *Philomathes*) what haste? Whither go you so fast?
>
> *Philomathes*. To seeke out an old frind of mine.
>
> *Pol*. But before you goe, I praie you repeat some of the discourses which you had yester night at master *Sophobulus* his banket: For commonly he is not without both wise and learned guestes.
>
> *Phi*. It is true in deede. And yester night, there were a number of excellent schollers, (both gentlemen and others:) but all the propose which then was discoursed upon, was Musicke.
>
> *Pol*. I trust you were contented to suffer other to speake of that matter.
>
> *Phi*. I would that had been the worst: for I was compelled to discover mine own ignorance, and confesse that I knewe nothing at all in it.[27]

It is from this beginning that Philomathes seeks out a master to teach him so that he can avoid being embarrassed at yet another banquet due to his ignorance of music.

A Plaine and Easie Introduction is framed around three interlocutors. The Master (taken to be Morley) primarily instructs Philomathes ("lover of learning"). In the third part of the treatise, Polymathes ("widely learned") joins his brother Philomathes and chiefly acts as an example of poor training in music.[28] Aside from pedagogical practicality, the dialogue allows for digressions from the musical material to set a scene.[29] For example, the third part begins with Philomathes (the student in the first two parts) questioning his brother Polymathes as to why he arose so early this morning.

> *Philomathes*…Was it the sight of some of those faire faces (which you spied in your yester nights walke) which have banished all other thoughts out of your minde, causing

[27] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 1.
[28] See Judd, "Music in Dialogue," 59.
[29] The dialogue format was not without its drawbacks. As Barry Cooper claims, "[The format] makes the text quite cumbersome, even at the same time [it makes it] more entertaining than most other treatises." Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie," 160. My translation.

> you thinke the night long and wish the daylight that thereby you might find some occasion of seeing your mistris?...
>
> *Pol*…and as for love which you would seeme to thrust upon me, *I* esteeme it as a foolish passion entering in emptie braines, and nourished with idle thoughtes, so as of all other things I must contemne it, so do I esteeme them the greatest fooles who bee therewith most troubled.[30]

Without knowing better, a reader could easily miss that this will be the beginning of a section on composing songs. Morley's introduction does serve some purpose, in that it introduces us to Polymathes and sets up the differences in approach between him and Philomathes. It is also entertaining or even humorous. This is one of the more charming treatises ever written; it is littered with witty asides and pointed comments (some of which are even relevant to the musical issue at hand). At times it is great fun to read.

The character of Polymathes, as a bit of a fool who blindly believes everything he has read in any Classical source, provides Morley with a perfect foil to rail against pompous academic teachers of music. The "Master Boulde" who taught Polymathes becomes the object of much ridicule (and punning) over the "bold" allowances that he permits in composition, which violate Morley's rules of counterpoint. He is also criticized as a teacher of an antiquated style that has since fallen out of favor.[31] Morley's goal in this is to justify his writing of a new treatise of composition that is better grounded in theory and more up to date in practice; he also shows a concern for good composition that goes beyond simply following a set of rules.

The choice to use dialogue impacts the physical organization of the treatise. Aside from the treatise's division into three main parts (on rudiments, counterpoint, and composition), the dialogue progresses without other formal divisions. Morley relies exclusively on small marginal

[30] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 116.
[31] Morley, 119.

notes to alert the reader to the topic.[32] This contrasts to *The Pathway to Musicke* which has sections on individual topics that are clearly labeled and set apart (in essence, very short chapters) and John Dowland's translation (1609) of Andreas Ornithoparchus's *Micrologus* which has chapter headings and a table of contents at the end. Some of these marginal notes clearly function as subject headings, but others are substantive notes, like his comment on the various complexities of repeat signs.[33] These formatting decisions encourage the user of this text to read it as a larger unit, in part because it can sometimes be difficult to quickly locate guidance on a specific topic. (The lack of a table of contents further hampers easy retrieval of discrete pieces of information.) The reader is not presented with tables of rules but with exercises, followed by the student's completion, and then the master's correction.[34] The discursive genre of the dialogue affects the pedagogy it models. In Morley's treatise, advice that in other texts is abstracted as rules is instead given prosaically as practical suggestions on how to improve what the student has produced. Morley presents a model of pedagogy rooted in the actual lessons shared by student and master. In a typical instance, the master states a principle or gives an example and asks the student to produce a similar one of his own. Then the master notes the most important mistakes and offers his corrections. After this the student will often produce a new and improved version of the exercise or ask a question about some novel aspect of the exercise which allows the master to segue to the next topic. The reader is thus encouraged to learn the master's rules, examine the student's attempt at an exercise, evaluate the exercise to see how well it follows the rules, and then see how this aligns with the master's corrections; after this the reader can also evaluate the

[32] Morley's form of marginalia indexing was not uncommon, but it was by no means the only means of organizing a work at the end of the seventeenth century. These types of printed glosses are a holdover from how manuscripts were used. H. J. Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 46.
[33] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 68.
[34] The one major exception to this is the inclusion of "A Table containing the usuall cordes for the composition of foure or more partes," which is only included after Philomathes begs for it. Morley, 129–30.

master's exercise. Morley's presentation alone encourages a more active approach to reading the text than that found in his immediate English predecessors where rules are tabulated and then left to stand by themselves without further examples. The only break from this format is in the annotations appended to the end of the treatise, which Morley clearly states are not for the beginning student but for those who have already mastered the main contents of the treatise.

Throughout the text, Morley employs a bottom-up pedagogy in which the student inductively learns how to compose through exemplification and imitation; this is part of what adds to his treatise's length. His earlier English predecessors displayed a preference for brief rules and a top-down approach in their pedagogy. Perhaps the biggest benefit of this approach is the concision that it allows, codifying general practices without discoursing at length on exceptions. The tension between these two modes of teaching composition recurs to some extent in all English writing on music around the turn of the seventeenth century.

The dialogue format further allows Morley to expand his focus beyond the narrow confines of a musical tutor. Through the staging of introductory scenes, Morley is able to highlight the role of music in polite society. These scenes also act as a marketing strategy that alerts potential readers to the importance of music making in the upper portions of society and the need to be well-trained in the art. Using dialogue allows Morley to expand the scope of his project far beyond that of his immediate English predecessors. What he presents the student is quite ambitious for a supposedly introductory text on practical music. Given its venerable pedagogical pedigree, it is noteworthy that few other English theorists followed Morley in using dialogue in their texts even when they produced more comprehensive treatises on music. It is to the scope of Morley's treatise that we now turn.

The Scope of Morley's Treatise

What did Morley believe was necessary for the young student of music to learn in an introductory text? Based on the length of the *Introduction*, evidently the answer is quite a lot. Measured simply by page count, Morley's treatise consists of over 200 folio pages whereas Bathe's *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song* is forty-eight octavo pages plus a single foldout page and the anonymous *Pathway to Musicke* is forty-eight oblong quarto pages. By virtually any metric, Morley's treatise is substantially more expansive than any previous English treatise. (This adds a touch of irony to its claim of being an introduction, let alone a plain and easy one.) Instead, its ambition (if not its structure) is more akin to Gioseffo Zarlino's celebrated and encyclopedic *Le istitutioni harmoniche* (1558), a treatise that Morley knew well.

The title page (Figure 2.1) features an elaborate border and advertises the organization of the work. It contains detailed depictions of the liberal arts and a number of worthies from antiquity. It might be tempting to assign special significance to the title page border since its use is appropriate for a learned music treatise, but it had in fact been in use since 1559 for works on a variety of topics.[35] As the title page shows, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* is divided into three parts.

> The first teacheth to sing with all things necessary for the knowledge of pricksong. The second treateth of descante and to sing two parts in one upon a plainsong or ground, with other things necessary for a descanter. The third and last part entreateth of composition of three, foure, five or more parts with many profitable rules to that effect.

[35] The border was used until 1613 when it made its final appearance on the title page of a new edition of John Dowland's *The First Booke of Songs or Ayres*. Peter Short first used it for music prints beginning in 1597. R. B. McKerrow and F. S. Ferguson, *Title-Page Borders Used in England & Scotland, 1485–1640*, Illustrated Monographs. XXI (London: Printed for the Bibliographical Society at the Oxford University Press, 1932), 92–93.

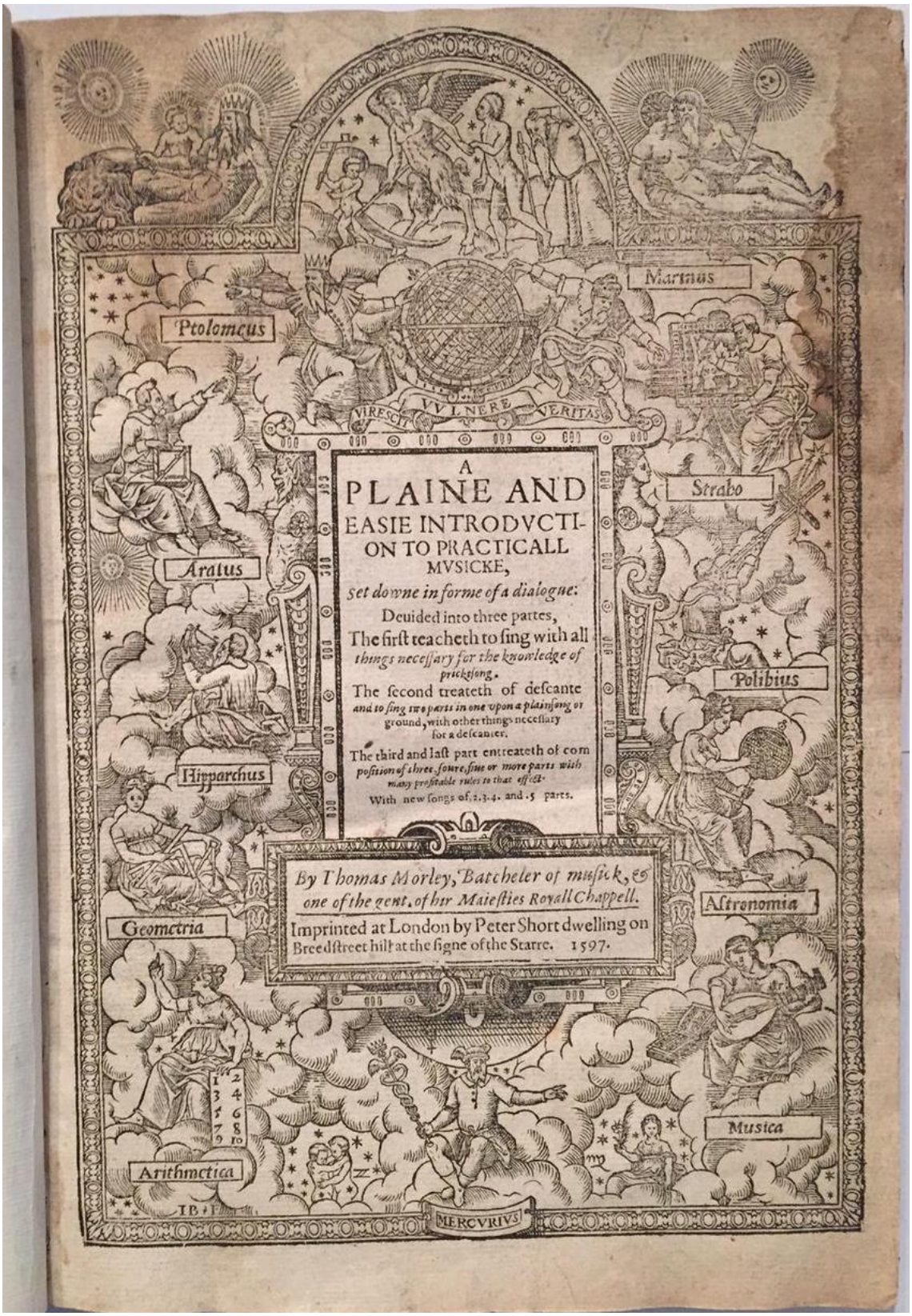

Figure 2.1 Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, title page

These three parts are followed by a lengthy section of "Annotations" where Morley addresses some of the thornier issues that the main text avoids. Among other things, the annotations discuss speculative approaches to music, Classical and contemporary writings, and the failures and contributions of other theorists. Because the main body of the treatise is fully practical in aim, it does not get bogged down in theoretical abstraction; rather, the focus is always upon conveying the practical knowledge and skills a performing musician and composer would need. In this light, Morley's treatise is firmly in line with his English forbearers along with a significant number of Continental *practica* texts.

Morley's treatise follows the accepted practice of treating "practical music" as vocal music in a generally uniform style and barely touches on instrumental and keyboard music. This is partly a practical pedagogical strategy on his part. The rules of counterpoint in the treatment of consonance and dissonance in vocal music are taken as normative. The model compositions shown in the treatise are all for voices, but the vast majority have no texts. These are idealized exercises that are vocally conceived and not the types of vocal pieces that a singer is likely to perform.[36]

Only in the closing pages of the treatise is instrumental music treated in any detail.[37] There Morley discusses the keyboard fantasie, which he tells us, is "the most principall and chiefest kind of musicke which is made without a dittie" (that is, without a text). Freed from a text to set, the composer "is tide to nothing but that he may adde, deminish, and alter at his pleasure." But Morley is quick to note that this instrumental practice is a special case: "this kind of musick is with them who practice instruments of parts in greatest use, but for voices it is but

[36] The main exception to this is the eleven unnumbered pages of texted vocal pieces set in table book format that follow the Peroratio and precede the Annotations.
[37] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 180–81.

sildome used."[38] Morley's instructions about instruments are suggestive at best, not offering as much concrete guidance as has been found throughout the rest of the print.[39]

In contrast to the main body of the text, the annotations, attached to the end of the treatise, delve into a number of thorny theoretical issues and are in constant dialogue with a wide range of Continental sources. They are by far the most purely theoretical portion of the treatise, covering topics of historical and speculative interest. In them we can see Morley's clearest departure from the writings of his English predecessors. For example, he gives a lengthy discussion of the three genera of the ancient Greek "scale of music."[40] Strictly speaking, this topic has little to do with the "practical music" that is the supposed object of Morley's study. It is closer to Continental speculative traditions, which he frequently cites in this section. Yet the treatise's organization does not draw a strict distinction between *theorica* and *practica*, as is found in Franchinus Gaffurius and Gioseffo Zarlino, for example.[41]

[38] Morley, 180–81. Morley wrote nine two-part vocal pieces with words that he labeled "fantasies" in *The First Booke of Canzonets to Two Voyces* (1595). Though the text in *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* does not mention any instruments by name in his discussion of the fantasie, it is clear that an improvisatory freedom and lack of text are viewed as basic features of the genre. Even though Morley wrote a few, he can still maintain that vocal fantasies are "seldom used." The works list in Morley's entry in *Oxford Music Online* classifies these nine fantasies as "other instrumental," a category that includes a number of entries that are not clearly for instruments such as "6 sol–faing songs" and an "aria, a 3." Murray and Brett, "Morley, Thomas."

[39] The generation following Morley found his limited discussion of practical instrumental music inadequate and more thoroughly explored instrumental music as a topic of specific instruction. For example, Charles Butler devotes significant attention to instrumental music in his *Principles of Musik* (1636), but the only practical instruction he gives is devoted to vocal music. Starting in 1654, John Playford in his enormously successful *A Breefe Introduction to the Skill of Musick* combined basic musical instruction with specific playing instructions for the viol.

[40] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, [¶r–¶v].

[41] Morley does define the speculative and practical aspects of music in his Annotations. This is discussed in Chapter 4.

Contents of the Treatise

Because many later authors drew heavily from Morley's treatise, an overview of its contents will prove helpful.[42] Table 2.1 provides a table of contents for the treatise.[43] In Part 1, a singer learns all there is to know about reading mensural notations. The text begins with the fundamental material of music: notes, clefs, scales, and solmization, with various solmization exercises provided. (Morley follows the medieval hexachordal solmization system; he is the only English theorist from around this time to do so.)[44] From this follows a discussion of mensural music and its various note shapes and lengths. Here Morley covers the subjects of ligatures, the three degrees (mood, time, and prolation), and the various types of dots and their effects on note lengths. The entire part ends with a discussion of proportion and much complaining about inaccurate use of proportional designations by various musicians. Many examples of mensurations follow in two to six voices, totaling some three dozen pages. He offers surprisingly little explanation about these examples.[45] Despite this, Morley illustrates far more types of mensuration than were actually used in contemporary music.[46]

[42] The dedication to William Byrd, laudatory poems, and note to the reader that begin this volume do not appear to have been of any particular interest to Morley's contemporary commentators and borrowers. (In many ways they are quite conventional.) However, they do help to establish some of the context for this print and are discussed at greater length below.

[43] Morley provides a number of marginal headings throughout his text. The headings listed in Table 2.1 are the result of my analysis, though at times they correspond to headings that Morley used.

[44] This does not count translations of Continental theory, such as Dowland's translation of Ornithoparchus, which retained the hexachordal solmization system.

[45] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 27–68. The section on proportion begins on p. 27 and contains little text, with the musical examples taking up the remaining space until the first part ends on p. 68.

[46] In general, English theorists of this time discussed four main proportion signatures: perfect of the more, imperfect of the more, imperfect of the less, and perfect of the less. Unfortunately, theorists were in less than complete agreement on which signs should signify which proportions. The confusion over this and the variety of solutions proposed are discussed in Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 57–65. That Morley was describing a practice from the past that was quickly becoming obsolete is not surprising considering the list of authors he cites on the matter. He says that what he has written is "confirmed by the authorities of *Peter Aron*, *Franchinus*, *Iordanus*, and nowe of late days, learned *Glareanus*, *Losius*, *Listenius*, *Berhusius* and a greate number more." (Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 28.) The major works from many of these

Dedication to William Byrd
To the Reader
Part 1: Teaching to Sing
- The Gamut
- Clefs
- Solmization
- Note values
- Ligatures
- Three degrees (Moode, Time, Prolation)
- Perfection, Imperfection, Alteration and their Signs
- Proportion (including many musical examples of a variety of proportions)

Part 2: Treating of Descant
- Definition of descant
- Concords and Discords
- Cadences
- Fuge (imitation)
- Rhythmic structures of descant (short and long, long and short, dupla)
- Successive perfect concords
- Stylistic rules and allowances in descant
- Figuration
- Two parts in one upon a plainsong (canons)
- Double descant (*Contrapunto doppio*)

Part 3: Treating of Composing or Setting of Songs
- Guidelines on dissonance treatment and style
- Chords to use in three voices
- Chords to use in four voices
- Formal closes in four to six parts
- General rules for setting
- Keeping the key
- Syncopation
- Discussion and correction of a variety of compositions
- Canons
- Rules to be observed in dittying (text-setting)
- Genres of music (vocal and instrumental)

Peroratio
5 Motets and Madrigals
Annotations Necessary for the Understanding of the Book
Errata
2 Motets
Authors whose Authorities be Either Cited or Used in This Booke

Table 2.1 Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke,* contents

authors were around fifty to seventy-five years old by the time of Morley's writing. Friedrich Beurhaus's *Erotematum musicae* (1573) was the closest thing to a contemporary work referenced by Morley.

The second part of the treatise is on descant. Morley is aware of the multiple meanings of the term "descant." He complains:

> The name of Descant is usurped of the musitions in divers significations: some time they take it for the whole harmony of many voyces: others sometime for one of the voyces or partes: & that is, when the whole song is not passing three voyces. Last of all, they take it for singing a part extempore upon a playnesong, in which sense we commonly use it: so that when a man talketh of a Descanter, it must be understood of one that can extempore sing a part upon a playnesong.[47]

Thus "descant" has a number of context-dependent meanings. It can describe a piece for multiple voices; it can be used as the name for a single voice in a composition of up to three voices; or it can refer to a part extemporized on a plainsong, the meaning that Morley prefers. Nicholas Temperley notes that there was "a tradition of improvised descant" in English churches around Morley's time that consisted of improvised note-against-note counterpoint; the evidence for this practice "is indirect, but it is highly persuasive."[48] Throughout part two of the treatise, "descant" is treated as a counterpoint written against a *cantus firmus*; it is essentially a tutor on counterpoint and a prologue to the rules of composition treated in Part III. Beginning with the basic consonances and dissonances, Morley progresses to various rules about the succession of intervals and which ones to avoid. For example, Morley begins with the well-known prohibition on parallel perfect consonances.[49] Most of the exercises consist of writing a single part against a *cantus firmus*, though a few involve writing two parts. These examples begin as note–against–note counterpoint but quickly become more elaborate in a proto-species approach. Many of these

[47] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 70.
[48] Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 74. Morley's strict definition does not appear to have been followed by later writers. For example, Charles Butler divides "setting" (composing) into counterpoint and discant. "Counterpoint is when the Notes of all the Partes, being eqal time and number, goe jointly together." "Discant is, when unto Integral Notes of longer time in one Parte, ar sung eqivalent Particles, or Notes of shorter time." That is, counterpoint is note against note, but descant is freer. It does not need to extemporaneous. Charles Butler, *The Principles of Musik, in Singing and Setting: With the Two-Fold Use Therof, [Ecclesiastical and Civil.]* (London: Printed by John Haviland, for the Author, 1636), 89–90.
[49] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 72.

exercises are based directly on examples from Zarlino, who appears to have been Morley's main source for rules on counterpoint.[50] There is also some discussion of more advanced techniques including imitation and canon. As always, the discussion is sprinkled with examples.

The scene that opens the second part of Morley's treatise implies that Morley recognized that some prestige could be gained by being able to improvise descant. Philomathes recounts to his Master being at a social gathering where "one of the company naming a friend of his owne, tearmed him the best Descanter that was too be found. Now sir, I am at this time come to know what Descant is, and to learne the same."[51] This anecdote really only makes sense if the "best Descanter" is a skilled performer of improvised melody and not a skilled writer of counterpoint exercises. Morley, however, moves away from this improvised basis to more general techniques that are not strictly tied to improvised descant. Hawkins notes that "the rules for extemporary descant…are in truth no other than the precepts of musical composition."[52] Hawkins might be overstating the importance of these rules for descant; after all, Morley does follow his discussion of descant with Part III of the treatise which directly covers composing. The rules themselves are not particularly innovative and largely follow those of Zarlino.[53]

While the second part of his *Plaine and Easie Introduction* essentially covers counterpoint against a plainsong, the third part covers free composition (often in more voices

[50] Harman provides a useful chart that compares Morley's examples to Zarlino's models. Thomas Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, ed. Alec R. Harman, 2nd ed., The Norton Library (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973), 199. In his Annotations, Morley suggests that the reader wanting to know more about the minutiae of counterpoint should consult the work of Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, Zarlino, and Gaffurius. Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, (∴)1r.
[51] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 70.
[52] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 491.
[53] Morley is not alone in taking this conservative approach. Herissone writes, "Although the rules governing the harmonic organization of a piece of music were revolutionized during the seventeenth century, instructions for writing note–against–note counterpoint and progressions showed little development in English theory, and many remained closely related to those of the Renaissance." Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 142.

than in the previous part). This part is primarily filled with examples from the student that are then corrected or otherwise improved by the master. The main exception to this procedure is when Morley includes a large "Table containing the usuall cordes for the composition of foure of more partes" (shown in Figure 2.2), which lays out the acceptable intervals that can be used between voices. This table is translated directly from Zarlino.[54] Chords are limited to those with unisons, thirds, fifths, sixths, and their octave compounds. The tenor is still the basis of this system, but Herissone notes, "In England the earliest suggestion of a shift away from the tenor towards the bass is found in Morley's *Introduction*."[55] This is shown in Morley's comment directly following the table. He writes, "Here be also certaine examples whereby you may perceive, your base standing in any key, how the rest of the partes (being but foure) may stand unto it: both going close and in wider distances."[56] Morley appears content to follow Zarlino's traditional lead on how chords are theorized while simultaneously tentatively moving towards an understanding of chords that prioritizes the bass. (England would have to wait for Thomas Campion's treatise in 1614 until an Englishman devised a complete system for composing from the bass.)

[54] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 129–30; Gioseffo Zarlino, *Le Istitutioni Harmoniche* (Venetia, 1558), 241; Gioseffo Zarlino, *The Art of Counterpoint: Part Three of Le Istitutioni Harmoniche, 1558*, trans. Guy A. Marco and Claude V. Palisca, vol. N833, The Norton Library (New York: Norton, 1976), 182–83.
[55] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 122.
[56] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 130.

A Table containing the vſuall cordes for the compoſition of foure or more partes.

OF THE VNISON.	
If the treble be and the baſe your *Alto* or meane ſhal be	an vniſon with the tenor a third vnder the tenor a fifth or ſixth aboue the baſe.
But if the baſe be the *Alto* ſhal be	a fifth vnder the tenor a third or tenth aboue the baſe.
Likewiſe if the baſe be then the Alto may be	a ſixt vnder the tenor, a 3 or tenth aboue the baſe
And if the baſe be the other part may bee	an eight vnder the tenor, a 3.5..6 10.or 12.aboue the baſe.
But if the baſe be the meane ſhal be	a tenth vnder the tenor, a fift or twelfth aboue the baſe.

S 2 But

Bnt if the baſe be the Alto may be made	a twelfth vnder the tenor, a 3. or 10. aboue the baſe.
Alſo the baſe being a the other parts may be	fifteenth vnder the tenor, a 3. 5. 6. 10. 12. and 13. aboue the baſe.
OF THE THIRD.	
If the treble be and the baſe the Alto may be	a third with the tenor a third vnder it an vniſon or 8. with the parts.
If the baſe be the *Altus* may be	a ſixt vnder the tenor, a third or tenth aboue the baſe.
But if the baſe be then the *Altus* ſhall be	an eight vnder the tenor, a fift or ſixt aboue the baſe.
And the baſe being then the parts may be	a tenth vnder the tenor, in the vniſon or eight to the tenor or baſe.
OF THE FOVRTH.	
When the treble ſhalbe and the baſſe then the meane ſhall be	a fourth to the tenor a fifth vnder the tenor a 3,or 10,aboue the baſe
But if the baſe be the *Altus* ſhal be	a 12. vnder the tenor a 10. aboue the baſe
OF THE FIFTH.	
But if the treble ſhal be and the baſe the *Alto* may be	a fifth aboue the tenor an eight vnder it a 3 or tenth aboue the baſe
And if the baſe be the *Altus* ſhal be	a ſixt vnder the tenor, an vniſon or 8 with the parts
OF THE SIXTH.	
If the treble be and the baſe the *Altus* may be	a ſixt with the tenor a fift vnder the tenor, an vniſon or eight with the partes
But if the baſe be the *Altus* ſhal be	a third vnder the tenor, a fifth aboue be baſe.
Likewiſe if the baſe be the meane likewiſe ſhalbe	a tenth vnder the tenor, a fifth or 12. aboue the baſe.
OF THE EIGHT.	
If the treble be and the baſe the other parts ſhal be	an 8. with the tenor. a 3. vnder the tenor a 3.5.6.10. 12.13. aboue the baſe
So alſo when the baſe ſhal be the other parts may bee	a 5. vnder the tenor a 3. aboue the baſe.
And if the baſe be the other parts ſhall bee	an eight vnder the tenor a 3 5 10. 12. aboue the baſe.
Laſtly if the baſe be the parts ſhal make	a 12. vnder the tenor a 10. or 17. aboue the baſe.

Figure 2.2 Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 129–130

In contrast to the table of chords, the rest of the third part is much more discursive, in keeping with the dialogue format. Issues of style are often incorporated into the master's corrections of the student's work. Other techniques are illustrated by exemplification and do not require the student to compose or correct an exercise. For example, Morley gives eleven pages of examples of "formall closes in foure, five and sixe partes" which are designed to cover just some of the many types of cadences available to a composer.[57] Morley also adds a confused discussion of mode and Psalm tones that is discussed at some length below. The part ends with a lengthy discussion (drawn partly from Zarlino without acknowledgement) of various styles and genres of music and their different effects on different men.[58] As was discussed at some length above, the treatise is rounded out by two dozen densely packed unnumbered pages of annotations to the main text covering complex issues and the history of music theory.

Morley's Idea of Practical Music in the Annotations and the Main Text

A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke is concerned with much more than just practical music in the sense of relating to the contemporary performance and composition of music. Morley is engaged in something of a philosophical debate over the claims and boundaries of theory and practice. Morley's more capacious notion of practical music is best illustrated in the lengthy section of annotations that ends the treatise. His treatise helps to complicate and unsettle the epistemological division made between theoretical and practical types of knowledge in the early modern period. In the abstract, theory and practice may have represented two distinct

[57] Morley, 131–42. Many of these cadences appear to be copied from Orazio Tigrini's *Compendio della Musica* (1588). Harman's table shows dozens of correspondences. Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, 241–42.
[58] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 177ff. draws from Zarlino, *Le Istitutioni Harmoniche*, 339–40; Gioseffo Zarlino, *On the Modes: Part Four of Le Istitutioni Harmoniche, 1558*, ed. Claude V. Palisca, trans. Vered Cohen, Music Theory Translation Series. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 94–97.

kinds of knowledge, but on the ground writers like Morley show just how much slippage there can be between various modes of knowing.

Morley's annotations, in general, form a curious part of his treatise. These are formatted as endnotes with commentary cued to specific pages and lines of the main text. The principal point of including the entire section of "Annotations necessary for the understanding of the Booke" is to give a space for Morley to demonstrate his knowledge of various authors and to justify his claims in the main body of the text as either agreeing with or contradicting those who came before him.[59] These annotations are aimed at the "learned reader" who already understands the body of the text and not the novice who would benefit from this plain and easy introduction. The annotations to all three parts seem oddly anxious, as if displaying embarrassment over the inclusion of such erudite passages in a practical treatise. His introduction to this section brings out some of these concerns.

> When I had ended my booke, and showne it (to be perused) to some of better skill in letters than my selfe, I was by them requested, to give some contentment to the learned, both by setting down a reason why I had disagreed from the opinions of others, as also to explaine something, which in the booke it selfe might seeme obscure. I have therefore thought it best to set downe in Annotations, such thinges as in the text could not so commodiouslie be handled, for interrupting of the continuall course of the matter, that both the young beginner shoulde not be overladed with those things, which at the firste woulde be to hard for him to conceive: and also that they who were more skillful, might have a reason for my proceedings.[60]

Keeping these lengthy digressions to a separate part of the treatise was thus a means to satisfy two readerships. First, Morley's more learned connoisseurs would find historical and scholarly commentary that would expand their comprehension of the science of music and show how Morley reconciled conflicting sources, perhaps exhibiting an attempt at self-fashioning to appear

[59] Charles Butler employed a similar system of annotations in his *Principles of Musik*, which is the discussed in Chapter 5.
[60] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, ¶1r.

as an erudite scholar. Second, students interested solely in practical issues of music would have a usable textbook that is not mired down in historical digressions. This dual aim is made clear in an opening address "To the Courteous Reader":

> As for the methode of the booke, although it be not such as may in every part satisfie the curiosity of *Dichotomistes*: yet it is such as I thought most convenient for the capacitie of the learner.

Hence, he explains,

> And as for the definition, division, partes, & kindes of Musicke, I have omitted them as things onely serving to content the learned, and not for the instruction of the ignorant.[61]

By the time Morley wrote his annotations (which he claims only to have written after he completed the main body of the text) he appears to have had something of a change of heart since he added in discussions of these matters to "content the learned." As the annotations make clear, Morley was clearly well read and understood his sources.

Morley's introduction to the annotations makes it clear that he was somewhat conflicted about including them in the book. Was such a practical treatise in the vernacular an inappropriate place to display his erudition? Or is he embarrassed about writing theory in a "speculative" mode? Morley is aware that he was not the first to do any of these. Pairings of *theorica* and *practica* had been common for over century, with Gaffurius and Zarlino providing prominent examples.[62] Over this same period, vernacular treatises had become increasingly common. However, Morley's treatise is certainly the first learned text printed in the English language.

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[61] Morley, B1r–B1v.

[62] Morley was well acquainted with the treatises of both Gaffurius and Zarlino and frequently mentions them throughout his treatise. See for example Morley, 13, 45. This division has a long history, extending back to Boethius's distinction between the *cantus* and the *musicus*. See Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, ed. Claude V. Palisca, trans. Calvin M. Bower (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 50–51. For a full history of the *cantus*/*musica* pairing see Calvin Bower, "The Transmission of Ancient Music Theory into the Middle Ages," in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 136–67.

Morley's learning and understanding should not be in doubt. He has a solid understanding of sources in Latin and Italian (with enough references to Greek sources to show that he knew a good deal of them). Morley's anxiety appears to be more than conventional self-deprecation. For example, a few decades later Charles Butler's treatise takes on the same form as Morley's: Butler writes a relatively clear body of the text and then adds scholarly annotations after the individual sections. Butler, however, does not display any of Morley's conflict about displaying erudition in a practical text.

The intellectual postering found in Morley's treatise stands in stark contrast to the two treatises published immediately before his. The author of *The Pathway to Musicke* is not at all troubled by its lack of theoretical ambition and citation of authorities. Bathe, on the other hand, directly positions his treatise as a cure for ignorance, invoking Aristotle and quoting the book of Ecclesiastes in the process.[63] The body of Bathe's treatise combats ignorance through instruction with simple rules and examples, however, and not by reference to important writers of the past. Morley's conflicted position appears to be caused as much by having to include erudite historical explanations in a practical treatise as it does by his worries about his own adequacy to correctly convey this information. By including these annotations, Morley finds a way to placate and appeal to two audiences (musical beginners and learned readers) and get the commercial and political payoff of selling to a wider market while displaying his learning. In his decision to provide a truly practical treatise but also include portions directed at the learned reader, Morley sets his treatise apart from its immediate English precedents, combining theoria and practica.

[63] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 1596, A2r.

Although the theoretical basis for Morley's claims is not always foregrounded (much of it is relegated to the annotations), throughout the treatise he stresses the importance of a compositional practice based on solid footing in theory. In the end he does provide the reader with the proper theoretical groundwork and practical rules to develop one's skills as a singer and composer. The degree to which a student could truly master practical music without a master is an open question. Certainly, practical necessities, like singing in tune and producing a suitable tone, cannot be conveyed from reading this treatise alone. (After all, this is largely a treatise on practical composition and not a practical singing tutor.) But Morley's thoroughness in explanation and examples provides the would-be student with enough model exercises and their corrections to make real progress. We are given a level of truly practical detail and cogent explanation not seen in English treatises to this date.

Take, for example, Morley's discussion of parallel and direct octaves. Philomathes boasts at having mastered the use of "binding" (suspensions), stating "that it is an easie matter for one that is well seene in counterpoint to atain in short time to the knowledge of this kind." To which the Master replies, "It is so. But there be many things which at the first sight seem easie, which in practice are found harder then one woulde thinke. But this much I will shew you, that he who hath this kind of descanting perfectlie, may with small trouble become a good musition."[64] Philomathes then produces a counterpoint example (shown in Figure 2.3) that just so happens to contain a number of errors in its treatment of octaves. The marginal heading gives us the rule "A discord comming between two perfect cords of one kind, taketh not awaie the faulty

[64] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 79.

consequence." The body of the text, however, delves much more deeply into the concept and explains why it is so.

> *Ma.* The first, second, and thirde notes [here meaning semibreves] of your lesson are tolerable, but your fourth note is not to be suffered, because that and the next note following are two eights.
>
> *Phi*. The second part of the note is a *Discord*, and therefore it cannot be two eights seeing they are not both together.
>
> *Ma*. Though they be not both together, yet there is no concord between them: & this you must marke, that a *Discord comming betweene two eights, doth not let them to be two eightes stil*. Likewise, if you set *a discord betweene two fifts, it letteth them not to bee two fifts still*. Therefore if you will avoide the consequence of perfect cords of one kind, you must put betwixt them other concords, and not discords.
>
> *Phi*. This is more then I would have believed, if another had told it me, but I praie you goe on with the rest of the faultes.
>
> *Ma*. Your seventh and eighth notes have a fault, cosine germaine to that which the others had, though it be not the same.
>
> *Phi*. I am sure you cannot saie that they be two eightes, for there is a tenth after the first of them.
>
> *Ma*. Yet it is verie naught, to ascend or descend in that manner to the eight, for those foure crotchets bee but the breaking off a semibriefe in *G sol re ut*, which if it were sung whole, would make two eights together ascending…[65]

[65] Morley, 79–80.

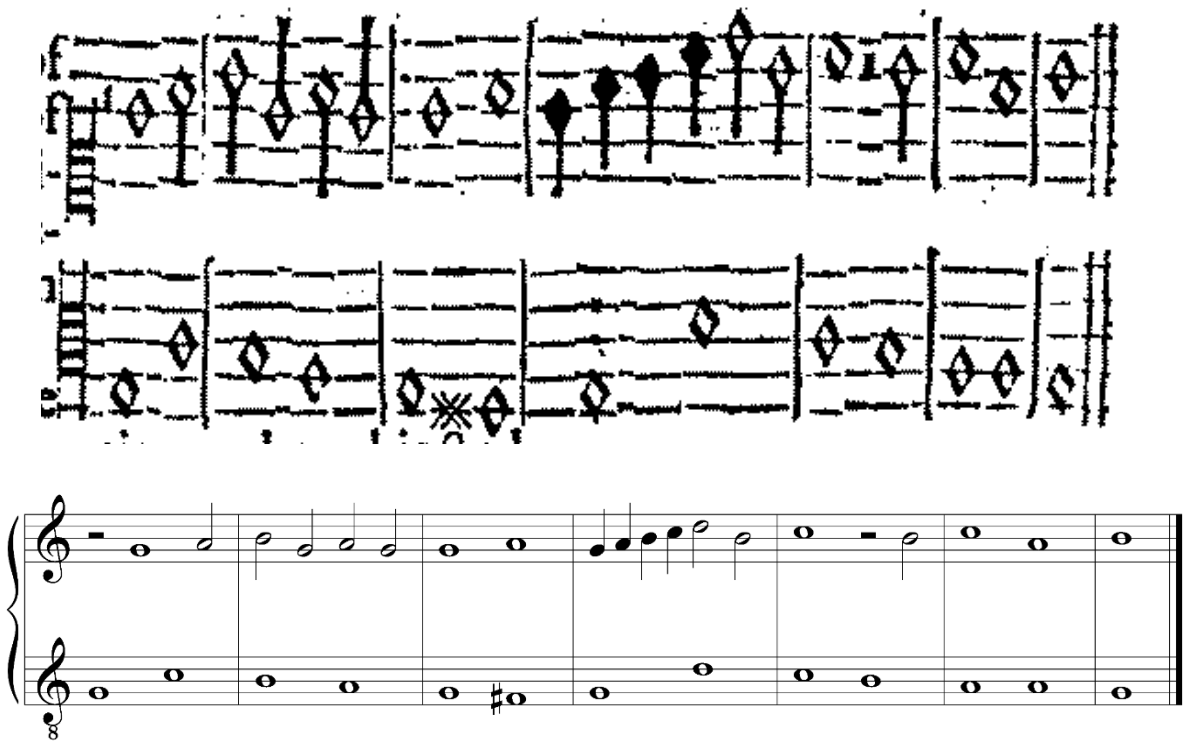


Figure 2.3 Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke,* 79 with transcription

Morley's basic point is that pairs of perfect consonances falling on consecutive beats should be avoided because they sound like parallel octaves (or fifths). The explanation of this principle in dialogue is much more prolix and tedious than it needed to be. At this point the marginal heading states "Ascending or descending to the eight condemned" and cites Zarlino on the matter. Instead of simply stating a rule about parallel and direct octaves, Morley shows an example that features various approaches to the octave, discusses whether or not they work, and then explains the general principles at play. For example, Morley concludes his correction of Philomathes's counterpoint by pointing to a larger rule.

> Your ninth & tenth notes [semibreves, as seen in Figure 2.3], are two eightes with the plainsong, for *a minime rest set betwixt two eights, keepeth them not from being two eights*, because as I saide before, there commeth no other concord betwixt them: but if it were a semibriefe rest, then were it tolerable in more partes, though not in two, for it is an

> unartificiall kinde of descanting in the middle of a lesson, to let the plainsong sing alone, except it were for the bringing in or maintaining of a point *pracedent*.[66]

Here Morley offers a rule of sorts ("*a minime rest set betwixt two eights, keepeth them not from being two eights*") grounded in experience. His objection to these apparent parallel octaves is essentially that they sound bad in two-part counterpoint. (It is "unartificiall" in the sense of artless or unskillful.) Only following all of this does Morley provide his own examples of allowable ways to approach perfect consonances in the corrected version of Philomathes's exercise (shown in Figure 2.4) "with your faultes amended, and that of yours which was good retained." Morley lets his previous admonitions suffice and offers no further comment on his corrected example.[67] Philomathes simply comments that "This is well" and then proceeds to another example, evidently having fully absorbed all he needs to know about parallel fifths and octaves.

Morley's pedagogical approach is grounded in the lived experience of a master correcting and refining his student's work. It goes beyond the giving of rules and instead relies on a dynamic process of trial, error, correction, and then further refinement. While the treatise alone cannot provide the direct engagement of a teacher and student, it can model an approach rooted in constant revision with an ear toward style that far surpasses a simple reliance on strict adherence to rules.

[66] Morley, 80.
[67] Morley's corrected example, while fixing the improper approaches to perfect consonances, still contains a surprising amount of parallelism and does not make for the most satisfying example of a corrected exercise.

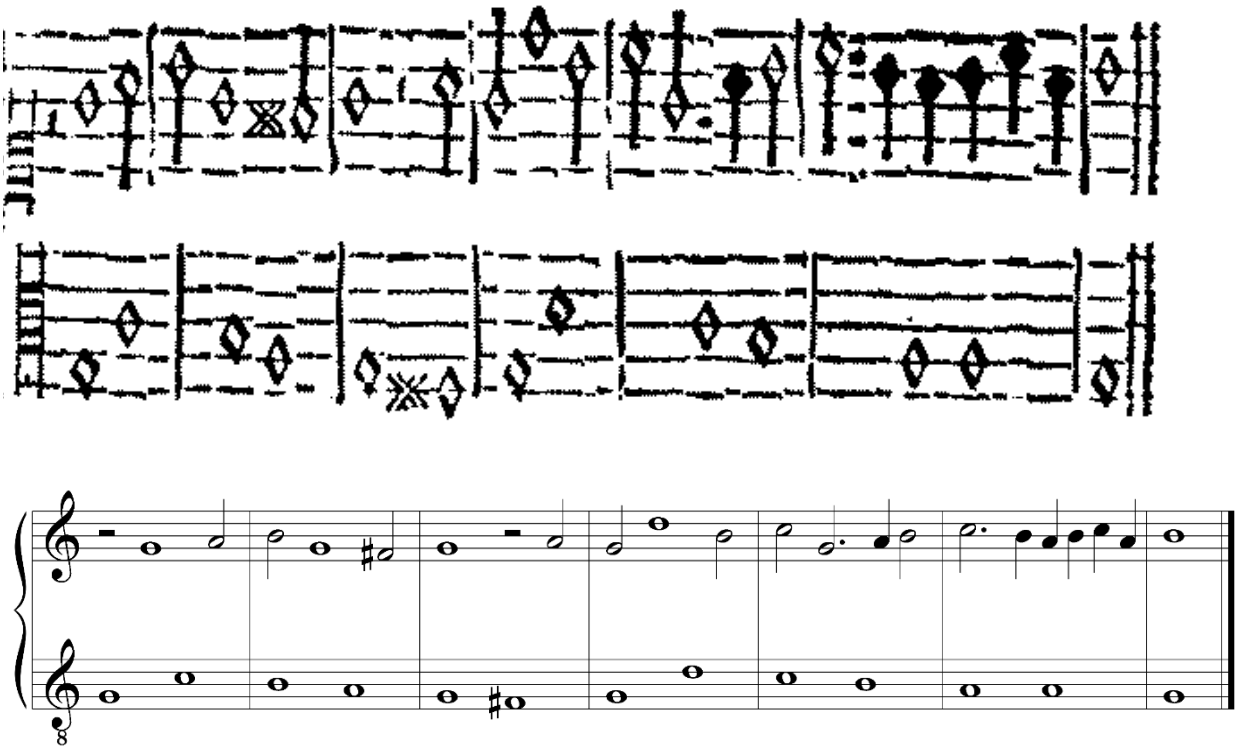


Figure 2.4 Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 81 with transcription

But there is always "theory" lurking behind what is ostensibly practical pedagogy. Instead of just stating rules, Morley demonstrates how these principles result in what he views as better and more stylistic exercises and compositions. Once again, Morley blurs the dichotomy between theory and practice with a hybrid text that pushes ancient practice into the realm of theory and contemporary theory into the realm of practice. The notion of the practical is contested throughout Morley's treatise to an extent not seen in his English predecessors. But Morley's example does provide the impetus for a reassessment of the presumed self-evident practicality of those earlier treatises.[68]

[68] The epistemological tensions between different modes of knowing in early modern England were by no means confined to discussions of music theory. This analysis also points, for example, to issues of English empiricism in science and its many tensions.

A Plaine and Easie Introduction, Its Predecessors, and English Practice: The Definition of Music, Ligatures, and Mode

Defining Music

The definition of music has traditionally been a starting point for writings on music. The pragmatic English tradition continues this practice. The introductions to the concept of music in the anonymous *Pathway to Musicke* and in Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* share an outward resemblance in that both start with charts of the scale without much theoretical fussing. *The Pathway* begins by answering the question "What is Musicke" by giving a fairly brief and direct answer: "Musicke is a science, which teacheth how to sing skilfullie: that is, to deliver a song sweetly, tuneably, and cunningly, by voices or notes, under a certaine rule & measure." The author then goes on to state that "first of all it is needful for him that will learn to sing truly, to understand his *Scale*, or (as they commonly call it) the *Gamma-ut*."[69] For the author of *The Pathway*, music is song that is skillfully performed. To properly sing the student needs to follow the rules set out in the book. This definition does not attempt to be deeply philosophical or historical. At the analogous point in Morley's treatise, he describes the scale without giving any definition of music. Only later in his "Annotations necessary for the understanding of the Booke" does Morley insert this lengthy comment:

> I have omitted the definition and division of musicke because the greatest part of those, for whose sake the booke was taken in hand, and who chieflie are to use it: be either altogether unlearned, or then have not so farre proceeded in learning, as to understand the reason of a definition: and also because amongst so many who have written of musicke, I knew not whom to follow in the definition. And therefore I have left it to the discretion of the Reader, to take which he list of all these which I shal set downe."[70]

[69] *The Pathway to Musicke*, A2r.
[70] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, ¶1r.

Morely makes two points here. First, he avoided the complexities of the definition of music in the main text because it goes beyond what the beginning student needs to know. Second, and more intriguingly, Morley states that he does not know which of the definitions of music is the best, so he is leaving it his readers to pick and choose whatever definition they like best. After this follows a number of definitions of "music" from Plato to Gafurius, displaying Morley's acquaintance with many important writers on music (and his understanding of classical rhetorical devices). In terms of outward displays of erudition, Morley and *The Pathway* are worlds apart. Morley's definition is aimed at the "learned reader" who already knows the contents in the body of the text and is not in need of a plain and easy introduction. The purpose of *The Pathway*'s definition appears positively blunt in comparison: to tell the reader what practical music is. By catering to both beginners and experts, Morley expands his audience, demonstrates his erudition, blurs the line between theory and practice, and provides a resource that would be used by English musicians for years to come.

Ligatures in Practice

Morley's treatise is much more comprehensive than its English predecessors while still aiming to be largely practical. The topic of ligatures is instructive in this regard. Peter Wright defines a ligature as a "notational symbol that combines within itself two or more pitches and by its shape defines their rhythm."[71] Most ligatures resulted in note values of longs and breves. As Wright explains, "By the end of the fifteenth century there was in any case considerably less opportunity to write ligatures. As the minim and the semiminim became the most common note

[71] Peter Wright, "Ligature (i)," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.16639. This definition is correct in the sixteenth century, but not all ligatures express rhythm. Willi Apel opts for a more capacious definition. Ligatures are "certain symbols which represent combinations of two or more notes." This allows him to begin his discussion of ligatures with neumes starting in the ninth century. Willi Apel, *The Notation of Polyphonic Music, 900–1600*, 4th ed., rev. with commentary (Cambridge: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1949), 87–88.

values, fewer and fewer occasions arose where a ligature of breve and long note values…could be used."[72] That is, by the time Morley wrote his treatise, changes in compositional style and the waning of mensural notation had made all but a tiny number of ligatures obsolete.[73] This is clearly to be seen in Bathe's discussion of quantity (a category of his that includes mensuration signs, note values, and proportions), where Bathe writes cryptically about "Some strange markes and knitting of Notes." Two tables follow a few pages later that measure precisely how long each note in the ligature is.[74] *The Pathway to Musicke*, by comparison, devotes only a few more words to the topic, but its definition is much clearer. In answer to the question "What is a Ligature?" we are told "It is a coupling together of simple Notes by a little stroke on the right hand or left side, and be of two sorts on this manner as followeth, that is to say, square and overthwart [slanting]." Here again an example of ligatures and their note lengths follows.[75] But neither author explains the principles behind the ligatures and how their note values were calculated. In fact, *The Pathway to Musicke* has many errors in its ligatures suggesting that the author might not have known how they were supposed to work.[76]

[72] Wright, "Ligature (i)."
[73] Outside of Morley's description of ligatures, actual ligatures are remarkably absent from the musical examples in his treatise. The movement away from the context-dependent mensural system toward the system whereby a note's value was fixed to its shape had occurred in the early sixteenth century, well before Morley was born. For more on this see Ian D. Bent et al., "Notation," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.20114.
[74] Bathe states that he expects ligatures to be "cut off" by time and become obsolete. Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 1596, B5v, [B6v–B7r].
[75] *The Pathway to Musicke*, C2r–C2v. The definition in *The Pathway* is traditional and follows versions of this description that had been used since the Middle Ages. For example, see the definition of the fourteenth-century Englishman Robertus de Handlo: "A ligature is an aggregate of shapes suitably formed with normal and oblique notes." Robertus de Handlo and Johannes Hanboys, *Regule / Robertus de Handlo. And Summa / Johannes Hanboys : A New Critical Text and Translation on Facing Pages, with an Introduction, Annotations, and Indices Verborum and Nominum et Rerum / by Peter M. Lefferts.* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 121.
[76] For more on this see Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 44.

Morley's discussion of ligatures is both substantially longer and clearer.[77] He defines a ligature as "*a combination or knitting together of two or more notes*, altering by their scituation and order the value of the same."[78] That is, a ligature is symbol that represents multiple notes whose lengths are determined by how they are placed into the ligature, what he somewhat cryptically calls "their scituation." After this general definition, Morley divides them into categories (first notes in ligatures without tails, first notes with tails descending, first notes with tails ascending, and so forth) and treats their various properties and note values individually.[79] See in Figure 2.5 how Morley weaves his examples of ligatures into the text instead of providing a single table of ligatures. In terms of understanding how ligatures work, Morley's treatise is much more valuable than Bathe's or *The Pathway to Musicke*, but his thoroughgoing approach is of questionable practicality. Morley does not teach his reader how to write ligatures nor does he attempt to explain their basis in the Franconian system of notation. All his reader learns is what the proper lengths of ligated notes should be. In his annotation to this passage Morley writes

> Ligatures were devised for the Ditties sake, so that how manye notes served for one syllable, so many notes were tied together. Afterwards they were used in songs having no dittie, but only for brevitie of writing: but nowadaies our songes consisting of so small notes, few Ligatures be therein used: for *minimes*, and figures in time shorter than *minimes* cannot be tied or enter in ligature.[80]

[77] My view contrasts somewhat with Barry Cooper's opinion. He writes, "Morley's presentation of the ligatures was the most thorough and sound, but the rules he gives are unnecessarily complicated." Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie," 191. My translation.

[78] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 9.

[79] Notably absent from Morley's discussion of ligatures is how they work in mensural notation. There is none of the discussion of propriety and perfection (and other scholastic subtleties) that might be expected in a complete account of ligatures. For a thorough accounting of the mensural system of ligatures see Apel, *The Notation of Polyphonic Music, 900–1600*, 87–95.

[80] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, [¶4v]. Morley follows this by stating, "But because in the booke *I* have spoken nothing of black or halfe black ligatures, I thoght it not amisse, to set downe such as I have found used by other Authors, and collected by Frier *Zaccone*." This afterthought serves mainly to demonstrate that Morley is aware of black and half black ligatures. He then gives an example from Ludovico Zacconi which he then resolves into more common note shapes. Morley's resolution has a surprising number of errors and that suggests Morley was not very familiar with these ligatures. Alec Harman gives an extensive list of corrections in Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, 119.

Phi. What is a Ligature?

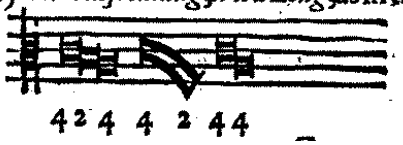
What ligatures be.

Ma. It is a combination or knitting together of two or more notes, altering by their ſcituation and order the value of the ſame.

Phi. And becauſe wee will in learning keepe order, I pray ſpeake of them according to their order beginning at the firſt.

Ma. I am contented, be then attentiue and I will both be briefe and playne, if your *firſt note lack a tayle, the ſecond deſcending, it is a Long*, as in this enſample.

Firſt notes in Ligature without tayles.



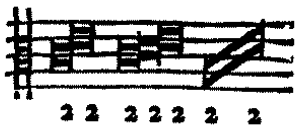
4 2 4 4 2 4 4

Phi. But what if it haue a taile?

Ma. I pray you giue mee leaue firſt to diſpatch thoſe which lacke tailes: and then I will ſpeake of them which haue tailes.

Phi. Go to then, but what if the next note be aſcending?

Ma. Then is it a briefe, thus.

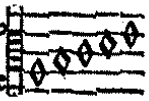


2 2 2 2 2 2 2

Phi. But interrupting your courſe of ſpeech of Ligatures: how manie notes doeth that charecter conteine which you haue ſet downe laſt?

Ma. Two.

Phi. Where doe they ſtande? for I thought it ſhould haue been ſet thus, becauſe it ſtretcheth from *A lamire*, to *E lami.*



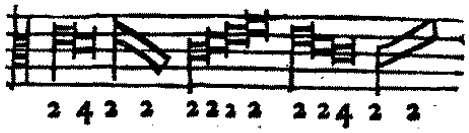
Ma. The notes ſtand at the beginning and the ende, as in this example aforeſaide: the firſt ſtandeth in *A lami re*, the laſt in *E lami.*

Phi. Proceed then to the declaration of the tayled notes.

Ma. If the firſt note haue a tayle on the left ſide hanging downward: (the ſecond aſcending or deſcending) *it is a briefe:*

Firſt notes with tayles comming downe.

Example.



2 4 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 4 2 2

Phil. But how if the tayle goe vpward?

Ma. Then is it and the next imediatly following, (which I pray you keepe well in minde,) *a ſemibriefe:*

Firſt notes with tayles aſcending.

Example.

I I 4 I I I I I I I I

Figure 2.5 Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 9–10

This annotation goes even further into the weeds. He has two main points. The first is that ligatures were invented to serve as ties in vocal music but can also be used to save space in writing. His second point is that historical changes in composition have led to the use of increasingly short note values. Only longer notes can be used in ligatures, thus making ligatures less much less common. In his treatment of ligatures, Morley provides an unnecessarily lengthy list of ligatures (at least in terms of contemporary practice). A few of the most basic ligatures were used into the seventeenth century, and older church music also featured ligatures.[81] What is most curious is that even after he acknowledges the decreasing frequency of ligatures, Morley adds yet another figure of even more ligatures. Morley may have included his extensive discussion of ligatures because he felt bound by tradition, he strove for thoroughness, or he desired to prepare the student to face uncommon challenges related to performing old music that used a greater variety of ligatures. Morley's introduction to ligatures is not particularly practical and has very little to do with contemporary musical practices, yet he foregrounds them at the very beginning of his treatise. More than anything Morley advertises to the reader that he is an erudite composer and theorist who possesses a true understanding of the intricacies of the science of music. Perhaps that is more important than the discussion of the ligatures themselves.

Morley's Concept of Mode

Ligatures are not the only increasingly obsolete topic covered in this book. Morley's treatment of mode and his difficulties in explaining it clearly hint at its diminishing relevance in English theory. Morley stumbles into his discussion of mode. Under the heading "Going out of

[81] Willi Apel notes, "In the sixteenth century [ligatures] gradually disappear and only a few of the simplest forms survive until the middle of the seventeenth century." Apel, *The Notation of Polyphonic Music, 900–1600,* 88.

this key a great fault," Morley explains why it is important to begin and end a piece in the same key. Ending a piece in a key other than the one it started in is

> A great fault, for every key hath a particular ayre proper unto itself, so that if you goe into another then that wherein you begun, you change the aire of the song, which is as much to wrest a thing out of his nature, making the asse leape upon his maister and the Spaniell beare the loade.[82]

He then proceeds to recommend the writings of Boethius and Glarean.[83] The discussion of mode in the main text, such that it is, acknowledges its long and storied history but does very little to elucidate the modes. The only examples given are of psalm tones which Morley suggests have "some shadowe of the ancient *modi*."[84] This is hardly a useful introduction to modal theory.

In general Morley displays as reasonable a grasp of the historical material he covers as might be expected for a sixteenth-century author.[85] The only real problem in Morley's understanding in his treatise seems to be when it comes to differentiating between modes and psalm tones.[86] The psalm tones began as melodic formulae for singing psalms but by Morley's day had expanded to the polyphonic "church keys," what Morley calls "the eight tunes."[87]

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[82] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 147.

[83] The citation of Boethius is perhaps strange since Boethius does not actually address the liturgical modes in his treatise (nor could he have since they were not developed until several centuries after his death). However, his discussion of species was influential in the development of modal theory in the following centuries. Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, 153–60.

[84] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 147.

[85] Herissone has compiled a list of Morley's sources, both unacknowledged and acknowledged. See Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 275–76, 286–88.

[86] The discussion in the text of the psalm tones occurs in Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 147–48. Morley adds a significant annotation ((∴)1v–(∴)2r) that attempts to clarify the matter but muddles the issue by bringing in modal theory. (The numbered pages stop with the *Peroratio* that concludes Part Three. The Annotations are marked by various somewhat unconventional sigla, beginning with the pilcrow ¶ for two folios, the asterisk ∗ for two folios, and finally the therefore sign in parentheses (∴) for two folios.) For ease of use, see this passage and its annotation in Harman's edition of Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, 249–52, 300–304.

[87] Almonte C. Howell describes the earlier usage: "It is customary to distinguish between 'church mode' and 'church tone' by using the latter to designate specifically the recitation formulae of psalms and canticles, the former to designate the modal structure to which all plainsong theoretically conforms." Almonte C. Howell, "French Baroque Organ Music and the Eight Church Tones," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 11, no. 2/3 (1958): 106.

Instead of taking the modes as a classification and organizational system for melodies and the psalm tones as a set of transposable polyphonic settings of psalms, Morley conflates the two. He would hardly be the last to do so.[88] Owens observes, "Morley's choice of psalm tones to illustrate mode suggests a surprising lack of understanding both of earlier theoretical traditions and of contemporary continental practices."[89] This is perhaps understandable since English church music in 1597 was no longer governed by the church modes; indeed the church modes were never a central part of liturgical practice during Morley's lifetime.[90] The musical practices of Protestant England hardly required a sophisticated understanding of mode.[91] His advice on keeping the composition in the correct mode displays a point of tension in modal polyphony: the "keeping of the key" is central, but it is difficult to explain what constituted being in a mode in general. There is also the tension between an emerging tonality and Continental modal theory.[92] That is to say, by the end of the sixteenth century in Catholic Europe it was still a debated issue as to how a polyphonic composition could be in (or represent) a mode. In newly protestant

[88] This was a real problem for musicians in the late-sixteenth century as well as for modern scholars. Michael R. Dodds writes, "To the aspiring church musician around 1700, the many ways of thinking about tonal structure in music must at times have been bewildering. There were the traditional eight modes; various incarnations of the twelve-mode system; the set of keys arising from polyphonic psalmody; and an emergent system of only two modes…It is plausible that four randomly selected musicians, asked to name the mode of a given polyphonic composition, might have invoked four different modal systems." Michael R. Dodds, "Tonal Types and Modal Equivalence in Two Keyboard Cycles by Murschhauser," in *Tonal Structures in Early Music*, ed. Cristle Collins Judd (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 341. For more on the psalm tones and their complicated relationship to tonal structure see Harold Powers, "From Psalmody to Tonality," in *Tonal Structures in Early Music*, ed. Cristle Collins Judd (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 275–340.
[89] Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," 219.
[90] Morley attempts to correct his conflation of psalm tone and mode in one of his Annotations. "It is also to be understood that those examples which I have in my booke set downe for the eight tunes, bee not the true and essentiall formes of the eight tunes or usuall moodes, but the forms of giving the tunes to their psalmes in the Churches, which the churchmen (falsly) beleeve to be the *modi* or tunes, but if we consider them rightly, they be all of some unperfect mood, none of them filling the true compas of any mood." Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, (∴)2r. Harold Powers identifies "a curious naiveté about modal theory in the English music-theoretical writings of this period." Powers, "From Psalmody to Tonality," 334 n. 2.
[91] While many older musical practices covertly continued in the private chapels of wealthy Catholics, they had mostly fallen out of public practice by the beginning of the seventeenth century. Gant, *O Sing unto the Lord*, 159.
[92] For a recent investigation into the emerging tonal practices throughout Europe (and not just England) in the sixteenth century (as seen in the homophonic partsong repertory) see Long, *Hearing Homophony*.

England, applying a system of plainchant organization to polyphony made substantially less sense. (That helps to explain why the only seventeenth-century English source that properly treated the modes is Dowland's 1609 translation of Ornithoparchus's *Micrologus* from 1517.)[93]

We see the problem that leads to Morley's confusion in the manner in which he conflates the terms "tone," "air," and "tune," not to mention cognate terms such as "key" and "mode." As Jessie Owens has noted, these terms form a complex nexus of related—but in crucial ways differentiated—concepts that bedeviled not only Morley, but most English theorists throughout the seventeenth century. While there is some agreement and overlap between authors, idiosyncratic usages remain.[94] These differences show the importance of pitch structure in English theoretical thought and some of the difficulties inherent in clearly describing it. For example, in a discussion of "key," Philomathes asks, "Have you no generall rule to be given for an instruction for keeping of the key?" To this the Master gives a somewhat confusing reply:

> *Ma.* No, for it must proceede only of the judgement of the composer, yet the church men for keeping their keyes have devised certaine notes commonlie called the eight tunes, so that according to the tune which is to be observed, at that time if it beginne in such a key, it may end in such and such others, as you shall immediatly know. And these be (although not the true substance yet) some shadowe of the ancient *modi* whereof *Boetius* and *Glareanus* have written so much.
>
> *Phi*. I pray you set downe those eight tunes, for the ancient *modi*, I mean by the grace of God to study hereafter.
>
> *Ma*. Here they be in foure partes, the tenor stil keeping the plainesong.[95]

Instead of the "ancient *modi*," Morley gives examples of psalm tone settings. Exactly what Morley is setting down is further confused since Philomathes has just conflated "those eight

[93] See Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 174.
[94] Jessie Ann Owens has explored these complex terminological issues in depth. Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," 229. Owens directly (and successfully) challenges Barry Cooper's earlier contention that "'Moode,' 'Mood,' 'Tone,' 'Tune,' 'Key,' and 'Air'" were all used synonymously. Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie," 199.
[95] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 147.

tunes" and "the ancient *modi*" immediately after Morley conflated key and *modi*. Within three sentences a messy overlap between key, *modi*, and psalm tones is established while also referencing eight-mode and twelve-mode systems without explanation. A textbook example of the first mode (of "the ancient *modi*") might be expected to have a tenor that shows a melodic range of an octave above the final and ends on the final D, highlighting the authentic ambitus and final. Morley's example does not do this, which should make clear that he is not actually concerned with "the ancient *modi*" that described monophonic chant. Figure 2.6 shows his first tune in a four-voice setting with the plainsong in the tenor. After giving similar illustrations for the seven other tunes, Morley moves on to another topic entirely, signaling an abrupt and unsatisfactory end to his discussion of psalm tones. It is not clear what exactly the student is supposed to glean from these examples beyond that they somehow illustrate the proper "keeping of the key." Rebecca Herissone points out Morley's psalm tones "could have left no suggestion to the reader that true mode was a characteristic of melody."[96]

It is only in the Annotations that we get a more complete discussion of modal theory, albeit one that is incomplete and ultimately confusing. This lengthy annotation is somewhat strange, as Owens has commented. "It is curious, in light of the nearly complete absence of continental modal theory from English treatises of the time, that the readers to whom Morley gave his almost finished book missed having such a discussion and recommended that he include one."[97] There Morley finally explains both the eight-mode system and Glarean's twelve-mode system, but provides explanations that are at times, in Herrisone's words, "either inaccurate or misleading."[98] In the end, Morley clarifies that what he gave in the main body of the text were

[96] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 175. See also Robert Stevenson, "Thomas Morley's 'Plaine and Easie' Introduction to the Modes," *Musica Disciplina* 6, no. 4 (1952): 177–84.
[97] Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," 244.
[98] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 175.

actually psalm tones and not examples of the modes. However, he does not specify how many modes there actually are. That he gives examples of "the eight tunes" rather than twelve could perhaps be taken as evidence of his preference for an eight-mode system, but it also hints at how little mode ultimately mattered to Morley.

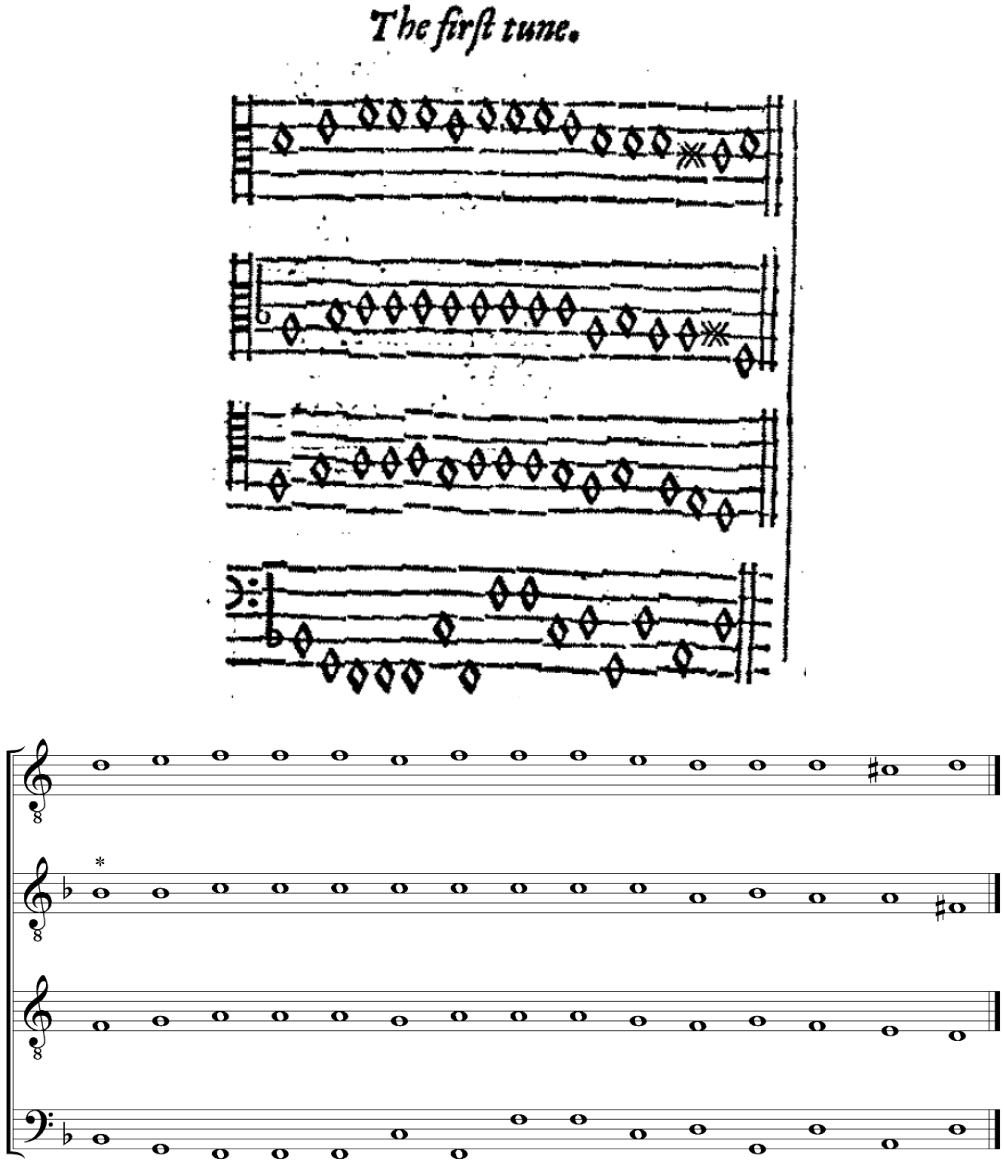

Figure 2.6 Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 147 with transcription

(* Morley's original gives this note as an A, which is presumably a typographical error. The correction to B♭ follows the change made by Harman. See Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, ed. Alec R. Harman, 2nd ed., 250.)

Morley's discussion, however, aptly illustrates the late-sixteenth century English misunderstanding, ambivalence, and confusion over modal theory. As Owens puts it, "The presence of these two pages in Morley's Annotations does not convince me that mode in the continental sense had much meaning for Morley or for most of his readers."[99] At most Morley is describing a practice that had some relevance among earlier generations of English musicians but had long since faded.[100] It is little wonder that English theorists after Morley decided to forego discussions of mode altogether.[101] Morley's position in this regard is truly anomalous but also transitional; he simultaneously encourages learning about the Continental modal system while showing how it was increasingly irrelevant in England. Morley's inclusion of this topic is more erudite than pragmatic; it reveals his urge to produce an encyclopedic volume even when it strays beyond the practical.

Morley and the Future of English Writing on Music

Morley's thorough explanations and primarily clear presentation combined with his citation of a host of Continental treatises, both contemporary and medieval, helped to make *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* a valuable resource for students but also for generations of English writers on music. Due to its breadth of sources and accessible approach, we are left with a treatise that shows us just how expansive a pedagogical work could be. As Christensen notes, "By not hewing closely to a single school of compositional pedagogy, his eclectic work gives us

[99] Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," 220.
[100] Perhaps some of this modal thinking could have come through Morley's training under William Byrd, who had a greater connection to a modal practice. Concerning Morley's compositions Megan Kaes Long writes, "If mode was only of secondary importance to Byrd, as John Harley has argued persuasively, it had faded far to the background in Morley's compositions, after another generation elapsed." Long, *Hearing Homophony*, 158. (Long's reference is to John Harley, *William Byrd's Modal Practice* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2005).)
[101] Some, like Charles Butler, gave ethical descriptions of modes, but they did not attempt to explain the modal system in detail. See Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 3–8.

one of the most striking overviews of European music training from the sixteenth century, refreshingly non-dogmatic, and infused with characteristic English wit."[102]

Perhaps the greatest contribution of Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* was showing what English music theory could or should be. It emphasizes first that instruction in music should be direct, accessible, and, above all, practical. At the same time, though, it also seems to argue that the true study of music should be grounded in theory and not just the whims of contemporary practice. The theoretical arguments underlying musical practice are presented at some length, but they do not occupy pride of place in the treatise. Because the treatise is so comprehensive, it gives multiple paths for how readers or future authors might approach its topics. The apparent pace of the treatise is rather swift, taking the reader from a complete novice who does not even know the notes to one who is able to compose elaborate music in six or more parts in only three lessons spread over three days! Yet the basic structure that Morley employs would be copied by future English theorists. Even when Morley's treatise is not a direct model, it often serves as a touchstone for later writers: the three parts of the treatise form modular units that could potentially stand alone or be replaced by the work of a later writer. Charles Butler provides a perfect example of this when he suggests at the end of Book One of *The Principles of Musik* that his attentive readers should now be ready to go to the second and third parts of Morley's treatise in order to further their musical studies, presumably even before approaching Book Two of Butler's treatise.[103]

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[102] Christensen, "Music Theory and Pedagogy," 428.

[103] In the Epilogus to Book One Butler writes, "The foundation of these Rudiments beeing layd, you may begin to build your Practice thereon. But hee that affecteth perfection in this rare faculti, and the honour of a good COMPOSER, let him first see that hee bee furnished with Natures gifts: [aptness, and abiliti of wit and memori:] then let him thoorrowly peruse & studdi the learned and exquisite Precepts of that prime Doctor Mr *Thomas Morley*, (concerning the Setting of 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 Partes) in the second and third Partes of his Introduction." Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 92.

At its core, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* is concerned with English musical practices even when discussing general principles that also apply to music from the Continent.[104] Some of Morley's teachings may have appeared somewhat traditional or slightly outdated when they appeared in 1597, reflecting a practice more closely related to Morley's youth than what was occurring in his last years. Morley does not blindly favor the English practice over that on the Continent; rather, his general approach is to favor clarity and precision over national identity. For example, he is quick to criticize the English tendency to write unnecessarily complicated canons that neither indicate the number of parts nor when and where each begins. He instead praises the French and Italians for clearly supplying this information and encourages his students to follow this Continental practice. He concludes by criticizing what he sees as a general tendency among the English to revel in being obtuse: "But such hath beene our manner in manie other thinges heretofore, to doe things blindlie, and to trouble the wittes of practitioners*:* whereas by the contrarie, straungers have put all their care how to make things plaine and easilie understood."[105] Even if English musical practice had become more removed from some Continental practices, English composers still have something to learn from their foreign counterparts. Morley describes and advocates for an Elizabethan musical practice that had grown increasingly divorced from the Catholic church music of continental Europe. He only touches on the complexities of modal theory when he felt compelled to address them in the Annotations, and he avoids Latin text setting and rules for intoning

[104] Even though he was concerned with English music, he did not limit himself to English sources. The list of "Authors whose authorities be either cited or used in the booke" which occupies the final unnumbered page of his treatise shows the significant use of both midcentury Continental theorists and composers along with substantial borrowing from Glarean's musical examples. See Harman's notes in Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, 319–22. Mining Glarean's *Dodecachordon* for musical examples was commonplace. See Judd, *Reading Renaissance Music Theory*, 115–76.

[105] Ironically, his obtuse jibe serves to confirm this tendency. Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 105.

psalms; even here Morley shows a predilection towards simplification and accessibility. His successors would move even further from Continental Catholic practice as English music continued to develop along separate lines.

Morley's treatise appeared at a time of unprecedented increase in music printing and a growing demand for books on music. The main texts discussed in this and the preceding chapter are primarily pedagogical in nature. Their titles bear this out; we have *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, *The Pathway to Musicke*, and *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*. All three prints presuppose virtually no formal knowledge of written music. All three are chiefly concerned with practical music, only dealing with speculative matters as asides or not at all. To a large degree, this pragmatic focus would continue throughout the seventeenth century in England.[106] But this pragmatic trend was rarely without some counter-currents as well. As Morley demonstrates, an ostensibly practical treatise may contain extensive theoretical information that is not strictly necessary for the student wishing to learn to sing and compose well. Historically obsolete practices may also be discussed in the same manner as contemporary practices. This tension between the overtly practical focus of treatises and their historical and speculative elements would remain unresolved throughout the seventeenth century. Butler's *The Principles of Musik* is a clear example of combining the practical with the erudite and historical, but even John Playford's massively successful Restoration era publications do not hew as closely to pure practicality as might be supposed.[107]

[106] Herissone has calculated that the clear majority of music treatises published in England in the seventeenth century were aimed at amateurs. Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 6.
[107] See for example the preface to the 1662 edition of Playford's *A Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick* where he gives a five-page religious and historical defense of music to start his treatise.

As we have seen, many later writers have viewed *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* as the highpoint of English music theory in the sixteenth century, from Hawkins who declared it "a work for which all who love or practice the science are under the highest obligations to its author" to Cooper who referred to it as "Morley's justly famous treatise."[108] These opinions, along with many others that reflect them, paint a picture of English music theory that features Morley as the central character. Indeed, for many who are not specialists, Morley may be the only recognizable character. This view is a simplification of the significantly more complex world of English music theory at the end of the sixteenth century where Morley was not the only voice, but it does point to the reality of his treatise's influence. It is difficult to imagine the treatises of Charles Butler or John Playford without Morley's seminal publication.

The monumentality of Morley's accomplishment cannot be gainsaid. *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* is the largest and most comprehensive work on music to be published in English until Thomas Mace's massive *Musick's Monument* was published in 1676. The practical result of having a single large and relatively accessible treatise in the vernacular was that it became a major source for generations of writers.[109] It is a theory text that begs for citation from other theorists.[110]

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[108] Hawkins maintained some critical distance, critiquing Morley's compositions. Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 494. Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie," 159. My translation.

[109] As Herissone has shown, Morley's treatise was probably the most frequently borrowed from and cited by other English writers on music until Playford published his many editions of *A Breefe Introduction to the Skill of Musick* beginning in 1654. See Appendix D: Origins of Material in Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 271–96.

[110] Part of what makes Morley so tempting to cite is the clarity of writing. Although not all of the concepts are as "plain and easy" as the title implies, the text mostly is. We need only compare his writing to someone like Bathe, whose prose is often tortured and convoluted. When Morley's writing gets clotted, as in his discussions of the modes, it is usually because he is dealing with an antiquated topic of diminishing importance to English practice.

However, not every author followed his lead. If Morley set the standard for an English approach to practical theory, John Dowland's theoretical writing and translation of Ornithoparchus show just how messy a concept practical theory could be. It is to Dowland's unusual musical project that we now turn.

Chapter 3 John Dowland and the Self-Fashioning of a Composer/Theorist

John Dowland (1563–1626) is rarely thought of in relation to music theory, yet in 1609 the famed lutenist and composer released a translation of Andreas Ornithoparchus's *Musice active micrologus* (1517). Translating a century-old treatise aimed primarily at training Catholic choirboys and offering it to a Protestant English market would seem to be a strange undertaking for a musician famed for performing and composing for the lute. What might have inspired him to undertake this foray into the translation of an antiquated music theory text?

After earning a Bachelor of Music from Oxford in 1588, Dowland spent most of the next two decades on the Continent working as a lutenist at various courts.[1] At some point during this sojourn he converted to Catholicism, a decision that would later cause problems for him. In spite of his absence from England, his reputation at home had grown substantially, something that was reinforced by the publication in London of Dowland's *The First Booke of Songs or Ayres* in 1597. This was successfully followed by two additional books of songs (1600, 1603) and his *Lachrimae, or Seaven Teares* (1604). By the time Dowland's service at the court of Christian IV of Denmark had come to an end in 1606, he was an internationally known lutenist and a respected composer of lute and consort music. However, nowhere in his biography do we see an interest in music theory, let alone in German writings from the beginning of the sixteenth century. Yet in 1609, in the words of Jessie Ann Owens, "Dowland, for reasons that have yet to be established, published a translation of Andreas Ornithoparchus's *Micrologus*."[2]

[1] The biographical information in this paragraph can be found in Peter Holman and Paul O'Dette, "Dowland, John," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.08103; Diana Poulton, *John Dowland*, rev. ed. (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 19–94.
[2] Owens, "You Can Tell a Book by Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" 373.

While Dowland's newfound interest in translating a music theory text may appear surprising, it also raises broader issues about music and musicians in early seventeenth-century England. As we will see, the treatise sheds light on changes in tuning theory and their applications at this time while simultaneously further complicating the notion of *musica practica*. The treatise also reflects the important role print culture played for the professional life of Jacobean composers.[3]

In order to substantiate these arguments, I will begin this chapter by examining the treatise itself and assessing its contents before moving into the minutiae of Pythagorean tuning and its application to the lute. After that I will situate Dowland's theoretical writings (including the important but brief "Other Necessary Observations belonging to the Lute" from 1610) into the complex world of the Jacobean musician. In this context, Dowland can be seen as showcasing the changing work of music theory in a world marked by religious, musical, and professional changes.

Dowland's Translation of Ornithoparchus

Why would a lute composer writing in the most fashionable styles of his day stop to translate a German school text from a century earlier that concerned such topics as mode and mensuration? One of the major riddles about John Dowland's translation of Andreas Ornithoparchus's *Musice active micrologus* is that it appeared so clearly out of place in England when it was published in 1609. (The title page of the 1519 printing of Ornithoparchus's treatise

[3] English composers of this period were more actively involved in and had more control of the process of publication of their music than both their Continental counterparts and English writers and dramatists. See Smith, *Thomas East and Music Publishing in Renaissance England*, 129. For more on the direct involvement of English composers in music publishing see Murray, *Thomas Morley*.

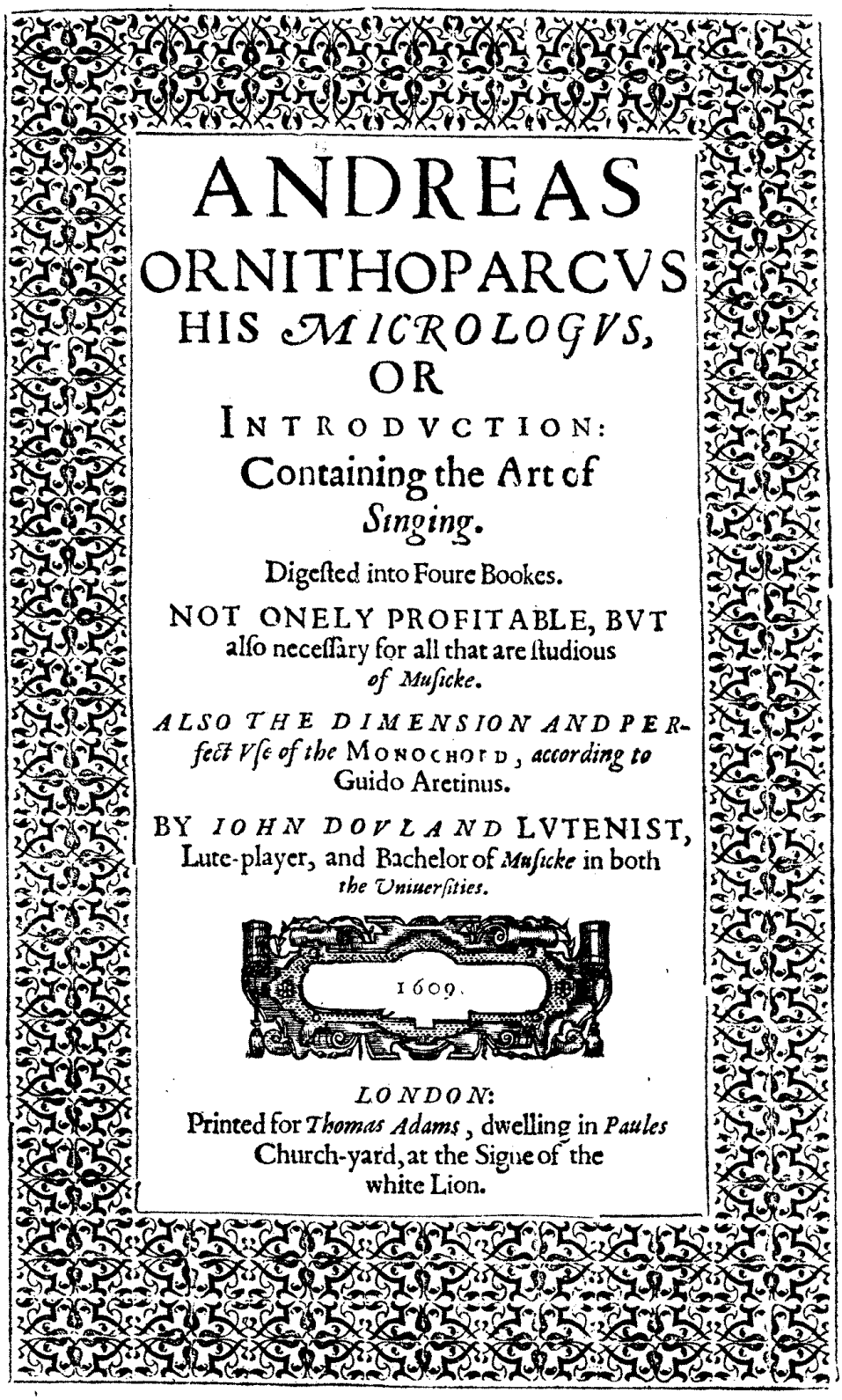
is shown in Figure 3.1 The title page of Dowland's translation of Ornithoparchus is shown in Figure 3.2.) Discussing the overall quality of Ornithoparchus's work, John Hawkins writes,

> To speak of this work of Ornithoparcus in general, it abounds with a great variety of learning, and is both methodical and sententious. That Douland looked upon it as a valuable work may be inferred from the pains he took to translate it, and his dedication of it to the lord treasurer, Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury.[4]

Yet the high quality of the original treatise and Dowland's esteem for it still do not answer the question as to why Dowland would want to bring a translation of Ornithoparchus to an English market. Originally published in Latin in Leipzig in January 1517, the text focuses on the basics of singing the music of the Catholic liturgy. Needless to say, a significant divide existed between Germany in 1517 and England in 1609. Not only was there a large cultural and religious gulf resulting from the advent of the Reformation shortly after the publication of Ornithoparchus's treatise, there were also obvious changes in musical style.

[4] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 314.

Figure 3.1 Ornithoparchus, *Musice Active Micrologus*, title page



ANDREAS
ORNITHOPARCVS
HIS *MICROLOGVS*,
OR
INTRODVCTION:
Containing the Art of
Singing.

Digeſted into Foure Bookes.

NOT ONELY PROFITABLE, BVT
alſo neceſſary for all that are ſtudious
of Muſicke.

ALSO THE DIMENSION AND PER-
fect Vſe of the MONOCHORD, *according to*
Guido Aretinus.

BY *IOHN DOVLAND* LVTENIST,
Lute-player, and Bachelor of *Muſicke* in both
the Vniuerſities.

1609.

LONDON:
Printed for *Thomas Adams*, dwelling in *Paules*
Church-yard, at the Signe of the
white Lion.

Figure 3.2 Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Mircologus*, title page

Throughout much of Europe during the sixteenth century, the vernacular had become an increasingly acceptable language in which to publish serious writing.[5] The translation of canonical works from Latin along with the publication of new works in the vernacular significantly grew in this century.[6] In terms of music publishing in England, the market for Latin-texted music was bleak and unprofitable.[7] By the seventeenth century, Latin writing on music published in England was rare.[8] Among this growing list of works newly translated into English, what has come to be known as the King James Version of the Bible holds pride of place. The note "From the Translators to the Readers" from the 1611 first edition is instructive concerning the religious value that translation holds in opening a text to wider readership. The editors wrote in their preface:

> Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtaine, that we may looke into the most Holy place; that remooveth the cover of the well, that wee may come by the water, even as *Jacob* rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well, by which meanes the flockes of *Laban* were watered. Indeede without translation into the vulgar tongue, the unlearned are but like children at *Jacobs* well (which was deepe) without a bucket or some thing to draw with: or as that person mentioned by *Esay* [Isaiah], to whom when a sealed book was delivered, with this motion, *Reade this, I pray thee*, hee was faine to make this answere, *I cannot, for it is sealed*. [Esay 29:11].[9]

Translation is that which opens a text to more people and allows them to be nourished by it. If by this time in England, the English language was worthy of having a vernacular Bible, it seems

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[5] It should not be surprising that Ornithoparchus's treatise is in Latin both because it was written early enough in the century when this was still more common and because it is directly focused on liturgical music in Latin.

[6] The period from 1570 to 1600 was a particularly fruitful time for translations into English, but every decade from 1550 to 1660 saw the publication of approximately 200 to 400 titles in translation. Translations made up a quarter or more of all books published in England in some years, with translations from Latin representing the largest portion. Braden, "An Overview," 3, 9.

[7] There was very little demand at this time in England for music with Latin texts. Jeremey L. Smith sees the use of Latin texts in Thomas Tallis and William Byrd's *Cantiones…sacrarum sacrae* (1575) as a major factor in that print's commercial failure. Smith, *Thomas East and Music Publishing in Renaissance England*, 32.

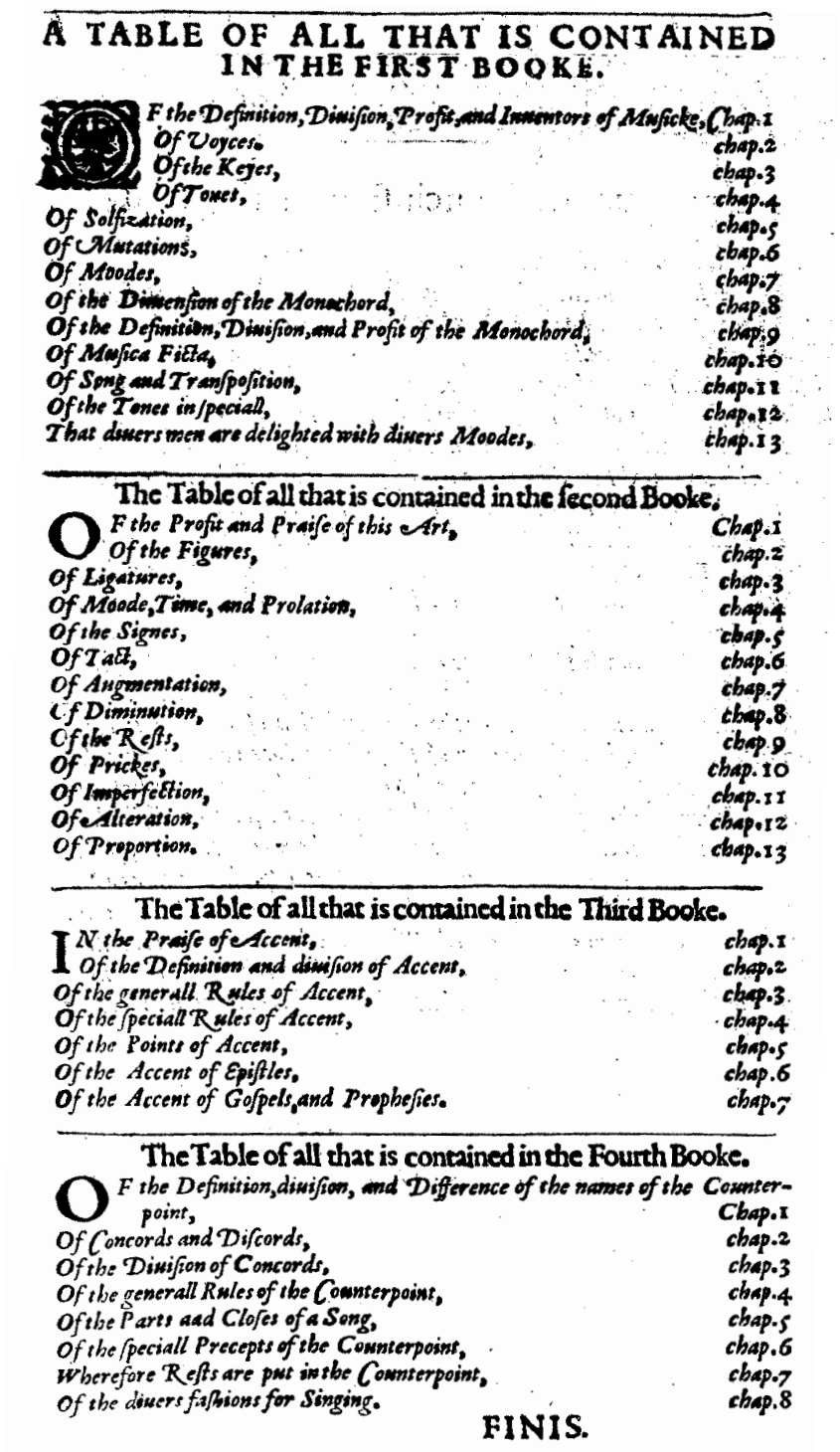
[8] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 13.

[9] *The Holy Bible, Conteyning the Old Testament, and the New: Newly Translated out of the Originall Tongues: & with the Former Translations Diligently Compared and Revised, by His Majesties Speciall Comandment. Appointed to Be Read in Churches* (London: Robert Baker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majestie, 1611), The Translators to the Reader.

only logical that it would be both proper and fruitful to bring Latin music theory into the "vulgar tongue." The translator would only need to find a Latin treatise of enduring usefulness in the English context.

Contents of the Treatise

Dowland gives no indication that he felt his translation of a century-old German music theory singing manual was out of place in seventeenth-century England. Yet a surprising amount of its content would be of limited use to a musician living in Protestant England. The table of contents is shown in Figure 3.3. Book One on "the Principals of plaine Song" lays out what music is and explains the note names, intervals, and modes. Book Two on "the Rudiments of Mensurall Song" covers mensural notation, rests, ligatures, and mensural signs and the proportions that govern them. Book Three "Touching the Ecclesiasticall Accent" presents a set of practices for properly intoning Latin mass texts, with specific rules for intoning the gospels, the epistles, and the prophets. Book Four "declaring the Principles of Counter-point" gives lists of acceptable intervals between voices, covers composition in up to four voices, and gives general advice to singers.



A TABLE OF ALL THAT IS CONTAINED IN THE FIRST BOOKE.

The Table of all that is contained in the ſecond Booke.

The Table of all that is contained in the Third Booke.

The Table of all that is contained in the Fourth Booke.

FINIS.

Figure 3.3 Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus*, Bb2v

Many of the chapters deal with conservative topics that would have been of interest only to a composer or performer of Catholic church music. For example, Chapter Four of Book One gives what would become the only accurate account of modal theory published in England in the seventeenth century, indicating the extent to which modal theory was no longer needed to describe English practice.[10] The rules in Book Three on Ecclesiastical accent only apply to Latin texts in the Catholic liturgy and were not applicable to the officially sanctioned liturgy in England.[11] In Book Two, Chapters Eleven and Twelve cover the minutiae of the mensural system as it applies to the imperfection and alteration of note lengths.[12] These chapters are likewise of little relevance, as the practice they describe was no longer current even on the Continent. Book Four covers rules for counterpoint which were rather conservative even by early sixteenth-century standards.[13] It is little wonder that John Hawkins expressed such mixed feelings about Ornithoparchus's text. While praising the author for his erudition, Hawkins bemoans the fact that his rules "are so very limited and mechanical…they can hardly be thought of any use."[14]

DOWLAND'S HAND IN THE TRANSLATION

Dowland was evidently not concerned with the perceived obsolescence of his source. The title page, dedication to Robert Earl of Salisbury, and the note "To the Reader" are the only parts

[10] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 174.
[11] See Poulton, *John Dowland*, 385.
[12] Chapter Eleven covers rules of Imperfection, in which a perfect note loses a third of its value when in proximity to a note of lesser value. (For example, a perfect breve would last for three beats, but if it is imperfected by a semibreve it would last two beats and the semibreve one.) Chapter Twelve discusses Alteration, in which a note doubles in length in order to fill a perfect amount of time. (For example, if two breves need to fill three beats, the first breve will last for one beat while the second breve will be altered to last two beats.) Starting in the thirteenth century, understanding imperfection and alteration was crucial to using the mensural system, but this became much less important by the sixteenth century.
[13] For the place of Ornithoparchus's treatise in terms of contemporary harmonic theory see Benito V. Rivera, "Harmonic Theory in Musical Treatises of the Late Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries," *Music Theory Spectrum* 1 (Spring 1979): 80–95 and Ernest T. Ferand, "'Sodaine and Unexpected' Music in the Renaissance," *The Musical Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (January 1951): 10–27.
[14] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 313.

of the text that could claim to be by Dowland's hand, and they exhibit no anxiety about the treatise being antiquated. Most of the dedication is conventional, but there are a few clues as to Dowland's purpose in putting forth this translation. Neil Rhodes reminds us, "The subject of translation is fraught with status anxiety, and this is particularly evident in the paratextual material that accompanies printed translations, which often presents complex and interesting negotiations between cultural and social status."[15]

As is to be expected, Dowland's dedication is primarily a conventional acknowledgement of the earl's financing for the treatise. He was "emboldened to present this Father of Music *Ornithoparchus* to your worthiest Patronage, whose approved Works in my travails (for the common good of our Musicians) I have reduced into our English language."[16] Dowland refers to Ornithoparchus as a "Father of Music" even though he wrote in the relatively recent past. This title, with its resonance with the Fathers of the Church, is somewhat curious and potentially revealing concerning the general lack of English knowledge of Continental developments in music theory. By claiming for Ornithoparchus a distinguished place in the lineage of great writers on music, Dowland is obviously doing the musicians of England a great service by making this work available to them (and not less worthy of the earl's rewards).[17]

Continuing through the dedication, Dowland goes on to write,

> Every Plant brings forth his like, and of Musicians, *Musicke* is the fruit. Moreover such is your divine Disposition that both you excellently understand, and royally entertaine the

[15] Neil Rhodes, "Status Anxiety and English Renaissance Translation," in *Renaissance Paratexts*, ed. Helen Smith and Louise Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 108.
[16] John Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus, Or Introduction: Containing the Art of Singing Digested into Foure Bookes. Not Onely Profitable, but Also Necessary for All That Are Studious of Musicke. Also the Dimension and Perfect Vse of the Monochord, According to Guido Aretinus. by Iohn Douland Lutenist, Lute-Player, and Bachelor of Musicke in Both the Vniuersities.* (London: Thomas Adams, 1609), [A2r].
[17] Relevant at this point is Rhodes's comment: "The last response to the burden of anxiety felt by many translators is to reject the charge of dumbing down by arguing for the cultural benefits of translation in general." Rhodes, "Status Anxiety and English Renaissance Translation," 111.

> Exercise of Musicke, which mind-tempering Art, the grave *Luther* was not affraid to place in the next seat to Divinity.[18]

Following what appears to be an oblique reference to the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:16–17; see also Luke 6:43–44), Dowland mentions Martin Luther's views on music in a positive light, subtly playing up Dowland's appreciation of the Protestant cause. (This was useful given the problems Dowland had faced due to his earlier conversion to Catholicism.) He concludes the dedication by writing, "My daily prayers (which are a poore mans best wealth) shall humbly sollicite the Author of all Harmonie for a continuall encrease of your Honors present happinesse with long life, and a successive blessing to your generous posteritie."[19] Here Dowland combines a reference to God, as the Author of all Harmony (a fitting Platonic sentiment of the time), with wishes for the dedicatee's health and success.[20] The short dedication moves from its one classical reference (the earl as Hercules-like) to spending most of its latter half steeped in religious language. Nothing in this dedication is particularly surprising by itself. But taken together with a number of other clues hidden in the translation, a clearer answer emerges to the question of why Dowland may have published it when he did.

One of these clues is found immediately following the dedication in a note "To the Reader." As this note is highly revealing, I quote it in its entirety.

> Excellent men have at all times in all Arts delivered to Posteritie their observations, thereby bringing Arts to a certainty and perfection. Among which there is no Writer more worthy in the Art of *Musicke,* than this Author *Ornithoparcus,* whose Worke, as I have made it familiar to all that speake our Language, so I could wish that the rest in this kinde were by the like meanes drawne into our knowledge, since (I am assured) that there is nothing can more advance the apprehension of *Musicke,* than the reading of such Writers as have both skilfully and diligently set downe the precepts thereof. My industry and on-set herein if you friendly accept (being now returned home to remaine) shall encourage me shortly to divulge a more peculiar worke of mine owne: namely, *My Observations*

[18] Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus,* [A2r].
[19] Dowland, [A2r].
[20] References to "the God of Harmony" and similar locutions were common in English writings of this time. See Hollander, *The Untuning of the Sky*, 266–72, 286–87.

> *and Directions concerning the Art of Lute-playing:* which Instrument as of all that are portable, is, and ever hath been most in request, so is it the hardest to mannage with cunning and order, with the true nature of fingering; which skill hath as yet by no Writer been rightly expressed: what by my endevours may therein be attained, I leave to your future Judgement, when time shall produce that which is already almost ready for the Harvest. *Vale,* From my house in Fetter-lane this tenth of Aprill. 1609.[21]

We learn two important things from Dowland's note. First, Dowland believes Ornithoparchus's treatise is highly relevant to musicians today, and thus deserves to be available in English; second, his note serves as an advertisement for Dowland's forthcoming publication on playing the lute. Nothing about this note implies that this translation is only of historical interest; indeed, the comment that men, such as Ornithoparchus, have "delivered to posterity their observations, thereby bringing arts to a certainty and perfection" only emphasizes the continued relevance (if not timelessness) of this work. (It is a claim that I will interrogate later in this chapter.)

We might thus be tempted to see the whole translation as a preface to Dowland's forthcoming manual on playing the lute, which would appear in print the following year (1610). But this would be misleading. Dowland's little manual, "Other Necessary Observations belonging to the Lute," is a mere seven pages long and is contained within the lute collection *Varietie of Lute-Lessons* compiled by his son Robert Dowland; this will be discussed at some length below.[22] We are left to conclude either one of two things: one, that Dowland abandoned his larger project of producing the advertised *My Observations and Directions concerning the Art of Lute-playing*; or two, that his "Other Necessary Observations belonging to the Lute" (perhaps taken together with Jean-Baptiste Besard's "Necessary Observations Belonging to the Lute and Lute-Playing," which directly precedes it in *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*) is indeed the

[21] Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus,* [A2v].
[22] John Dowland, "Other Necessary Obseruations Belonging to the Lute," in *Varietie of Lute-Lessons Viz. Fantasies, Pauins, Galliards, Almaines, Corantoes, and Volts: Selected out of the Best Approued Authors, as Well beyond the Seas as of Our Owne Country. By Robert Douland. VVhereunto Is Annexed Certaine Obseruations Belonging to Lute-Playing: By Iohn Baptisto Besardo of Visonti. Also a Short Treatise Thereunto Appertayning: By Iohn Douland Batcheler of Musicke.*, by Robert Dowland (London: Thomas Adams, 1610), D1r–E2r.

promised work.[23] The second choice seems the more plausible one, even if it delivers less than what the earlier note advertised.

Dowland's claim that Ornithoparchus's treatise deserved translation certainly has some credibility. There was a growing market for music treatises published in English. And as Rebecca Herissone has reminded us, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, there was a "small number of scholarly publications being produced in England at the time" to satisfy this need.[24] Dowland clearly saw this as a gap to be filled. (But whether Ornithoparchus's treatise counts as a "scholarly publication" as alluded to in Herissone's remark is another question that I will consider in a moment.)

Returning now to Dowland's translation, we find Dowland's note to the reader immediately followed by Ornithoparchus's original dedication to the Governors of the State of Lunenburg. Curiously, each of the four books of Ornithoparchus's treatise has its own dedication, meaning that in Dowland's translation there are actually five separate dedications. The original purpose of Ornithoparchus's four dedications is clear enough: the publication of his treatise was costly, and he would have hoped that in having multiple dedicatees, he would likewise increase the support he received for its production. Dowland could well have eliminated these dedications; most of their content is boiler-plate encomia and parochial to local concerns (obsequious praise extolling all the wonderful things the dedicatees have done for Germany, how support for this publication would be good for the people of the land, and so forth). Yet oddly, Dowland included each one of these dedications in his translation.

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[23] It has been suggested that Dowland may have been the one who translated Besard's treatise. If Dowland indeed translated this, it would significantly increase his involvement in the project. Diana Poulton and Robert Spencer, "Dowland, Robert," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.08104.

[24] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 13.

This is not to say that Dowland was scrupulous in including every bit of Ornithoparchus's original text in his translation. Parts of these dedications were indeed shortened by Dowland. More surprisingly, perhaps, he also eliminated some material from the main body of the text from his otherwise very faithful translation.[25] That is to say, Dowland did not merely mechanically translate his source; he exercised a certain degree of editorial control in the production of his translation. The reader is confronted, then, with two authors trying to position what is largely the same text in different ways to suit their often conflicting aims.

The interplay between authorship and translation thus comes to a head. Kirsten Gibson has convincingly argued that Dowland was actively involved in a project of authorial self-promotion, largely executed through the frontmatter of his music prints.[26] Her discussion, however, largely excludes Dowland's translation of Ornithoparchus where we also find clear evidence of self-promotion. Dowland continually inserts himself into the translation, often in subtle and potentially insidious ways. For example, on the title page he puts Ornithoparchus and Guido d'Arezzo in dialogue; in other places he excises text to soften the treatise's pro-Catholic elements. If we seriously consider Warren Boutcher's suggestion to "read Renaissance translations as 'original' works by those who happened to be translating," the authorial role of

[25] Andreas Ornithoparchus and John Dowland, *A Compendium of Musical Practice: Musice Active Micrologus by Andreas Ornithoparchus; Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus, or Introduction, Containing the Art of Singing, by John Dowland. With a New Introduction, List of Variant Readings, and Table of Citations of Theorists by Gustave Reese and Steven Ledbetter.*, ed. Gustave Reese and Steven Ledbetter (New York: Dover Publications, 1973), xiii–xxiii.

[26] Kirsten Gibson, "The Order of the Book: Materiality, Narrative and Authorial Voice in John Dowland's First Booke of Songes or Ayres," *Renaissance Studies* 26, no. 1 (2012): 13–33; Kirsten Gibson, "'How Hard an Enterprise It Is': Authorial Self-Fashioning in John Dowland's Printed Books," *Early Music History* 26 (2007): 43–89. She heeds Foucault's warning to not assume that the author function is transhistorical and thoroughly situates Dowland's authorial aims in his early modern English context. See Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 113–38.

Dowland increases.[27] To be clear, Boutcher's suggestion directly concerns the translation of literary works where the creative labor of the translator is perhaps more pronounced. Yet Dowland's original contributions and reworkings should not be under-estimated. Highlighting the original aspects of Dowland's translation helps it to fit more easily into its new English context.

The religious posturing of their respective dedications reveals divergent authorial aims for each man. Ornithoparchus's opening dedication to the Governors of the State of Lunenburg is largely concerned with praising the dedicatees and their governance. While Ornithoparchus makes one reference to "Musicke the nurse of Christian religion," there are few other religious motivations mentioned in his dedications. (If anything, Ornithoparchus seems to prefer classical citations.)[28] Dowland, on the other hand, brings the religious references to the foreground; his Protestant posturing is hard to miss. Perhaps this displays Dowland's anxiety over translating a treatise originally written for a Catholic audience and attempting to sell it in a Protestant market.

Dowland had good reason to play up his Protestant sympathies in his newly written introduction. By the time of his treatise's publication, Dowland had been at pains for some years to prove his Protestant credentials. While in France beginning in 1580, Dowland converted to Catholicism, "an event which he later believed was to exert a profoundly unfortunate influence over his worldly career."[29] In a famous letter from November 10, 1595 to Robert Cecil (who would later become the dedicatee of this translation), Dowland laments the fact this his

[27] Warren Boutcher, "The Renaissance," in *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation*, ed. Peter France (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 46 as quoted in Rhodes, "Status Anxiety and English Renaissance Translation," 107.
[28] Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus,* B1r.
[29] Poulton, *John Dowland,* 26.

conversion to Catholicism has hurt him professionally, "for I have been thrust off of all good fortune because I am a Catholic at home."[30] Kirsten Gibson notes,

> This long confessional letter was written to Cecil after Dowland seems unwittingly to have become involved with a group of Catholics plotting against Elizabeth while he was in Florence during the summer of 1595. Dowland swiftly returned to Nuremberg, from which he wrote the letter in what appears to be an attempt to forge some distance from a highly dangerous situation, and also to salvage his client relationship with the all-powerful Cecil. The extent and nature of Dowland's Catholic sympathies, however, remain obscure, while the complexity of motives for writing the letter to Cecil, not to mention the pressures he found himself under, render any direct interpretation of the letter difficult.[31]

Dowland appears to have pulled back from his Catholic position, at least publicly, in order to further his career in England.[32] In Gustave Reese and Steven Ledbetter's introduction to the facsimile edition of Ornithoparchus's *Micrologus* and Dowland's translation, Reese and Ledbetter suggest that the few substantive omissions in Dowland's text relate to "Dowland's rather sensitive political position in England" and were designed to assuage any fears that Dowland held allegiance to Rome.[33] This provides a plausible explanation for two of the lengthy excisions from Book Three that conveniently removed positive references to the pope, descriptions of monastic practice, and the potentially alarming statement that "a priest is both higher than kings and holier than angels."[34] But if this explains why a few passages may have been omitted from Dowland's translation, what do we make of the remainder of the treatise that aims to teach young singers music specifically serving a Catholic liturgy? Perhaps Dowland had other, more subversive aims in mind.

[30] The letter from Dowland to Cecil is reproduced in Poulton, 37–40, quote at 38.
[31] Gibson, "'How Hard an Enterprise It Is': Authorial Self-Fashioning in John Dowland's Printed Books," 61–62.
[32] Gibson, 62–63.
[33] Ornithoparchus and Dowland, *A Compendium of Musical Practice*, xi.
[34] See Ornithoparchus and Dowland, xvii–xxi for the text of these passages, quote on xix.

A Hidden Use for an Old Treatise?

Instead of assuming that Dowland's translation was something of a historical anomaly in seventeenth-century England, perhaps Dowland used his translation of Ornithoparchus as a way to better train recusant Catholic musicians in England. Although not officially sanctioned by the crown, there were still practicing Catholics in prominent English families at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Discussing the third book of Ornithoparchus's treatise, Diana Poulton has correctly claimed, "His rules apply exclusively to Latin texts which were, of course, no longer in use in the Jacobean church."[35] These rules, however, still applied to Catholic practice. While this claim is speculative, there are good reasons to believe that it represents a possible use for this treatise and a potential additional motivation for its translation.

If Dowland really did intend for his translation to be secretly used by Catholics in England, how did this escape the notice of the authorities? There are at least three factors we might note that worked to his advantage. First, the early editions of Ornithoparchus's treatise were published in the relatively modest oblong quarto and upright quarto formats, fitting for a pedagogical text used by schoolboys.[36] Dowland, on the other hand, published his translation in folio; at this time the only other English music treatise to be published in folio was Morley's.[37] This was a prestige format that highlighted the seriousness of the endeavor and did nothing to keep the cost down. By transforming the treatise from something used by schoolboys to an object of scholarly learning, the treatise's potential for coercion is limited. Second, the pedagogical nature and practicality of Ornithoparchus's text works to Dowland's advantage. Much of

[35] Poulton, *John Dowland*, 385.
[36] Ornithoparchus and Dowland, *A Compendium of Musical Practice*, x; Owens, "You Can Tell a Book by Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" 356–57.
[37] Thomas Mace's treatise is the only other music book in England in the seventeenth century to be published in folio. Owens, "You Can Tell a Book by Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" 373.

Ornithoparchus's treatise rehashes well-established musical fundamentals. A good deal of the basics of reading music and singing are relevant to both the training of Catholic and Protestant singers and are applicable to Protestant English music from earlier in the sixteenth century. It also did not hurt that Ornithoparchus wrote his treatise before the start of the Reformation; that is, his instructions are orthodox and come from a time when few were openly challenging the Catholic status quo. In this light, Ornithoparchus is traditional and hardly reformist in aim.[38] Finally, the fact that Dowland put forth a translation and not an original treatise certainly helps to deflect accusations of advocating for a pro-Catholic position. The translator can exist at a level of remove from the original work, allowing objections to be made about the work itself without necessarily implicating the translator.[39] Of course, being a translator does not absolve one of all responsibility for the content of a text, but it does help to create some distance. By translating a Catholic pedagogical volume into a work of prestigious and enduring scholarship, Dowland's volume could find a place for itself in an environment that might otherwise appear quite hostile.

While Dowland's translation might have been used by recusant Catholics hoping to escape the notice of the state, the theoretical content of Ornithoparchus's treatise had interested English theorists even outside of Dowland's translation. Both Thomas Morley and Charles Butler cite Ornithoparchus in their own publications. Still, it is clear that neither author viewed him as an up-to-date authority.[40]

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[38] At least as late as the 1535 Cologne edition published by Gymnicus, all of the original dedications are still present. It is likely that Dowland translated from one of the Cologne editions (published in 1524, 1533, 1535, 1540, and 1555), but it not possible to determine which one. Ornithoparchus and Dowland, *A Compendium of Musical Practice*, x.

[39] Matthew Reynolds explores this concept in more detail in a case study of John Dryden's translation of Chaucer, Boccaccio, Ovid, and Homer at the end of the seventeenth century. Matthew Reynolds, "Semi-Censorship in Dryden and Browning," in *Modes of Censorship and Translation: National Contexts and Diverse Media*, ed. Francesca Billiani (Manchester, UK and Kinderhook, NY: St. Jerome Publishing, 2007), 196ff.

[40] Morley cites Ornithoparchus as an example of how proportions were notated in Germany. Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 45. Butler cites Ornithoparchus mainly as a source for Guido's comments

Rebecca Herissone reads Ornithoparchus as more forward-looking than has sometimes been thought. She cites as an example his prioritization of the bass voice for the calculation of intervals instead of from the more traditional tenor voice.[41] But whatever there was that was innovative in Ornithoparchus's day was commonplace by the time of Dowland's translation. Diana Poulton expresses strong doubts that the treatise could have been of any use to a musician of Dowland's time:

> Dowland can hardly have failed to realize the changes that had come about since Ornithoparcus's time, nor is it likely he was unaware of the publication of Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*. Without in any way belittling the quality of the *Micrologus*, or underestimating its importance as a historical document, it may be said with truth that some sections were obsolete in relation to the English musical scene in 1609, and that the contents of the still relevant chapters had been carefully and expertly handled by Morley. Yet Dowland nowhere suggests that his motive in publishing is to make available a work important mainly as a historical record of ideas and practices either just passed into, or rapidly on their way towards, desuetude.[42]

Although her assessment might give Morley a little too much credit for his work while assigning a bit too little to Dowland, the general thrust of her statement is difficult to argue with. If in Germany in 1517 Ornithoparchus's treatise was considered progressive, in England by 1609 the distance between this treatise and contemporary practice had significantly widened, making it rather antiquated.

Tuning and the Monochord

Or had it? There is one topic of Ornithoparchus's treatise that could help explain his attraction to this older text: tuning. From the outset of his translation, Dowland emphasizes the role of Guido d'Arezzo in tuning theory. In "The Preface upon the Division of the Worke,"

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on singing and note names and also to quote Berno. Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 10, 14, 17. See Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 122.

[41] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 122.

[42] Poulton, *John Dowland*, 385.

Ornithoparchus gives Guido only short shrift, including him in a list of writers "whom I hearin followed as my leaders, and acknowledge as my speciall Patrons." Guido is there listed among the practical writers (as opposed to the theoretical), but no special mention is made of what his contribution might be.[43] Not so with Dowland. On the title page of his translation, Dowland advertises that the treatise contains "the dimension and perfect use of the Monochord, according to Guido Aretinus." Dowland clearly has a reason for stressing what he sees as the practical importance of the venerable theorist. In order to understand how a medieval theorist's discussion of the monochord might be of interest to an English lutenist from the early seventeenth century, a digression on tuning is in order. Dowland, like many of his predecessors, finds himself caught between a mathematically ideal tuning and the realities of practical music making.

In his *Micrologus* from the early eleventh century, Guido provides two methods for dividing the monochord, both of which result in the same Pythagorean tuning. The first method is substantially longer, needing twenty steps to produce twenty-one notes. But Guido stresses that it is "both easily learned, and once learned, rarely forgotten." Through a series successive string divisions, Guido builds up a diatonic scale that results in the familiar tuning.[44] But Guido is also able to arrive at the same tuning in only seven steps via a method "which is harder to memorize, but by it the monochord is more quickly divided."[45] In the longer method, most of the steps are only used to generate one note even if the division marked out the places where

[43] Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus*, B2r. Although it might not be clear from Ornithoparchus's and Dowland's discussions, Guido's use of the monochord is designed to be a practical aid and not a theoretical abstraction.

[44] These steps occur in a memorable pattern. The first two steps divide the monochord into nine parts; the next seven steps use divisions into four parts; the final eleven steps use divisions into two parts.

[45] Guido of Arezzo, "Micrologus," in *Hucbald, Guido, and John on Music: Three Medieval Treatises*, ed. Claude V. Palisca, trans. Warren Babb (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978), 60. Babb's translation should be used with some caution. See Calvin Bower, "Review of Hucbald, Guido, and John on Music: Three Medieval Treatises by Warren Babb and Claude V. Palisca," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 35, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 157–67.

additional notes would fall; this allows for the same pattern to be repeated and presumably aids in memory. In the shorter method, every note is given as soon as it is generated by any division; what this loses in memorability, it makes up for in concision. So, in the longer method the first step of dividing the entire string into nine parts only generates A a step above Γ, but in the shorter method this same division generates A, D, a, d, and aa.[46] The second cumbersome but concise method will be detailed below.

While Guido's gamut may have been sufficient in the beginning of the eleventh century for the singing of chant, by the beginning of the sixteenth century, it would have been wholly insufficient for a musician. The gamut did not contain all the notes used by later musicians. More importantly, polyphonic and instrumental music increasingly used sonorities full of imperfect consonances that can be wildly out of tune in Pythagorean tuning.[47] Guido produces a monochord of twenty-one notes from Γ to dd with B♭ and B♮ in the upper two octaves but only B♮ in the lowest octave.[48] Ornithoparchus will follow Guido's second method (without acknowledgement) when describing his own tuning procedure. To better meet his needs, Ornithoparchus expands his gamut to include the low F and high ee along with adding A♭ and E♭ in the upper octaves.[49] Ornithoparchus's chapter "Of the Dimension of the Monochord" reveals that it makes no claim to be Guido's or anybody else's division; it simply presents a way to divide the monochord. It is only in the following chapter, "Of the Definition, Profit, and use of

[46] Guido's shorter instructions are incomplete, but it is clear from the text what the final step should be. See Guido of Arezzo, "Micrologus," 60, n. 1.
[47] Rudolph Rasch, "Tuning and Temperament," in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 198.
[48] Indeed, this is a very traditional gamut whose main innovation on the Greek Greater Perfect system (as interpreted through Boethius) is to extend the highest range beyond aa to dd and add Γ as the lowest note. For further discussion of ancient Greek theory in and its incorporation into European musical thought see Calvin Bower, "The Transmission of Ancient Music Theory into the Middle Ages," in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), especially 143–46.
[49] See also Cecil Dale Adkins, "The Theory and Practice of the Monochord" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Iowa, 1963), 211.

the Monochord," that Guido is mentioned: "A *Monochord* (as *Guido* proves in the beginning of his *Doctrinall*) is a long square piece of wood hollow within, with a string drawn over it; by the sound whereof, we apprehend the varieties of sounds."[50] While Dowland may not be precisely correct in his claim that Ornithoparchus's treatise presents "the dimension and perfect use of the Monochord, according to Guido Aretinus," the two are very closely related. Ornithoparchus takes Guido's monochord division as the core of his own and then extends it.

ORNITHOPARCHUS'S TUNING METHOD

Ornithoparchus's division (reproduced in Figure 3.4) is modeled on Guido's second method. His method is as follows: (1) Divide the entire string into nine equal parts, which gives F, Ut, C, G, c, and g.[51] (2) Starting at Ut, divide the string into nine parts again, which gives A, D, a, d, and aa. (3) Starting at A, divide the string into nine parts again, which gives B♮, E, b♮, e, and bb♮. (4) Divide the entire string into four parts, which gives B♭, F, and f. (5) Starting at B♭, divide the string into four parts, which gives E♭, B♭, b♭, and bb♭. (6) Starting at E♭, divide the string into four parts, which gives a♭, e♭, and ee♭. (7) Divide the string between e♭ and ee♭ into two parts, which gives aa♭. (8) Starting at c, divide the string into two parts, which gives, cc. (9) Starting at d, divide the string into two parts, which gives dd. (10) Starting at e, divide the string into two parts, which gives ee.[52] Ornithoparchus is able to divide his monochord into a relatively large number of notes with a relatively small number of steps all while maintaining an entirely Pythagorean tuning system, with 3:2 fifths and 4:3 fourths throughout.[53] Table 3.1 shows the

[50] Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus*, 22–23.
[51] Ornithoparchus's begins with one more division into nine parts than Guido's since Ornithoparchus's monochord begins a tone lower on F instead of Γ. Cf. Guido of Arezzo, "Micrologus," 60.
[52] Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus*, 22–23.
[53] See J. Murray Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament, a Historical Survey.* (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1953), 153.

ratios for each of the notes generated by Ornithoparchus's monochord.[54] (The size of each interval is also given in cents for ease of comparison with Dowland's lute tuning discussed below.)[55] Ornithoparchus expands Guido's division while maintaining its Pythagorean tuning. Even with Ornithoparchus's citation of Guido as a source for his treatise, it is unlikely that Ornithoparchus would have had any direct knowledge of any of Guido's writings. Pythagorean tunings were a commonplace in theoretical treatises of the sixteenth century and could have been based on any number of historical sources. The invocation of Guido's name does more work for Ornithoparchus than the specifics of where this tuning method came from.

[54] Ornithoparchus does not calculate a pitch for F♯ and C♯. I give them here (instead of G♭ and D♭) because Barbour takes this solution to be more common and because it more closely resembles Dowland's lute tuning. (See Barbour, 89–90.) F♯ and C♯ were calculated by continuing the process of adding 3:2 perfect fifths, which is how F, C, G, D, A, E, and B were calculated. Conversely, B♭, E♭, and A♭ were derived by adding 4:3 perfect fourths to F. Continuing this process gives D♭ as 128:81 (792 cents) and G♭ as 256:243 (90 cents).

[55] The use of cents tends to imply the normativity of equal temperament, which was by no means the goal of any Pythagorean tuning. Cents are given here only to aid in the comparison between Ornithoparchus's and Dowland's tunings and to show how much they deviate from equal temperament, which is particularly useful for fretted instruments.

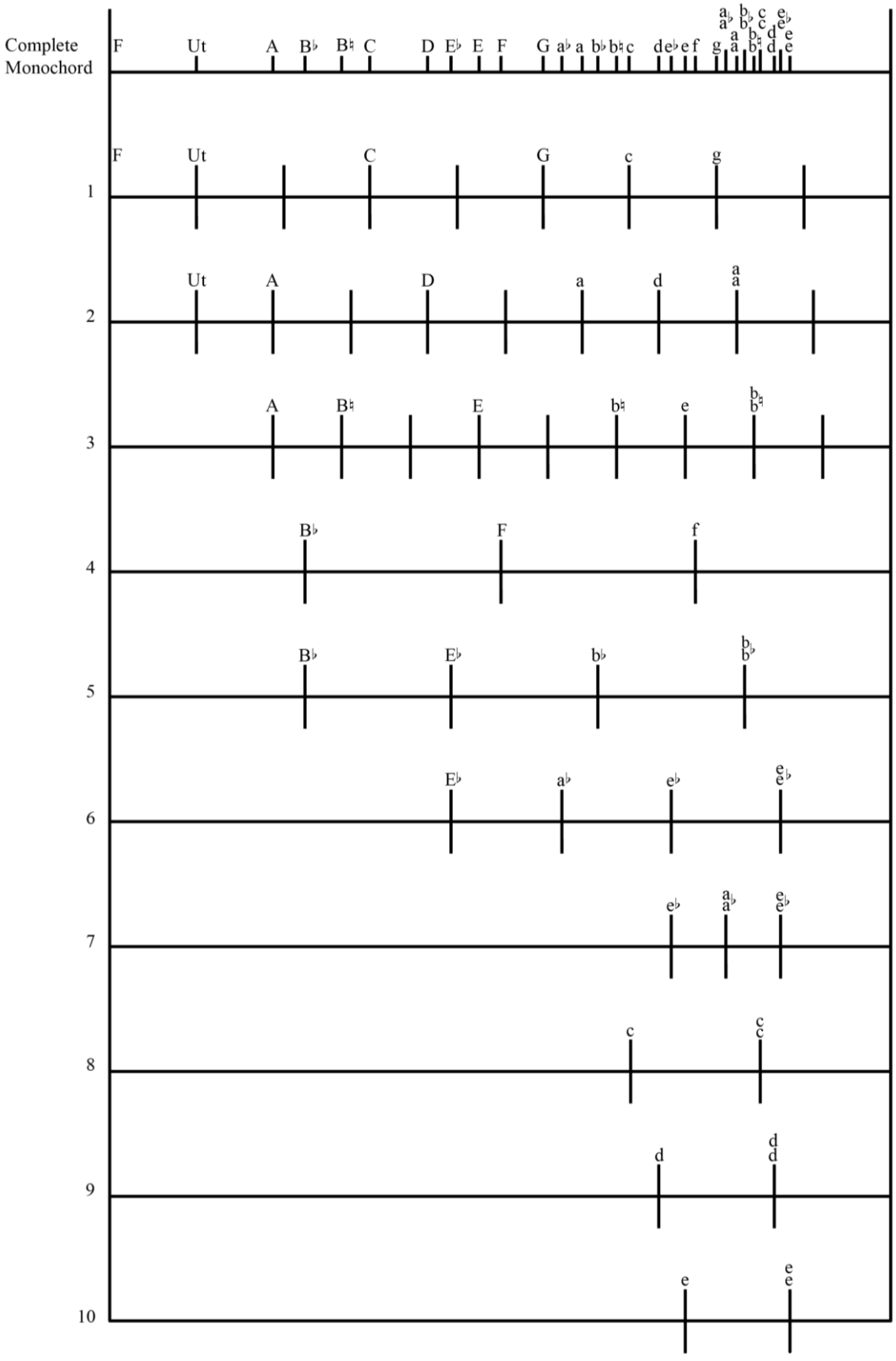

Figure 3.4 Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus*, 22–23 (Based on Diagram 52 in Adkins, "Theory and Practice of the Monochord," 212)

Ratios	1	[2187: 2048]	9:8	32:27	81:64	4:3	729:512	3:2	[6561: 4096]	27:16	16:9	243:128	2:1
Names	F	[F♯]	G	A♭	A	B♭	B♮	C	[C♯]	D	E♭	E	F
Cents	0	[114]	204	294	408	498	612	702	[816]	906	996	1110	1200

Table 3.1 Ornithoparchus's tuning (Compare with Table 80 in Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament*, 90)

Both Guido and Ornithoparchus give completely Pythagorean tunings. However, what was a usable tuning for singing plainchant in the eleventh century would not necessarily prove to be useful for singing polyphony in the early sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, let alone be usable as an instrumental tuning. Ornithoparchus does not stand alone in his insistence on this venerable tuning. Pythagorean tuning remained popular among theorists throughout the sixteenth century, being advocated for by Gafurius, Bermudo, and Glarean.[56] At least among theorists, Pythagorean tuning had a long life.

DOWLAND AND PYTHAGOREAN TUNING

But how did Pythagorean tuning work in practice in the Renaissance and early modern eras? Persistent as it may have been, Pythagorean tuning did result in some practical difficulties when performing polyphonic music, especially that written for fretted instruments. Dowland, working as a lutenist in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, must surely have been aware of the gulf between a Pythagorean tuning system and what the practical necessities of playing the lute required.[57] In his *Dialogo della musica antica et della moderna*, the lutenist and

[56] The German mathematician Henricus Grammateus also advocated for Pythagorean tuning. Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament*, 3. See especially Rasch's discussion of Glarean's Pythagorean tuning in Rasch, "Tuning and Temperament," 195–98.

[57] Mark Lindley shows that these difficulties did not stop a number of theorists and authors, some of whom were lutenists, from recommending a variety of Pythagorean tunings that may or may not have been practical. Lindley, *Lutes, Viols and Temperaments*, 9–18.

theorist Vincenzo Galilei in 1581 provided an elegant solution to lute tuning by using twelve 18:17 semitones in each octave, approximating equal temperament. Barbour explains:

> Galilei's explanation of the reason for equal semitones on the lute is logical and correct: Since the frets are placed straight across the six strings, the order of diatonic and chromatic semitones is the same on all strings. Hence, in playing chords, C♯ might be sounded on one string and D♭ on another, and this will be a very false octave unless the instrument is in equal temperament.[58]

In terms of chronology, Galilei postdates Ornithoparchus by over sixty years.[59] His approach to tuning was neither available to Ornithoparchus in 1517 nor was it necessary, since he only discusses vocal music, where C♯ and D♭ can and often should be sung differently. But Dowland would have been well acquainted with the difficulties this creates for fretted instruments. When faced with this same tuning problem, Dowland posited a puzzling solution that is as suggestive of his professional aspirations as it is of his preferred lute tuning.

As we have seen, many parts of Ornithoparchus's *Micrologus* were outdated by the time Dowland translated it. By this time its rules for counterpoint were extremely conservative; its instructions for intoning Latin texts only applied to a church that was no longer in place in England; and the tuning system that Ornithoparchus advocates resulted in many practical difficulties when used by anyone but vocalists. Yet Dowland forcefully advocated for this treatise, especially the importance of its tuning system. Why would this be?

Dowland would obviously have been aware of the vexing problems that Pythagorean tuning posed to any lutenist. A short essay in a publication from 1610 seems to have been his answer as to how this ancient tuning might be salvaged for use by contemporary lutenists. Yet as we will see, his proposal was not without substantial problems of its own.

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[58] Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament*, 7–8.
[59] See Vincenzo Galilei, *Dialogo Della Musica Antica et Della Moderna* (Florence: Giorgio Marescotti, 1581); Vincenzo Galilei, *Dialogue on Ancient and Modern Music*, trans. Claude V. Palisca (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

The publication in question was his "Other Necessary Observations Belonging to the Lute" that served as part of a didactic introduction appended to the major lute collection compiled by his son, Robert Dowland: *Varietie of Lute-Lessons* from 1610.[60] (The title page is reproduced in Figure 3.5.) Unfortunately, where the monochord division Dowland père had translated from Ornithoparchus was relatively straightforward, his instructions here for tuning the lute are comparatively more opaque. Dowland divides his instructions into two parts: "Of fretting the Lute" and "Of Tuning the Lute." "Of fretting the Lute" consists of a mythologized history of the number and placement of frets on the lute mixed with various creation myths about music involving Jubal and Pythagoras as reported by Boethius (a story which Boethius got from Nichomachus). As would be expected for an essay on tuning, the well-known tale of Pythagoras "passing by the Smith shops" and hearing the sonorous intervals produced by the smithy's hammers is included. From this we learn the typical just ratios for consonances.

> And to make that which is spoken more plaine, let there be for examples sake of hammers foure waights, which let be comprehended in the numbers under-written, 12. 9. 8. and 6. Those hammers which waigh 12. and 6. pounds, did strike a *Diapason*, or eight Concord in the duple: the hammer that weighed 12. to the hammer of 9. pound waight, and farther the hammer of 8. pound, to the hammer of 6. pound, according to the *Sesquitertia* proportion, were joined in a Concord of a fourth, or in a *Diatessaron*: then the 9. pound hammer to that of 6. and of 12. to 8. did mingle a fift or *Diapente*, in the *Sesquialtera* proportion. Againe, the hammer of 9. to that of the 8. did sound in a *Sesquioctava* proportion. Wherefore returning backe againe from hence, and searching by manifold tryals, whether the whole nature of Concords did consist in these proportions, and so fitting the waights (which answered the late found proportions) to strings, hee judged of their Concords by his Eare. Then overseeing the doublenesse and halfe of the strings length, and fitting the other proportions, he gat a most true rule out of his manifold experience, and was exceedingly joyed that hee had found that which in all things answered with the truth: hitherto are *Boetius* his words.[61]

[60] Didactic introductions and brief tutors were commonly attached to instrumental prints throughout the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. See the many examples in Owens, "You Can Tell a Book by Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" especially 376.
[61] Dowland, "Other Necessary Obseruations Belonging to the Lute," D2v.

Figure 3.5 Dowland, *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*, title page

In Dowland's retelling, Pythagoras has concluded that proportional weights of hammers will produce consonances. He then claims that the proportion between string lengths matches the proportion between weights. Dowland's final conclusion is that weight, number, and length all directly correspond to produce consonances. Needless to say, there are some real errors in some of these claims, errors that had been perpetuated for centuries.[62] However, the only one of these claims that is relevant to fretting the lute is the final one about proportionate string lengths; the claim also happens to be correct. (For example, a string twelve units long will sound at an octave to a string six units long at the same tension.) Dowland throws in one last flourish before discussing the actual mechanics of fretting the lute: "Thus the Intervals being found out by waight and number, wee will endeavour to set them downe by measure: whereby the ignorant may perceive by this undivided Trinitie, that the finger of God framed Musicke, when his Word made the World."[63]

After this Dowland moves directly to his method for determining the proper placement of the frets on the lute. Placing the frets on a lute is commensurate with fixing its tuning. Lutes of this period had gut frets that had to be manually tied on by the lutenist. This means that in order to make a lute playable the frets must first be properly placed and then the strings must be tuned. While the broad overview of his method is clear (divide the space between the bridge and the nut on the lute like you would a monochord and then place the frets at each calculated location), the details are a bit of a mess. (This is essentially a monochord division, yet Dowland's instruction are not nearly as clear as those found in his translation of Ornithoparchus's monochord division.)

[62] Hammers of these weights do not produce the intervals from the myth. Calvin Bower reminds us, though, that "the myths and dreams of a civilization are judged not by their empirical truth or falsity, but by the expression of intellectual and spiritual complexes they reveal within a culture." Bower, "The Transmission of Ancient Music Theory into the Middle Ages," 143.
[63] Dowland, "Other Necessary Obseruations Belonging to the Lute," D2v.

A few typographical errors muddle the description, and a few convoluted instructions simply make things more difficult than necessary.[64] These errors are corrected below, and his instructions are clarified as much as possible.

Dowland's naming of the frets follows that found in lute tablature, with *A* being the nut and *N* being the twelfth fret. I give fret names in italics and note names in parentheses (following the bass course nominally tuned to G). Figure 3.6 provides a diagram that follows the steps in Dowland's instructions. His method is as follows: (1) Divide the distance from the nut *A* (G) to the bridge in half, which gives *N* (G). (2) Divide the distance from *A* to *N* into three parts, which gives *H* (D).[65] (3) Divide the distance from *A* to *H* into eleven parts, which gives *B* (G♯). (4) Divide the distance from *A* to *H* into three parts, which gives *C* (A). (5) Divide the distance from *A* to *N* into two parts, which gives *F* (C).[66] (6) Divide the distance from *F* to *H* into two parts, which gives *G* (C♯). (7) Divide the distance from *A* to *B* into three parts; then using the third part that was just calculated, measure up from *B* four and a half parts, which gives *D* (A♯). (8) Divide the distance between *D* and *F* into two, which gives *E* (B).[67] (9) Divide the distance from *B* to the bridge into three parts, which gives *I* (D♯). (10) Divide the distance from *C* to the bridge into three parts, which gives *K* (E).[68] (11) Divide the distance from *D* to the bridge into three parts, which gives *L* (F).[69] The results of this fretting procedure are shown in Table 3.2. In Dowland's

[64] See Lindley, *Lutes, Viols and Temperaments*, 81–82. The corrections to Dowland's fretting instructions follow his suggestions.
[65] An error in the print reads "part the distances from *N*. to *D*. in three parts." Dowland, "Other Necessary Obseruations Belonging to the Lute," D2v.
[66] An error in the print reads "there the first part sheweth you the first fret, sounding a *Diatessaron*." Read "fifth fret" for "first fret." Dowland, E1r.
[67] Dowland's prose is particularly opaque here. "Seventhly, divide the distance from the letter *B.* to *A.* in three parts, which being done, measure from the *B.* upwards foure times and an halfe, and that wil give you the third fret, sounding a *Semiditone*: mark that also with a prick, & set thereon the letter *D.* then set the fourth fret [*E.*] just in the middle, the which wil be a perfect *ditone*." Dowland, E1r.
[68] An error in the print reads "then take a third part from the Bridge to *C.* and that third part maketh *E*." Dowland, E1r.
[69] Dowland, D2v–E1r.

tuning a number of his intervals correspond with the standard Pythagorean tuning, a few are relatively close, and some significantly differ.[70] Table 3.3 provides a comparison between the tuning systems given by Dowland and Ornithoparchus; notes using the same tuning are shown in bold. In general, Dowland's tuning results in intervals in the diatonic scale that are close to equal temperament, but the chromatics are problematically farther off.[71] If nothing else, Dowland's tuning is deeply indebted to Pythagorean tuning even though it provides novel solutions for some intervals.

[70] For further discussion of some of these correspondences see Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament*, 153.
[71] The tuning of these chromatic notes results in real problems in actually playing Dowland's music using his own tuning. Lindley, *Lutes, Viols and Temperaments*, 82–83.

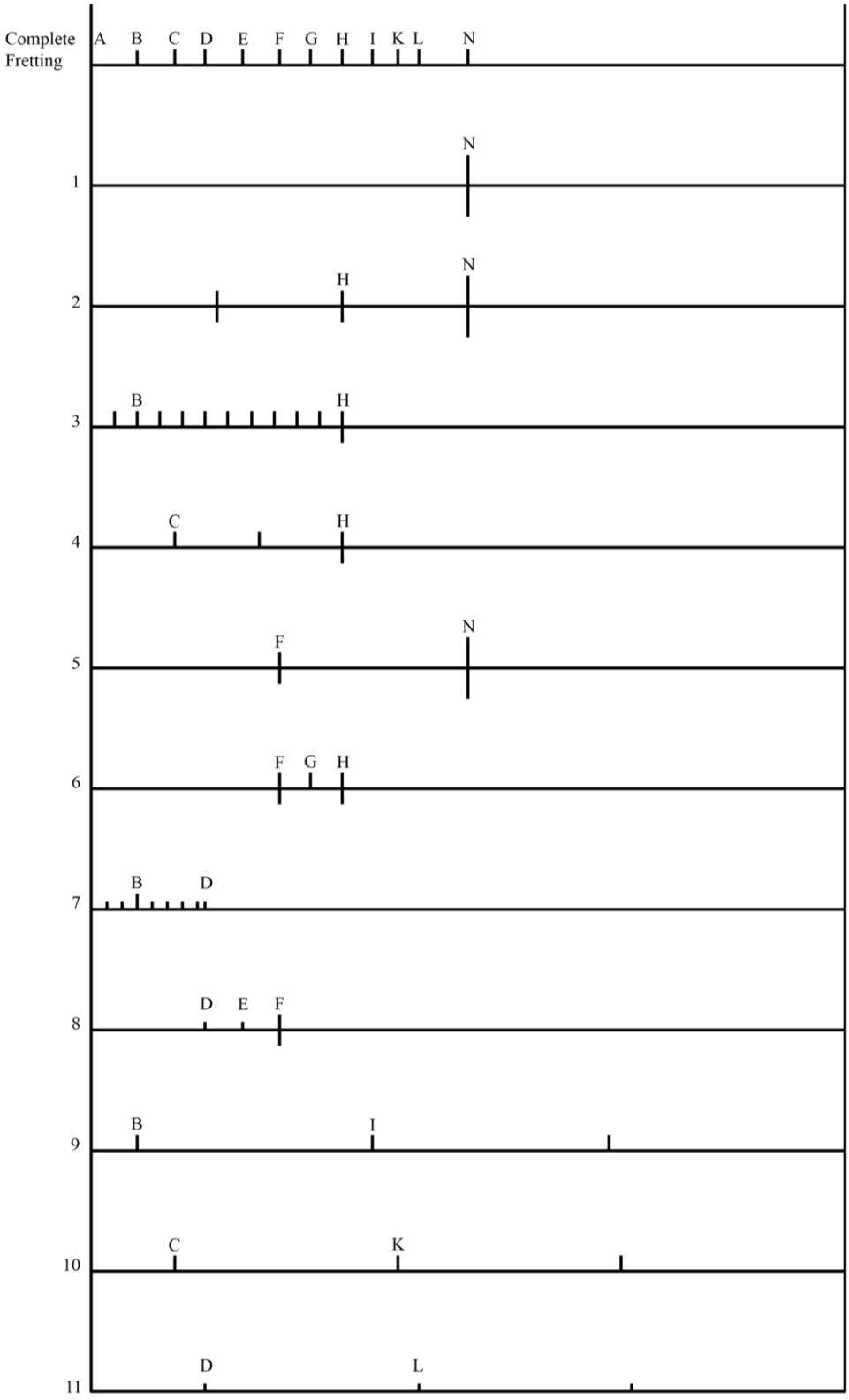

Figure 3.6 Dowland, “Other Necessary Observations,” D2v–E1r (Based on Diagram 89 in Adkins, “Theory and Practice of the Monochord,” 418)

Ratios	1	33:31	9:8	33:28	264:211	4:3	24:17	3:2	99:62	27:16	99:56	[396:211]	2:1
Names	G	G♯/A♭	A	A♯/B♭	B	C	C♯/D♭	D	D♯/E♭	E	F	F♯/G♭	G
Cents	0	108	204	284	388	498	597	702	810	906	986	1090	1200

Table 3.2 Dowland's tuning (Based on Table 129 from Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament*, 155)

Dowland													
Ratios	**1**	33:31	**9:8**	33:28	264:211	**4:3**	24:17	**3:2**	99:62	**27:16**	99:56	396:211	**2:1**
Names	**G**	G♯/A♭	**A**	A♯/B♭	B	**C**	C♯/D♭	**D**	D♯/E♭	**E**	F	F♯/G♭	**G**
Cents	**0**	108	**204**	284	388	**498**	597	**702**	810	**906**	986	1090	**1200**
Ornithoparchus													
Ratios	**1**	2187:2048	**9:8**	32:27	81:64	**4:3**	729:512	**3:2**	6561:4096	**27:16**	16:9	243:128	**2:1**
Names	**G**	G♯	**A**	B♭	B	**C**	C♯	**D**	D♯	**E**	F	F♯	**C**
Cents	**0**	114	**204**	294	408	**498**	612	**702**	816	**906**	996	1110	**1200**

Table 3.3 Comparison between Dowland's and Ornithoparchus's tunings

Following the section "Of Fretting the Lute" wherein Dowland laid out the proper disposition of the frets on the lute which resulted in a chromatic division of the octave, he turns to the actual tuning of the strings in the section "Of Tuning the Lute." Many lute tunings existed throughout the sixteenth century, but the norm for a six-course lute was for the two strings of each of the five lowest courses to be tuned in octaves. Barbour writes, "Ordinarily, lutes and viols had six strings, tuned by fourths, with a major third in the middle. Thus the open strings might be G C F A D G or A D G B E A."[72] This results in a span of two octaves.[73] Indeed, the first of these examples is the tuning that Dowland gives, with the courses nominally tuned to Γ, C, F, a, d, g. Dowland's tuning diagram is shown in Figure 3.7. The course names from low to high are given as Base (Γ), Tenor (C), Contra-tenor (F), Great meane (a), Smale meane (d), and Treble (g). The letters on the strings are fret names as are found in tablature and not note names, starting with A at the nut. While Dowland's instructions are not perfectly clear, the basic procedure is to tune the two strings of each course in unison with each other and then, starting from the bass, move to the appropriate fret on the lowest course to give the pitch for the next highest course, tune the second course in unison to the first and then repeat the process until all the courses are tuned, a practice that should be familiar to all players of string instruments. This procedure produces problems on fretted instruments that are not in equal temperament since each successive string gets further out of tune from the bass as the player tunes in successive 4:3 perfect fourths. The third between the third and fourth courses of the lute is also a problem. In

[72] Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament*, 185.
[73] For an overview of lute tunings see Lynda Sayce's section "Tunings" in Klaus Wachsmann et al., "Lute," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40074. Contrary to what was commonly recommended, Dowland suggests tuning all of the courses to unisons instead of tuning the lowest courses to octaves.

Pythagorean tuning the major third is sharp by a comma.[74] Dowland's discrepancies are more serious than just that.

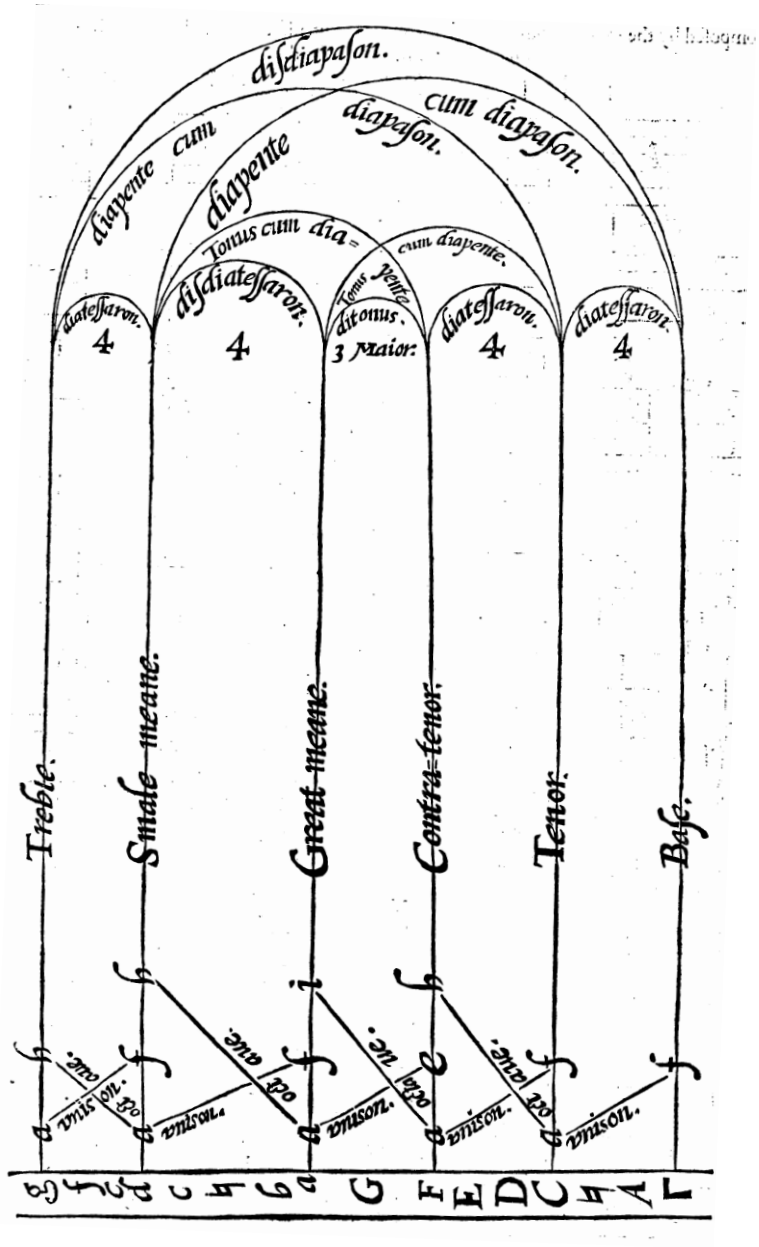

Figure 3.7 Dowland, "Other Necessary Observations Belonging to the Lute," E2r

[74] The problem of Pythagorean tuning being off by a comma was well-known and was a motivation for the creation of a large number of temperaments. For difficulties with Pythagorean lute tunings see Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament*, 185–86. As David Mitchell has shown, the resulting double octave between the first and sixth courses would only be 2378 cents instead of 2400 cents, which he arrived at by adding four 4:3 perfect fourths to one 5:4 just major third. David Mitchell, "Fretting and Tuning the Lute," Appendix 2 in *John Dowland*, by Diana Poulton (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 457.

If one were to mechanically follow Dowland's tuning, the double octave between the outer strings would be significantly off. Tuning up from the Base (Γ), the Tenor (C) is a perfect 4:3 fourth higher. (Recall from the fretting instructions and Table 3.2 that fret *F* (C) is tuned to 4:3.) Starting from the Tenor (C), the Contra-tenor (F) is tuned another 4:3 fourth higher. From the Contra-tenor (F) the Great meane (a) is a 264:211 major third higher. Starting from the Great meane (a), the Smale meane (d) is a 4:3 fourth higher. And starting from the Smale meane (d) the Treble (g) is a 4:3 fourth higher. There should be a 4:1 double octave between the Base and Treble courses. Instead of the expected 4:1 ratio we get 22528:5697 (approximately 3.95:1); expressed in cents, we would have a double octave that is 2380 cents instead of 2400.[75] (In order to arrive at a 4:1 double octave by stacking four 4:3 fourths and a major third, the major third would have to have the Pythagorean ratio of 81:64.) The tuning diagram he provides, shown in Figure 3.7, does not correspond to his written instructions.[76] The problem is that for Dowland's tuning diagram to work, one cannot use the fretting that he just proposed. Between every course there is a line indicating unisons between adjacent courses; these were used in the tuning instructions. Between four sets of courses there are also lines indicating octaves. Three of these sets (Tenor to Contra-tenor, Great meane to Smale meane, and Smale meane to Treble) are not problems; they produce perfect 2:1 octaves. Between the Contra-tenor and the Great meane, however, the octave is not pure. Instead of a 2:1 octave we get a ratio of 26136:13082 (approximately 1.9978:1); that is, an octave of 1198 cents instead of 1200. This is not as large a problem as the grossly out of tune double octave between outer strings, but it seems implausible

[75] That is, 4:3+4:3+264:211+4:3+4:3=67584:17091=22528:5697 which is not 4:1 (22788:5697).
[76] Dowland's tuning instructions only concern the six-course lute even though his earlier publications demanded at least a seven-course lute. For example, in his note "To the Reader" in his *Lachrimæ, or Seven Teares* from 1604 he provides instructions for tuning the seventh, eighth, and ninth courses of a lute one octave below a given note from a higher course. Each piece in this collection includes a chart giving the required tuning. See John Dowland, *Lachrimæ, Or Seauen Teares Figured in Seauen Passionate Pauans With Diuers Other Pauans, Galiards, and Almands, Set Forth for the Lute, Viols, Or Violons, in Fiue Parts* (London: Printed by John Windet, 1604), A2v.

that a skilled lutenist would intentionally tune to a flat octave. Dowland does not note (or perhaps even notice) any of these discrepancies, discrepancies he surely would have noticed if he regularly fretted his lute by this method.[77]

Dowland's instructions for the actual tuning of the lute have aroused some criticism among scholars. Barbour sees "the trend of Dowland's tuning" as following Ornithoparchus's entirely Pythagorean tuning. He concludes, "It was natural for Ornithoparchus to advocate the Pythagorean tuning, since most of his contemporaries had not yet departed from it. But a century later, the Pythagorean tuning was becoming somewhat rare."[78] As shown in Table 3.3, Dowland's tuning shares a number of notes with Ornithoparchus's Pythagorean tuning. Barbour has calculated how far on average each of these tunings is from equal temperament, with the results expressed as a mean deviation given in cents.[79] (Equal temperament has a mean deviation of zero cents.) As he has calculated, Pythagorean tuning has a mean deviation of 11.7 cents and Dowland's tuning has a mean deviation of 8.2 cents, meaning Dowland's tuning is slightly closer to equal temperament. As a point of reference, Vincenzo Galilei's approximation of equal temperament from his *Dialogo della musica antica et della moderna* from 1581 has a mean deviation of only 1.8 cents.[80] That is to say that Dowland's tuning is closer to equal temperament than Ornithoparchus's, but not as much as one might expect for it to be useful on a fretted instrument.

[77] Those who have attempted to use Dowland's fretting have not been happy with it. David Dolata calls his instructions "inexplicably unworkable." Lindley calls them simply "inept." David Dolata, *Meantone Temperaments on Lutes and Viols* (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016), 14; Lindley, *Lutes, Viols and Temperaments*, 83.
[78] Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament*, 153.
[79] In essence, Barbour adds up how many cents each note varies from equal temperament and then divides the total by twelve to get his average. Barbour, vii.
[80] Barbour, 155, 90, 57.

Barbour mentions that there was at least one other writer besides Dowland in contemporary English music theory who advocated for a Pythagorean tuning: Thomas Morley in his *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* from 1597.[81] However, it seems clear that the Pythagorean tuning that Morley gives is not as foundational to his work as it is for Dowland. Perhaps counterintuitively, Dowland's preference for this tuning might be based on the nature of the lute. We recall that typically courses of the lute were tuned in fourths with a major third in the middle, as is the case in Dowland's tuning. Barbour writes, "Because of the perfect fourths, the fretted instruments might have inclined toward the Pythagorean tuning, as the later violins have done." This inclination toward Pythagorean tuning leads to immediate problems that lutenists had to solve, such as having to make adjustments so that the octaves are true. Barbour also notes that the practicalities of tuning play a role: "But the strings of lutes and viols were tuned by forming unisons, fifths, or octaves with the proper frets on other strings, thus making the tuning uniform throughout the instrument…Since the frets were merely pieces of gut tied across the fingerboards at the correct places, the order of diatonic and chromatic semitones would have to be the same on all strings."[82] Faced with a theory that works poorly in practice, Barbour concludes "that it seems very probable that lutes and viols did employ equal temperament from an early time, perhaps the beginning of the sixteenth century. We need not be too much concerned with what the equal temperament for the fretted instruments was really like."[83] In spite of all this, Barbour takes Dowland's lute tuning literally, which is perhaps understandable in a work that is mainly concerned with tuning systems in the abstract.

[81] Barbour, 153.
[82] Barbour, 185–86.
[83] Barbour, 188.

Mark Lindley is more suspicious, calling Dowland's music theory "garbled plagiarisms."[84] He classifies Dowland's fretting among a group "that seem to betray by their complexity an erudite intention, but fail to embody precisely any feasible model of intonation."[85] He claims, "All told, these fretting instructions are so inept that one must doubt whether Dowland ever used them. This doubt is confirmed by the fact that his introductory remarks refer to two ways of placing the frets, by ear and 'by measure', and declare that skillful players used the former."[86] Dowland is not an outlier in this regard: "Remarks by Bermudo, Ganassi, Dowland and Jean Rousseau suggest that many good players adjusted the frets by ear (as they often do today) rather than conform to an exact regular spacing."[87] More broadly Lindley claims, "There is reason, however, to doubt the practical significance of any sixteenth-century Pythagorean scheme," especially given "that there is plenty of evidence in sixteenth-century treatises for the use of tempered tuning on fretted instruments."[88] Lindley is almost assuredly correct in asserting that Dowland would not have used his own method for fretting the lute due to its many technical and practical difficulties. Lindley also generalizes about the direct application of numerical measuring for fret placement, arguing that it "was but the first stage in determining the intonation of the instrument" after which the player would tune the strings by ear and adjust

[84] Lindley, *Lutes, Viols and Temperaments*, 93. The plagiarism in this case relates to the close resemblance between Dowland's fretting instructions to those of Hans Gerle from 1532. This connection has been well noted. See, for example, Mitchell, "Fretting and Tuning the Lute" and Chris J. Coakley, "Dowland's Lute Tuning and Other Ancient Methods, Including Gerle's," *Fellowship of Makers and Researchers of Historical Instruments Quarterly* 123 (February 2013): 16–43.
[85] Mark Lindley, "Temperaments," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.27643. Dolata claims that Dowland's instructions are simply a display of erudition and "mastery of classical theoretical musical concepts." Dolata, *Meantone Temperaments on Lutes and Viols*, 15.
[86] Lindley, *Lutes, Viols and Temperaments*, 83.
[87] Lindley, 94.
[88] Lindley, 11.

the frets, concluding that "the intonation of the notes might then be further shaded ad hoc during performance."[89]

Both Barbour and Lindley add to our understanding of Dowland's lute tuning and its problems. Barbour demonstrates that Dowland was engaged with an active theoretical tradition that emphasized Pythagorean simplicity over practical concerns. Lindley shows that lutenists like Dowland were accustomed to tuning by ear in systems that approximated equal temperament. Both provide partial answers to the vexing problem of reconciling Dowland's theoretical writings with practical performance. Yet larger questions remain.

If Dowland did not use or could not have used his own instructions for fretting the lute, why might he have published them anyways? Why did he provide such cumbersome instructions if the lutenist would ultimately adjust the frets by ear? A discussion of Dowland's broader engagement with the world of music may provide an answer to this riddle.

Self-Fashioning in Dowland's Musical Life

If we step back for a moment, it may be possible to gain a more coherent picture of Dowland as a theorist and musician by viewing his two theoretical publications from a distance. His translation of Ornithoparchus and his "Other Necessary Observations" work together as two aspects of a larger professional project aimed at promoting himself and securing financial stability from patrons and court appointments. In other words, Dowland may have been less interested in the actual practical use of his publications by musicians than in advertising a certain erudition and membership in a venerable intellectual tradition that might have appealed to his prospective patrons.

[89] Lindley, "Temperaments."

As a reminder, "Other Necessary Observations belonging to the Lute" is one of two short treatises that preface the actual lute music in Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*. In "Other Necessary Observations," aside from providing the relevant information on the lute, Dowland takes the opportunity to alert the reader to his recent translation of Ornithoparchus. The direct usefulness of Ornithoparchus's treatise to a lutenist is not obvious: playing the lute is not discussed (indeed the only mention in the treatise of a lute is in a description of what a monochord is); no form of tablature is explained; instrumental music of any sort is only discussed in broad terms.[90] In his "Other Necessary Observations," Dowland, however, anticipates these objections and answers them with a broader educational project.

> Wherefore I exhort all Practitioners on this Instrument to the learning of their Pricke-song, also to understand the Elements and Principles of that knowledge, as an especiall great helpe, and excellent worker in this Science, and soone attained, if the Teacher be skilfull to instruct aright: for which purpose I did lately set forth the Worke of that most learned *Andreas Ornithoparcus* his *Micrologus*, in the English tongue. Also the duty of the Lute-master is to teach them the Γ *ut* upon the Instrument, that thereby they may both discerne those degrees which are continuall, and also those discreet Intervals, which belong to the tuning of an Instrument.[91]

Dowland makes the reasonable claim that the lutenist ought to know more than just how to play the lute and should instead be a true *musicus* who understands how music works and how it is written. Conveniently Dowland can recommend a recent volume that will provide everything that he thinks the student needs to know. Or so he claims. While it may be true that a lutenist should aspire to be a *musicus*, Dowland's translation of Ornithoparchus hardly provides all that the student ought to learn.

The lines between self-interest and sound pedagogy are somewhat blurred here. There is every reason to believe that Dowland thought highly of Ornithoparchus's treatise and trusted that

[90] Dowland, *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus*, 22.
[91] Dowland, "Other Necessary Obseruations Belonging to the Lute," E1r.

it would be of real help to students. One cannot deny that Ornithoparchus provides basic instructions on prick-song, the gamut, and intervals that could still be useful for a young musician at the beginning of the seventeenth century. But we also need to reconcile those parts that are useful elements of this treatise with the large amount of material that would only have been of historical interest. In terms of a comprehensive treatise that would provide the type of instruction that Dowland thinks necessary, one would need to go no further than Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musick,* which had a second edition issued in 1608. Morley's treatise is undeniably clearer and more up to date than Ornithoparchus's. It is safe to assume that Dowland recommends his own translation without even mentioning the existence of other relevant books for all the expected reasons related to promoting one's own work.

What is less clear is what the inclusion of the various authors and composers presented in Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute-Lessons* does for the younger Dowland and his career. As Diana Poulton has claimed, this print contains "works of the highest order by both English and continental composers," and is an important collection of lute music.[92] While there are compositions by both Robert Dowland and John Dowland contained in the print, they are not highlighted in any particular way or given pride of place.[93] The boldness with which Robert alerts the reader to his famous father is difficult to miss. The note "To the Readers Whosoever" begins, "Gentlemen: I am bold to present you with the first fruits of my Skill, which albeit it may seeme hereditarie unto mee, my Father being a Lutenist, and well knowne amongst you here in

[92] Poulton and Spencer, "Dowland, Robert."
[93] Of the forty-two pieces in the collection, nine are by John and two are by Robert, representing half of his known compositions. For more on this see the overview presented in David Greer, "Dowland, Robert (c. 1591–1641), Musician," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/7963; Julia Sutton and Tim Crawford, "Besard, Jean-Baptiste," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.02951.

England, as in most parts of Christendome beside."[94] Dowland fils finds the opportunity at multiple other points to remind the reader of who his father is. However, his father's actual contributions to the print are somewhat obscured; John Dowland may have been the one who translated Jean-Baptiste Besard's *De modo in testudine libellus* as "Necessarie Observations belonging to the Lute, and Lute-playing," but nowhere in the print is a translator named or is it even noted that this is a translation.[95] (This essay immediately precedes John Dowland's "Other Necessary Observations belonging to the Lute.") Robert Dowland's main claim in this print is that he has collected important lute music and useful writings on playing the lute; his editorial, let alone authorial, role is hardly prominent. *Varietie of Lute-Lessons* is designed to be a promotional tool for Robert Dowland, even if his various means of promotion are not always clear.

The work that *Varietie of Lute-Lessons* does for John Dowland is more direct. On the one hand, he is able to use his own fame to boost his son's career. On the other hand, he is able to show his breadth of learning and musical expertise in a way that is directly self-promotional. In much the same way that the son draws attention to his father that came before him, Dowland makes direct mention of his own scholarly work that directly preceded the publication of *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*. This is not the first time that Dowland has alerted his readers to his learning. As Kirsten Gibson has noted, "His academic credentials and classically influenced theoretical knowledge of the art of music are repeatedly articulated in his presentation on the title pages of his publications as 'Iohn DOVLAND LUTENIST, Lute-player, and Bachelor of Musicke in both

[94] Robert Dowland, *Varietie of Lute-Lessons Viz. Fantasies, Pauins, Galliards, Almaines, Corantoes, and Volts: Selected Out of the Best Approued Authors, as Well Beyond the Seas as of Our Owne Country. by Robert Douland. VVhereunto Is Annexed Certaine Obseruations Belonging to Lute-Playing: By Iohn Baptisto Besardo of Visonti. Also a Short Treatise Thereunto Appertayning: By Iohn Douland Batcheler of Musicke* (London: Thomas Adams, 1610), [A2v].
[95] See Poulton and Spencer, "Dowland, Robert."

the Uniuersities', while his translation of the early sixteenth-century music treatise by Andreas Ornithoparcus, published in 1609, perhaps also functions to reinforce this image."[96] Dowland does not, however, alert the reader to the numerous music prints of his that had been published by this time. His comments are those of a master performer, teacher, and scholar, but they draw no attention to his prominent activity as a composer. Either because it seemed unnecessary to highlight his skill as a composer or because he made a calculated move to stress one aspect of his professional life over the others, in this print Dowland puts forth a picture of himself as an erudite educator and not simply as a lutenist.

In light of Dowland's larger professional and educational project, then, his instructions for fretting and tuning the lute can begin to make more sense. While at first glance Dowland's markedly Pythagorean tuning seems like a garbled mess that is utterly impractical on the lute, it can also be understood as an attempt to place himself in a longer music-theoretical tradition. There was not unanimity of opinion on the best lute tuning, and a variety of lute tunings existed at this time, some more practical than others. Yet in spite of the difficulties inherent in actually using Dowland's lute tuning, it is clear that he ascribed to the view that privileged pure fifths. The impracticalities of Dowland's lute tuning in his "Other Necessary Observations" can probably be explained as a master lutenist precisely attempting to write down a process he had largely done by ear, a position that is supported by the text. Dowland frequently references his translation of Ornithoparchus throughout his tuning instructions. This helps to show how Dowland's teaching and publication worked together to promote him as both a scholar and a musician, even if at times these two aspects appeared to be at cross purposes.

[96] Gibson, however, does not explore further the relationship between Dowland's intellectual self-promotion and his translation of Ornithoparchus. Gibson, "'How Hard an Enterprise It Is': Authorial Self-Fashioning in John Dowland's Printed Books," 81–82.

It is possible that Dowland had multiple motivations to advertise himself as teacher, scholar, performer, and composer, even if there was tension between some of those roles. Michael Gale, who has recently explored Dowland's work as a lute teacher and the place of teaching in his career, would seem to agree with this assessment.[97] He shows how Dowland belonged to a group of highly sought-after lutenists who used their teaching and publications as a way to further their careers. "Fitted around their other duties in household service and at court, these teaching activities served an important function in their career development: their growing status as celebrity figures carried enormous cachet for the wealthy amateur musicians who engaged them, providing these professional lutenists with another pathway to further patronage and opportunity."[98] More than most of the musicians of his day Dowland was able to use his printed works to grow his fame and publicize himself to patrons and students.[99] Dowland's "Other Necessary Observations" does as much to promote Dowland as a teacher as it does to give the beginning student practical advice. The work begins, "When we take in hand to instruct or teach a man on the Lute…"[100] Later Dowland writes, "I wish those who assume unto themselves the name of Master, (by instructing of others) to provide and find out some good and necessary rules for the tuning of the Lute, not only for their own ease, but also for the Scholars' present good, because it is most needful."[101] It is shortly after this that Dowland encourages lute teachers to use his translation of Ornithoparchus. Dowland's "Other Necessary Observations" also works to promote his son Robert by being contained within Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*, a relationship that Robert is clear to bring out in his note "To the Readers

[97] Michael Gale, "John Dowland, Celebrity Lute Teacher," *Early Music* 41, no. 2 (2013): 205–18.
[98] Gale, 206.
[99] Gale, 216.
[100] Dowland, "Other Necessary Obseruations Belonging to the Lute," D1r.
[101] Dowland, E1r.

whosoever."[102] In addition to this, John Dowland uses his "Other Necessary Observations" to promote his own skill as a teacher, both by reference to his mastery of the lute and lute instruction and by reference to his true knowledge of music as demonstrated by his translation of Ornithoparchus. Gale notes that the teaching performed by Dowland and others "provided access to patronage networks, and the evidence…reminds us that Dowland and his contemporaries evidently visited numerous households across their careers—not just those of the few noblemen deemed important enough to receive the dedication of a printed songbook."[103]

Dowland's self-fashioning and professional activities were by no means limited to his teaching and performing. Graham Freeman has recently shown how Dowland's lute songs were used to broaden his social and musical influence. He speculates on the motivations for Dowland's ventures into printed music: "Dowland must correctly have determined that lutenists, at least those of the English variety, were not yet sympathetic to the idea of 'authoring' lute music in print, despite the fact that his considerable reputation rested on his skill in this area. Through the creation and promotion of the genre of the lute song, a genre that would appeal to musicians beyond simply lutenists, Dowland found a way to access a more extensive network of communal domestic music making in his quest for self-promotion."[104] We can thus place Dowland's "Other Necessary Observations," his translation of Ornithoparchus, his printed music, his teaching, and his work as a lutenist into a multifaceted and integrated project aimed at furthering his career.

[102] Dowland, *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*, [A2v].
[103] Gale, "John Dowland, Celebrity Lute Teacher," 216.
[104] Graham Freeman, "The Transmission of Lute Music and the Culture of Aurality in Early Modern England," in *Beyond Boundaries: Rethinking Music Circulation in Early Modern England*, ed. Linda Phyllis Austern, Candace Bailey, and Amanda Eubanks Winkler (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2017), 53, n. 48.

In the end, the picture of John Dowland that emerges is one of a musician interested in employing a broad range of strategies in order to promote himself. By publishing his own lute music at a time when many other lutenists were skeptical of the benefits of distributing their compositions more widely, Dowland was able to secure a considerable degree of recognition within England and on the Continent. His "Other Necessary Observations" further emphasizes his skill as a lutenist while also bringing to the fore his erudition on the science of music, which is used to sell his translation of Ornithoparchus, all the while actively using these publications to fashion himself as an erudite scholar and musician.

Seeing Dowland's translation of Ornithoparchus as one aspect of a career that combined performing, teaching, composing, translating, and publishing moves Ornithoparchus from the center of Dowland's intellectual project to a more peripheral location where the treatise's content can still be useful but there is less pressure for it to be a complete guide to practical music of the type we find in Morley.[105] The clear resonances between Ornithoparchus's Pythagorean division of the monochord and Dowland's flawed Pythagorean lute tuning (presented only a year after his translation of Ornithoparchus) demonstrate that Dowland saw a conceptual link between the *Musice active micrologus* and his own teachings as a lutenist, even if this connection may have been somewhat hidden to those who were not lutenists. The specifics of Ornithoparchus's work and Dowland's own musical convictions show a deeper connection between the two men, tied to the theoretical minutiae of tuning systems and practical instruction. As part of a multifaceted approach to his career, Dowland was able to take a century-old treatise and fashion it into something that would both "advance the apprehension of *Musicke*," as he claimed in his note "To

[105] Entrepreneurial activity in publishing was a hallmark of many English musicians throughout this period, with Tallis and Byrd, Morley, and Playford being prominent examples. The classic study is Krummel, *English Music Printing, 1553–1700*. Also see the more recent studies Smith, *Thomas East and Music Publishing in Renaissance England*; Murray, *Thomas Morley*.

the Reader," and advance the professional life of the translator. Now that we have seen how new life could be breathed into an old treatise, we turn to two reformist treatises that emphasize just how relevant they are for the music of the present.

Chapter 4 Learning the Rudiments of Music: The Treatises of Campion and Ravenscroft

Right around the year 1614, Thomas Campion and Thomas Ravenscroft released two of the most self-consciously reformist music treatises yet published in England. In different ways and with differing amounts of success, both men called for significant changes in how music in England should be taught. Campion's *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point* is principally concerned with providing an innovative chordal approach to composition whereas Ravenscroft's *A Briefe Discourse of the True (but Neglected) Use of Charact'ring the Degrees* calls for a reform of mensural notation based on historical practice. Both treatises seem to have been written to correct deficiencies each author saw in current methods of teaching music.

When Campion's and Ravenscroft's treatises were published, they appeared during a slight downturn in music-theoretical publication in England. Following the three treatises published in the 1590s that were the subject of previous chapters (Bathe's, *The Pathway,* and Morley's), there was a nearly three-decade period in which only two new English treatises on music were published, those by Campion and Ravenscroft.[1] A couple instrumental tutors were also published during these decades.[2] It would not be until the end of the 1620s that we see another significant uptick in the publications on music, with the writings of Francis Bacon,

[1] This is not to discount Dowland's translation of Ornithoparchus but rather to claim that its theoretical content does not respond directly to early-seventeenth century English music since it was written in early-sixteenth century Germany.

[2] See Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke Wherein Is Taught, the Perfect Method, of True Fingering of the Lute, Pandora, Orpharion, and Viol De Gamba; with Most Infallible Generall Rules, Both Easie and Delightfull. Also, a Method, How You May Be Your Owne Instructer for Prick-Song, by the Help of Your Lute, without Any Other Teacher: With Lessons of All Sorts, for Your Further and Better Instruction. Newly Composed by Thomas Robinson, Lutenist* (London: Printed by Tho. Este, for Simon Waterson, dwelling at the signe of the Crowne in Paules Church-yard, 1603). Also see the discussion in the previous chapter on the contributions by Besard and John Dowland to Dowland, *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*.

Elway Bevin, and Charles Butler.[3] Among these, only Butler's treatise (the subject of Chapter 5) is a comprehensive introduction to music. What is surprising is that the relative dearth of comprehensive publications on music at the beginning of the seventeenth century was accompanied by an outpouring of new music prints.[4]

If, in their opinions, the teaching of music needed to be improved, what were the shortcomings Campion and Ravenscroft were trying to correct? To understand this question, we will need to understand the differing institutional and social settings in which practical music was taught in England during the early seventeenth century, and what the expectations of these educational regimes consisted of. In this chapter, I will explore how the publications of Campion and Ravenscroft were part of a general reform of music education in England that gained momentum at the beginning of the century. This chapter begins by examining how practical music was taught in various institutional and less formal settings. It then looks to the treatises of Campion and Ravenscroft, both of which are concerned with *musica practica* though in very different ways.

Categories of Practical Music in England

The pragmatism of seventeenth-century English music theory is often placed in contrast to its Continental counterpart, which was steeped more deeply in the tradition of *musica*

[3] Francis Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum: Or A Naturall Historie in Ten Centuries. Written by the Right Honourable Francis Lo. Verulam Viscount St. Alban. Published After the Authors Death, by William Rawley Doctor of Diuinitie, Late His Lordships Chaplaine* (London: Printed by I[ohn] H[aviland and Augustine Mathewes] for William Lee at the Turks Head in Fleet-street, next to the Miter, 1626); Elway Bevin, *A Briefe and Short Instruction of the Art of Musicke to Teach How to Make Discant, of All Proportions That Are in Vse: Very Necessary for All Such as Are Desirous to Attaine to Knowledge in the Art; and May by Practice, If They Can Sing, Soone Be Able to Compose Three, Foure, and Five Parts: And Also to Compose All Sorts of Canons That Are Usuall, by These Directions of Two Or Three Parts in One, upon the Plain-Song. by Elway Bevin London* (London: Printed by R. Young, at the signe of the Starre on Bread-street hill, 1631); Butler, *The Principles of Musik*.

[4] William Byrd's monopoly on music printing ended in 1596. The following two decades saw a significant increase in the number of music prints. Murray, *Thomas Morley*, 162–68.

theorica.[5] Certainly a number of factors contributed to this distinctive feature in English practice. Most obviously, perhaps, musical changes spurred by England's break with Rome necessitated a new approach to teaching music. It is clear that the authors of English practical treatises are not engaged with *musica theorica* to a comparable extent as the authors of Continental writings.[6] However, we must not assume all this English practicality was uniform. Thomas Christensen notes, "Even the most pragmatic components of musical instruction reveal on closer scrutiny more than they might at first appear to."[7] Pushing beyond the pragmatic label reveals a diverse constellation of practices that are sometimes closely related to music-making and are at other times completely removed from actual music. At least in seventeenth-century England, practical music appears as a capacious category.

In this chapter, I examine more closely the kinds of practicality found in the music treatises of Thomas Campion and Thomas Ravenscroft and their role in educating students at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Both of their published treatises are practical in the sense that they are concerned almost exclusively with the performance and creation of music and have little to say in terms of speculative content; in this respect, they follow the approach of their English predecessors like Bathe and Morley. But in the meaning of "sensible and realistic," these

[5] For the boldest recent presentation of this view see Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*. Also see Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie."

[6] Among English writers, Robert Fludd engaged most directly with the *musica theorica* tradition in the sections on music in his *Utriusque cosmi … metaphysica, physica atque technica historia* (1617–24). Notably, this was published in Latin in Oppenheim (and not in England). For a modern edition of the sections on music with parallel English translation see Robert Fludd, *"The Temple of Music,"* ed. Peter Hauge, Music Theory in Britain, 1500–1700. Critical Editions (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011).

[7] He follows this statement with a slight caveat. "This is not to say that we must always be on guard for ideological motivations lurking behind every pedagogical pronouncement, that practical music theory always disingenuously masks some underlying philosophical, social, or theological agenda. Clearly, at some point a music instructor must get on with the business of teaching, however socially constructed or ideologically saturated we may deem these lessons to be." Thomas Christensen, "Review of *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England* by Rebecca Herissone; *Music Theory and Natural Order from the Renaissance to the Early Twentieth Century* by Suzannah Clark and Alexander Rehding," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 57, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 183.

treatises (especially Ravenscroft's) push at the boundaries of what can truly be considered practical.[8] Each author takes a markedly different approach from his counterpart, not just by covering different aspects of music theory and composition but also by the varied stances they take on the role of the educated musician in society.

What exactly is practical music? Thomas Morley provides a good place to begin.[9] When Morley defines "practicall musicke," he is concerned with any music that could be sung or played and not just the music that is in contemporary use. Linda Phyllis Austern has called his definition "the most famous early modern English definition of music."[10] In his Annotations he writes

> Musicke is either *speculative* or *practicall*. *Speculative is that kind of musicke* which by Mathematicall helps, seeketh out the causes, properties, and natures of soundes by themselves, and compared with others proceeding no further, but content with the onlie contemplation of the Art. *Practicall* is that which teacheth al that may be knowne in songs, eyther for the understanding of other mens, or the making of ones owne.[11]

The practical music of which Morley writes is concerned with the knowledge necessary for performing and writing songs. Morley contrasts this with the speculative branch, which is concerned with the nature of sounds and the math that describes them but which has little bearing on performing music. This division is hardly original to Morley. What is somewhat surprising is that Morley directly follows the above quote by mentioning that practical music "is of three kindes: *Diatonicum, chromaticum,* and *Enharmonicum*." This is a distinction that pertains to ancient Greek music. He goes on to explain that the diatonic genus is the only one in

[8] The use of "practical" to mean "sensible and realistic" was current, if recent, in England in the early seventeenth century. The *Oxford English Dictionary* records the first usage in this sense by Francis Bacon in 1605. See Francis Bacon, *The Twoo Bookes of Francis Bacon. of the Proficience and Aduancement of Learning, Diuine and Humane to the King* (London: Printed [by Thomas Purfoot and Thomas Creede] for Henrie Tomes, and are to be sould at his shop at Graies Inne gate in Holborne, 1605), II: 65.
[9] Morley's notion of practical music was discussed at greater length above in Chapter 2.
[10] Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind*, 94.
[11] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, ¶1r–¶1v.

contemporary use; he still gives explanations of the other two ancient Greek genera that had no bearing on English practice. Of these other genera he concludes, "But in our musicke, I can give no example of it," yet for some reason he introduces them to his reader.[12] Morley's definition stands in contrast to the body of his treatise which concerns the actual practice of singing and composing songs in a roughly contemporary style. Taking his definition of music and the content of his treatise together, we see music divided into two basic parts, speculative and practical. From his historical digression that followed his definition, one could infer that practical music could also be implicitly divided in two, into what may be thought of as practice in theory and history and practice in practice. His treatise is primarily concerned with the latter.[13] This makes intuitive sense since his definition of "practical" as "that which teacheth al that may be knowne in songs, eyther for the understanding of other mens, or the making of ones owne" closely mirrors the subtitle of his treatise.[14] We can see that Morley struggles to make his treatise reflect the plain and obvious meaning of his definitions. This shows that simply classifying something as "practical" can actually tell the reader surprisingly little about the applicability of its content in practice.

The problem of defining practical music poses similar problems for modern scholars. For example, Penelope Gouk gives this definition:

> Musical science could be both practical and speculative in orientation. Practical musical science comprised the study of music as a vocal art, of melody and singing, and as a mathematical art, the metrical, mechanical and acoustical parts of music. While it might be learned simply as a basis for performance, it could also serve as an introduction to speculative music, the philosophical study of the proportion and structure of the physical and metaphysical universe. Speculative music was traditionally concerned with the

[12] Morley, ¶1v.
[13] It is important to remember that Morley did not initially plan to write the Annotations from which this definition of music comes. In his note "To the Reader," he directly states that his treatise may not "satisfie the curiositie of *Dichotomistes*…And as for the definition, division, partes, & kindes of Musicke, I have omitted them as things only serving to content the learned, and not for the instruction of the ignorant." Morley, B1v.
[14] Morley, ¶1v.

> harmony of all parts of God's creation, in the relationship between body and soul, in human society, in the elements and seasons, and in the motion of the planets.[15]

This definition greatly expands Morley's definition of practical music to cover most of what he declared speculative. For Gouk, speculative music is only concerned with philosophical and religious abstraction. The practical contains music "as a mathematical art, the metrical, mechanical and acoustical parts of music." This is very close to Morley's definition of speculative music: "*Speculative is that kind of musicke* which by Mathematicall helps, seeketh out the causes, properties, and natures of soundes by themselves."[16] Gouk allows for the empirical investigations of acoustics by Francis Bacon and later writers to be considered practical, but it is telling that in the late sixteenth century Morley could still view this mode of inquiry as distinct from the practical.

In the years surrounding Morley's treatise, a number of English publications appeared that seemed to be exemplars of practical pedagogy. Tellingly, many of these primers prefaced music prints and provided just enough information so that the amateur musician could decode the notation in the music that follows. In 1596, for example, William Barley published *A New Booke of Tabliture* which begins by giving twenty-four "rules" on playing the lute, ranging from basic information about the number of strings to an explanation of tablature to instructions on tuning. (See the title page in Figure 4.1.) Some of these instructions are extremely rudimentary. For example, in one instance he simply explains the construction of a lute: "Understand this that the Lute is ordinarily strung with sixe stringes, and although that these six stringes be double except

[15] Penelope Gouk, "Speculative and Practical Music in Seventeenth-Century England: Oxford University as a Case Study," in *Atti Del XIV Congresso Della Societa Internazionale Di Musicologia: Trasmissione e Recezione Delle Forme Di Cultura Musicale*, ed. Angelo Pompilio et al., vol. 3, Free Papers (Torino: Edizioni di Torino, 1990), 199.
[16] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, ¶1r.

the Trebble, and make eleaven in number, yet they must be understood to bee but sixe in all."[17] In general, Barley's instructions are concerned with translating tablature into the appropriate movements of the hands and fingers. These seventeen pages of instructions are then followed by twenty-four pages of tablature. Barley's instructions are truly practical and only give enough information to play the six-course lute from tablature; this is not quite the same thing as teaching "practical music."[18] Barley only gives the bare minimum of information. The lutenist wishing to play lute songs or to play as part of a consort would have to seek additional instruction in pricksong from another source.[19] Barley's title page suggests that that source should be *The Pathway to Musicke*.[20]

[17] William Barley, *A New Booke of Tabliture Containing Sundrie Easie and Familiar Instructions, Shevving Howe to Attaine to the Knowledge, to Guide and Dispose Thy Hand to Play on Sundry Instruments, as the Lute, Orpharion, and Bandora: Together With Diuers New Lessons to Each of These Instruments. Whereunto Is Added an Introduction to Prickesong, and Certaine Familliar Rules of Descant, with Other Necessarie Tables Plainely Shewing the True Vse of the Scale Or Gamut, and Also How to Set Any Lesson Higher Or Lower at Your Pleasure. Collected Together Out of the Best Authors Professing the Practise of These Instruments* (London: [By J. Danter] for William Barley and arre to be sold at his shop in Gratious street, 1596), B2r.

[18] Barley's practical instructions related to playing music test the limits of what could reasonably be called *musica practica*; learning to read from tablature closely parallels the instructions on learning to read notation that begin so many treatises on practical music. But actual instructions on sound production tend to be avoided. The most liberal interpretation of Morley's definition of practical music could be interpreted to include instruction on how to produce sound. He writes, "*Practicall* is that which teacheth al that may be knowne in songs, eyther for the understanding of other mens, or the making of ones owne." (Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, ¶1v.) This interpretation requires the "all" in the definition to do some heavy lifting. Morley does not directly include this type of instruction in his definition, but he does not exclude it either.

[19] Dowland's *First Booke of Songs or Ayres* for lute and four voices was published as a folio table book in 1597, just one year after Barley's print. While a lutenist who could only read tablature could adequately perform from this print, this is not a situation for which Barley explicitly prepares his reader. For more on Dowland's print and other tablatures see Krummel, *English Music Printing, 1553–1700*, 103–7.

[20] The format of Barley's print deserves some comment. The title page announces that this is a book of tablature for lute, orpharion, and bandora which also has an introduction to pricksong added to it. In 1970, John M. Ward showed that *The Pathway to Musicke* was the introduction to pricksong in question and was originally part of the same print. Jessie Ann Owens supplies more evidence to support the claim that the print was constructed in a "modular fashion so that a reader could purchase one of more of its four sections" and use them as standalone tutors. The connection between *The Pathway* and *A New Booke of Tabliture* has led some to attribute authorship of *The Pathway* to Barley. Ward, "Barley's Songs without Words," 14, n. 2; Owens, "You Can Tell a Book by Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" 353.

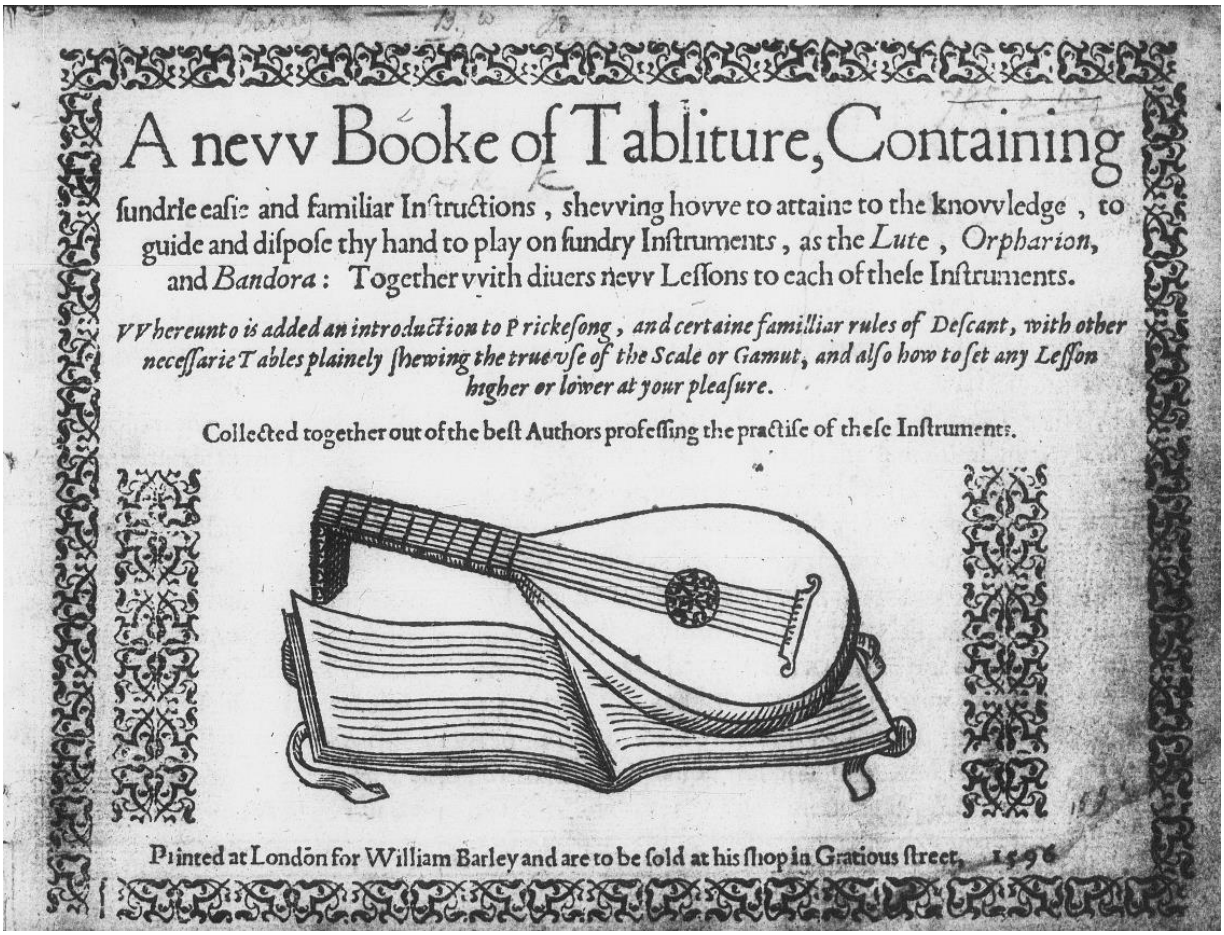

Figure 4.1 Barley, *A New Booke of Tabliture,* title page

Music Education at the Universities around the Turn of the Seventeenth Century

The publication of a number of overtly practical treatises aimed at amateurs raises the larger question of who was receiving musical instruction and how. That is, what was the state of music education in England at the turn of the seventeenth century? It certainly lacked the stability of previous eras. The dismantling of choir schools during the Reformation was not followed by the reinstitution of music education in a protestant vein. Thus, as Christensen notes,

"English music education…was in a parlous state through much of the [sixteenth] century."[21] The situation in Scotland was similarly bleak.[22] Some boys were still educated at the major cathedrals, but the number and size of these establishments did not return to their pre-Reformation glory. The Reformation did lead to a significant rise in congregational singing, but this did not require a high degree of literacy and training in either reading or music. The role and changing status of church music is a major focus of Chapter 5.

The teaching of music remained remarkably stable, however, at the universities throughout the sixteenth and into the seventeenth century. The curriculum was largely based on Boethius and included music as one of the seven liberal arts. By the early sixteenth century, students at Oxford were also required to compose a mass in order to receive a bachelor in music.[23] While the university towns were important sites of actual music-making, performing music was not strictly tied to the course of study.[24] A significant number of occupational musicians were awarded degrees in music throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (including Morley and Dowland), but the course of instruction did more to provide an intellectual and theoretical grounding in the history and nature of music than to give them practical musical training.[25]

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[21] Christensen, "Music Theory and Pedagogy," 422.
[22] See Munro, "'Sang Schwylls' and 'Music Schools': Music Education in Scotland, 1560–1650."
[23] Carpenter, *Music in the Medieval and Renaissance Universities*, 160.
[24] This began to change somewhat in the first few decades of the seventeenth century when some practical music was taught at Oxford, though the majority of practical music-making was still not directly tied to the university curriculum. Gouk, *Music, Science and Natural Magic in Seventeenth-Century England*, 47–54.
[25] As previously discussed, during this time the conferral of a degree did not necessarily require the conferee to attend a course of residential study. In the absence of biographical information, a degree alone is often not enough to establish that someone was in one of the university towns for any extended period of time. Christopher Marsh prefers the term "occupational musician" to "professional musician" because it better represents the variety of musical and nonmusical work in which musicians partook. Some musicians in this era, however, did begin to style themselves as "professionals." Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 72.

An interesting, if idiosyncratic, window into what was actually taught at the universities is provided by the music lectures John Taverner gave at the recently founded Gresham College around 1611.[26] The public-facing mission of Gresham College was notably different from what was found at the universities, instead aiming for greater practicality and pitched toward a larger segment of the public. It is important to note that these Gresham lectures likely differed to some extent from what was taught at Oxford or Cambridge, yet Taverner's lectures contain what Joseph M. Ortiz believes "may be the only extant text of a complete university music course in Renaissance England."[27] They exist in Latin and English versions, which is perhaps to be expected since Gresham professors were required to give lectures in both languages. The lectures cover the origin and history of music in the *laus musicae* tradition, but "with a philological rigor that is rarely found in such works."[28]

In general, Taverner's lectures hew closely to the humanist tradition in education. Unlike the curriculum at Oxford and Cambridge, Taverner's lectures were not directly based on Boethius, though he is frequently cited throughout. None of the mathematical parts of Boethius or other writers are discussed at any length. Indeed, when discussing Vincenzo Galilei's *Dialogo della musica antica et della moderna* (of which Taverner had direct knowledge), he makes no mention of the detailed tuning systems that occupy the majority of the treatise; instead, he focuses on the loss of ancient musical practices.[29] His emphasis on the historical and ethical aspects of music instead of the mathematical makes sense considering the larger audience to

[26] The professor John Taverner appears to have been a distant relative of the early-sixteenth musician and composer John Taverner. John Taverner, *On the Origin and Progress of the Art of Music by John Taverner*, ed. Joseph M. Ortiz (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), 3.
[27] Taverner, 1.
[28] Taverner, 27.
[29] Taverner, 62.

which Gresham lectures were aimed. It is also consistent with university training in general (even if Taverner's lectures were less focused on Boethius than was traditional).[30]

Taverner was appointed to the professorship in spite of his lack of an advanced degree in music or any known accomplishment as a performer or composer. This appeared to be rather common among Gresham professors, much to the chagrin of the eighteenth-century music historian Charles Burney. After listing around a dozen Gresham music professors from the seventeenth and early-eighteenth century, he concludes

> though all men of learning and abilities in other faculties, yet no one of them had ever distinguished himself, either in the theory or practice of Music; nor are any proofs remaining that they had ever studied that art, the *arcana* of which they were appointed to unfold! What an abuse of reason and munificence does it seem, that those who have never meditated on the art, or been taught, themselves, should be fixed upon to teach, and direct the studies of others![31]

While the educational mission of Gresham College may not have aligned with Burney's ideal, it does draw out the fact that the college's mission was not the training of practical musicians.[32] What Burney misses is how innovative these lectures could be. In the case of Taverner, the lectures are based primarily on classical sources (as was traditional), but they also discuss performance practices from the past. Ortiz argues, "In this respect, Taverner's treatise constitutes

[30] Ortiz notes, "To a large degree, Taverner's philological approach to music represents an attempt to replicate the kind of training he had received as a student at Cambridge. In this respect, his lectures would likely have seemed very traditional. And the material in them would have been familiar even to audience members who may not have attended university but had read musical treatises." While the traditional form of the lectures is self-evident, it is less clear who the audience members "who may not have attended university but had read musical treatises" might be. Access to many of the music treatises that Taverner draws from would have been extremely limited in London at that time. Taverner, 21.

[31] Burney, *A General History of Music*, II: 94. John Hawkins is slightly more reserved in his judgment, writing "it does not appear from the doctor's account of him [in Dr. John Ward's *The Lives of the Professors of Gresham College*] that he had any better claim to the office of music professor than a testimonial from the university of Oxford, where he had studied." Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 355.

[32] Burney seems to ignore the fact that in the Oxbridge system each university was made up of different colleges with their own faculties and traditions of teaching music that could lead to a variety of approaches to music education. Though not affiliated with either Oxford or Cambridge, the curriculum at Gresham College shows an example of an educational approach that varied from what could have been taught at any one of the colleges in the universities.

a unique link between the humanist *laus musicae* tradition and the growing demand for utilitarian, or 'practical,' music instruction."[33] Even given the logistical constraints on teaching practical music in a public lecture, Taverner's approach still clings reasonably closely to the humanist tradition, in spite of its more innovative overtures toward practical music instruction.[34] It is also reasonable to assume that the attendees of these lectures would expect a learned discourse on music and not a choir rehearsal. For practical training, the attendee would need to go elsewhere.

Learning Music at Home

If the choir schools attached to the major religious institutions trained only a few musicians and the universities offered little in the way of practical instruction in music, how did prospective students learn the basics of music? This was primarily done via individual lessons, both formal and informal, at home. The students in question were overwhelmingly the children of the gentry and the growing merchant class who were taught by private tutors. This was at a time of growing commercial music-making that had an avid upper-class audience. Music lessons gave the students the skills to be able to reproduce at home some of the music they heard in public.[35] The ephemeral nature of these transactions and the significant passage of time have severely limited the amount of direct knowledge we have of how music lessons were given. The

[33] Taverner, *On the Origin and Progress*, 1. The anonymous *The Praise of Musicke* (1586) fits firmly in the *laus musicae* tradition and has been called "the first apologetic treatise on music in English." Hyun-Ah Kim has recently argued that John Bull is its author, which would mean that a second Gresham professor also wrote a similar defense of music. Kim, *The Praise of Musicke, 1586*, 3, 35–49. This attribution has not been universally accepted. For example, Austern views its authorship as still unresolved. Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind*, 7.
[34] Ortiz notes, "In the treatise, Taverner takes a historical, humanist approach to music education, eschewing both mathematical approaches and instruction in musical composition or performance." Taverner, *On the Origin and Progress*, 1.
[35] Marsh covers the emerging commercial opportunities available to musicians in detail. Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 107–72; see 198–214 for more on domestic music lessons.

bulk of music making was undertaken recreationally by people who could not read music and had received no formal musical training. Direct evidence of formal training is regularly spotty at best, often preserved in manuscript music books or household financial ledgers; evidence of informal musical activities is preserved to an even lesser extent.[36] The publication of instrumental tutors and singing manuals beginning at the end of the sixteenth century indicates that there was a market for books of musical instruction, but it gives little evidence as to how these books were actually used.

The surviving materials disproportionately represent the activities of the gentry, who indeed were the primary audience for the printed music treatises that form the core focus of this study. The late sixteenth century saw a vogue for part-song singing, meaning that there was a growing market for these songs along with instructional tutors on how to read music.[37] Many of these treatises and collections of music included at least some focus on instrumental music, whether this was a viol tutor or a song collection that included a lute accompaniment. But who owned the instruments necessary to use these prints? Christopher M. Marsh says, "we can claim with confidence that, from the reign of Elizabeth onwards, a substantial and increasing proportion of the gentry lived within easy reach of a selection of instruments."[38] But this alone is unlikely to have created sufficient demand for the instrumental music that was printed. However, during this same time, records attest to instrument ownership among merchants and even

[36] Marsh notes, "It is notoriously difficult to establish the extent of such informal creativity, and previous scholars have reached divergent conclusions." Marsh, 173.
[37] Popular part-songs in England (especially those by Morley) are discussed in Long, *Hearing Homophony*, 33–42, 158.
[38] Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 179.

yeomen.[39] The increased presence of instruments among a broader swath of society created enough demand to support the burgeoning market for instrumental prints.

There was more than just a love of music behind this growth in domestic music instruction. As Robert Burton noted in 1621, playing instruments was an important skill for young gentlewomen. Instrumental training was "the next way their parents thinke to get them husbands."[40] While the musical training of girls and young women might have had outsized importance to their ability to marry a suitable husband, domestic music was by no means limited to members of only one gender.[41] And yet making domestic music is the primary (and virtually only) sphere in which women were actively encouraged to engage with music. These norms were established well enough by Shakespeare's day that in *The Taming of the Shrew* he could set a woman's refusal to participate in her lute lesson as a comedic event that challenges the prevailing ideas about female domesticity and the importance of music-making.[42]

The music lesson was a site of contact that mixed a number of elements of society in a setting that could sometimes appear scandalous and which gave rise to frequent polemics against music and musicians more generally.[43] By and large, music teachers were closer to (and often

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[39] Marsh, 181.

[40] Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy What It Is. With All the Kindes, Causes, Symptomes, Prognostickes, and Seuerall Cures of It. In Three Maine Partitions with Their Seuerall Sections, Members, and Subsections. Philosophically, Medicinally, Historically, Opened and Cut vp. By Democritus Iunior. With a Satyricall Preface, Conducing to the Following Discourse.* (Oxford, Printed by John Lichfield and James Short, for Henry Cripps, 1621), 586. Also quoted in Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 176–77. Burton does not approve of this type of childrearing. He disapprovingly calls it "A thing neverthelesse frequently used, and part of a Gentlewomans bringing up, to sing, and dance, and play on the Lute, or some such instrument, before she can say her *Pater noster*, or ten Commandements." Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 586.

[41] For a good overview of domestic music in the broader European context in the sixteenth century see Van Orden, "Domestic Music." The music manuscripts left behind by wealthy women are some of the few pieces of direct evidence for how music was taught during this time. See Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 203–5; David C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 195–204.

[42] This and other instances of music lessons in Shakespeare's plays are discussed at length in Ortiz, *Broken Harmony*, 77–141.

[43] For more on polemics against music, see the discussion in Chapter 5.

quite literally were) servants and were not independent creative artists. Christopher Marsh summarizes the situation:

> All in all, a music lesson was a complicated encounter: social superiors placed visiting inferiors in a position of artistic authority over them, then reasserted their own social superiority by preserving their technical inferiority. The situation was further complicated by the fact that, on many occasions, the socially superior pupil was a girl or young woman, and thus—according to two further hierarchies—inferior to her teacher. Music tutors had to choose their words carefully when addressing their charges, striking an appropriate balance between authority and deference.[44]

With increasing middle-class access to music teachers and printed tutors throughout the late-sixteenth century and into the mid-seventeenth century, some of the class divisions between pupil and teacher had begun to diminish, but the tensions remained similar throughout this period. The contrast between the realities of the fraught dynamics of teaching a student and the idealized world presented in music treatises is stark. The lessons in *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* are marked by professorial authority; if anyone needs to show deference, it is the student. Part of this is due to the generic expectation that printed books will be written by some expert and carry some authority, but it is easy to read Morley's idealized lessons as arguing for a great deal of respect (and respectability) for the master. (It is also important to remember that by this point Morley had been made a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal and was no simple music teacher.) Most other treatises avoid the dynamics of the actual lesson and aim instead to prove their own usefulness either for the teacher or student. For example, Thomas Ravenscroft feels free to critique the "strange *imbecillity of our Professors*" and to castigate "those common kinde *Practitioners*" of music who "have (fairely) brought it downe from a chiefe *Liberall Science*, to the basest almost of *Mechanick Functions*."[45] He stresses the

[44] Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 199.
[45] Thomas Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse of the True (but Neglected) Use of Charact'ring the Degrees, by Their Perfection, Imperfection, and Diminution in Measurable Musicke, Against the Common Practise and Custome of These Times Examples Whereof Are Exprest in the Harmony of 4. Voyces, Concerning the Pleasure of 5. Vsuall*

superiority of his own method and the failures of contemporary instruction without directly implicating the student in any of it.

There was a gulf between what was taught in actual music lessons and the pedagogical claims of published music treatises. This raises the question of how these treatises were actually used by students and teachers. The treatises themselves provide suggestions as to their intended audiences, but these tell us more about advertising than actual use. In some cases, the treatises only obliquely reference their intended market. For example, in the preface to *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point* Thomas Campion intersperses references to two possible audiences for his treatise in the middle of a discussion of the gamut. He writes:

> In like manner there can be no greater hinderance to him that desires to become a Musition, then the want of the true understanding of the Scale, which proceeds from the errour of the common Teacher, who can doe nothing without the olde *Gam-ut*, in which there is but one Cliffe, and one Note, and yet in the same Cliffe he wil sing *re* & *sol*. It is most true that the first invention of the *gam-ut* was a good invention, but then the distance of Musicke was cancelled within the number of twenty Notes, so were the sixe notes properly invented to helpe youth in vowelling, but the liberty of the latter age hath given Musicke more space both above and below, altering thereby the former naming of the Notes: the curious observing whereof hath bred much unnecessary difficultie to the learner, for the Scale may be more easily and plainely exprest by foure Notes, then by sixe, which is done by leaving out *Ut* and *Re*.[46]

This quote is densely packed with all sorts of information that positions this treatise into a historical and pedagogical tradition. Campion's overall claim is that the gamut was useful when there were only twenty notes (respecting the more limited range of vocal music), but contemporary practice now uses a significantly greater range. This has made the traditional

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Recreations. 1 Hunting, 2 Hawking, 3 Dauncing, 4 Drinking, 5 Enamouring. (London: Printed by Edw: Allde for Tho. Adms, 1614), A1v. "Professors" in this case refers to music teachers in general and not university instructors.

[46] Thomas Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point by a Most Familiar, and Infallible Rule. Secondly, a Necessary Discourse of Keyes, and Their Proper Closes. Thirdly, the Allowed Passages of All Concords Perfect, Or Imperfect Are Declared. Also by Way of Preface, the Nature of the Scale Is Expressed, with a Briefe Method Teaching to Sing.* (London: Printed by T. S. for Iohn Browne, and are to be sold at his shop in Saint Dunstanes Church-yard, in Fleetstreet, 1614), B3v–B4r.

hexachordal system of solfege ("vowelling") unduly complicated for students. Christopher R. Wilson reads this as "a barely disguised rebuttal" of Morley's system of solmization based on an older Continental practice.[47] Instead, Campion suggests using a four-syllable solmization system.[48] But who is this explanation for? It is certainly not for the "common Teacher" who is bound by tradition, but it is not pitched directly to the student either. Campion tries to have it both ways. He ends his preface by stating, "This is an easie way for him that would eyther with ayde of a teacher, or by his owne industrie learne to sing."[49]

Campion's is a treatise on writing counterpoint, so it is only logical to assume that it is written for the student wanting to learn how to write counterpoint.[50] Campion even allows for this possibility, but he also suggests that his ideas could be absorbed by a teacher and then communicated to a student. The important point here is that even for a treatise that appears to be aimed at the musical beginner the relationships between the treatise, the student, and a possible teacher are under-prescribed.[51] We cannot assume that "practical" treatises aimed at amateurs were meant only for self-instruction; they could also have been used as aids to help teachers. This ambiguity, alongside the relative lack of direct evidence of how music lessons were taught, makes it difficult to directly map the concepts found in theory treatises onto what was learned by actual music students.

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[47] Thomas Campion and John Coprario, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counterpoint by Thomas Campion and Rules How to Compose by Giovanni Coprario*, ed. Christopher R. Wilson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2003), 17.
[48] William Bathe's earlier development of a similar four-syllable solmization system was discussed at length in Chapter 1. For more discussion of English solmization systems see Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," 216–30.
[49] Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts*, B5v.
[50] Though Campion's method of counterpoint "by a most familiar and easie rule" does not teach *contrapunctus* as it was understood on the Continent.
[51] As Wilson notes, "Whilst the historical significance or place of Campion's treatise can be adjudged, its practical or pedagogical purpose is harder to define." Campion and Coprario, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts and Rules How to Compose*, 3.

The context given in the preceding section points to a network of ideas and discussions about music learning, teaching, and theorizing in England at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The remainder of this chapter examines the music treatises of Campion and Ravenscroft and their reception histories. These treatises display contrasting attempts at bridging the gap between music theory and practical music, one marked by success and continuing influence and the other by failure and being largely forgotten.

Campion and the Evolution of Music Education

Thomas Campion (1567–1620) came from a relatively affluent family. Christopher Wilson notes, "Campion's family background, typical of many 'new' Elizabethan gentlemen, enabled him to pursue what might seem a dilettante existence." Campion was a composer, poet, and physician, but "he did not earn his living, like Dowland, Rosseter or Jones, as a professional musician, nor like Nashe, Greene or Drayton as a professional poet."[52] He was at Cambridge in the 1580s, although he was never awarded a degree. This was followed by a time at Gray's Inn where he participated in plays and masques. (During the reign of James I, Campion would produce materials for royal entertainments for the court.) A full decade before he published his music treatise, Campion released his *Observations in the Art of English Poesie* (1602), having already published a number of poems starting in the 1590s. The late-seventeenth century antiquarian Anthony Wood declared him "an admired Poet and Musician."[53] Around the turn of

[52] The biographical information in this paragraph is mainly drawn from Christopher R. Wilson, "Campion [Campian], Thomas," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.04693. See also Christopher R. Wilson, *Words and Notes Coupled Lovingly Together: Thomas Campion, a Critical Study* (New York: Garland Pub., 1989).
[53] Anthony à Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses an Exact History of All the Writers and Bishops Who Have Had Their Education in the Most Ancient and Famous University of Oxford, from the Fifteenth Year of King Henry the Seventh, Dom. 1500, to the End of the Year 1690 Representing the Birth, Fortune, Preferment, and Death of All Those Authors and Prelates, the Great Accidents of Their Lives, and the Fate and Character of Their Writings: To*

the century, Campion published the first of his eventual five books of lute songs beginning with *A Booke of Ayres* (1601). The innovative approach to his airs has often been unjustly overlooked, as David Lindley notes, thus "Campion is too often seen simply as a composer of light and tuneful airs."[54] In 1605 Campion found the time to gain his medical degree from the University of Caen. Around 1614 Campion published *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point*.[55] Campion's biography makes it abundantly clear that he was not simply a musician who composed songs and wrote a short treatise as an aid to beginning students. His treatise on poetry and his treatise on music show real ambition and a desire for novel reform, a novelty that Campion takes pains to advertise.

Thomas Campion's treatise on composition is mainly remembered because John Playford chose to incorporate it into many editions of his wildly popular *Introduction to the Skill of Music* that were produced throughout the second half of the seventeenth century.[56] Throughout its many editions, Playford swapped sections in and out. Tracking some of these changes, John Hawkins notes that the book is divided into three main parts, and that in the edition "of 1660, the third part

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Which Are Added, the Fasti, Or, Annals, of the Said University, for the Same Time (London: Printed for Tho. Bennet at the Half-Moon in S. Pauls Churchyard, 1691), I: 848.

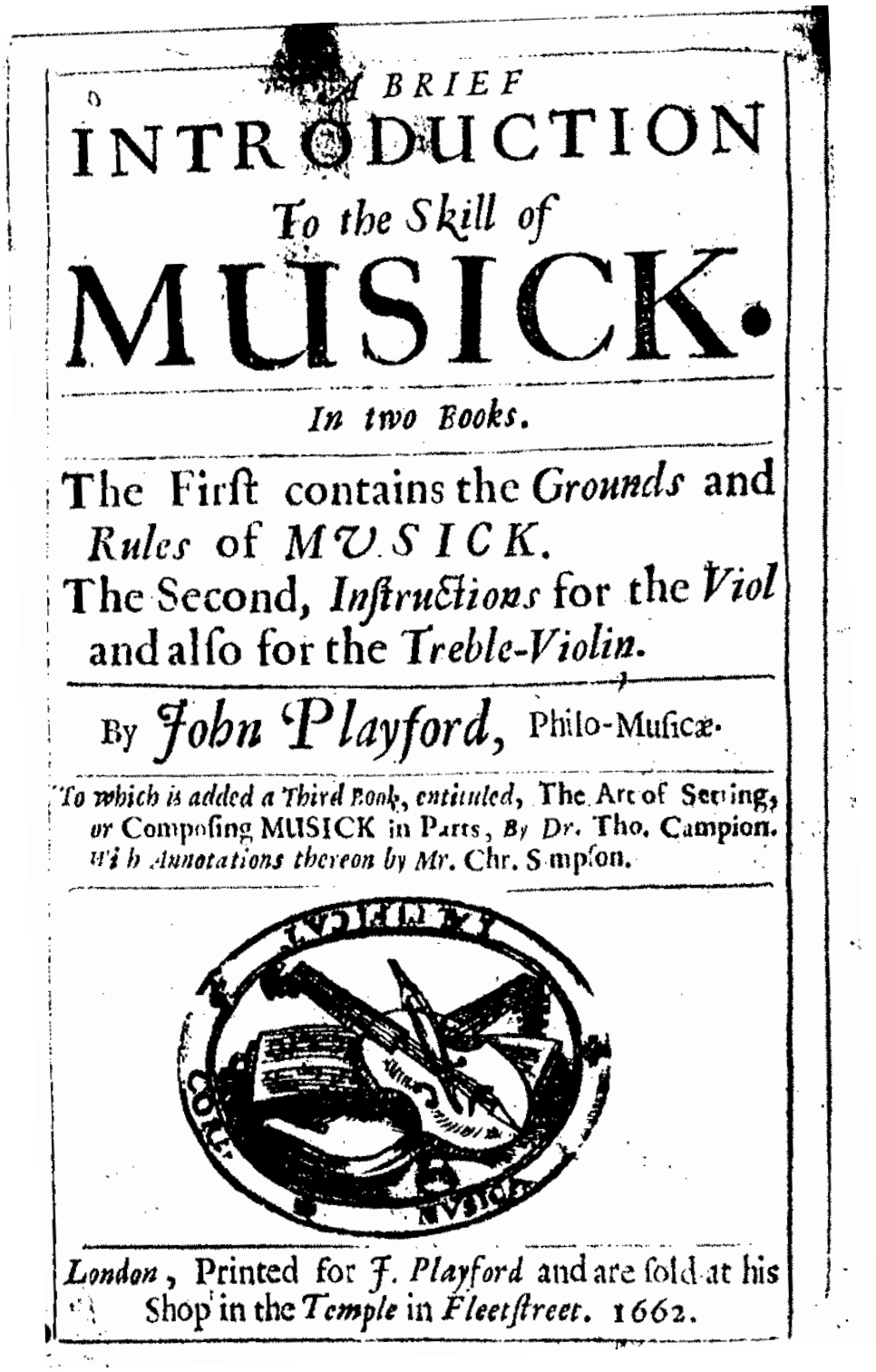
[54] David Lindley, *Thomas Campion* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986), 82. Lindley goes to some lengths to argue for the expressivity and craftsmanship in Campion's compositions, compositions that might on the surface appear rather bland and forgettable. His aim is "to recover Campion's music from the condescension of those who have written him off as a composer of merely agreeable tunes" (111).

[55] The published treatise is undated, but Christopher R. Wilson has shown that 1614 is its most likely date of publication. Campion and Coprario, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts and Rules How to Compose*, 4–7. Rebecca Herissone has also come to this same conclusion, but others have proposed dates as early as 1612. Barry Cooper claims that it was published shortly before 1616. Campion and Coprario, 4–7; Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 232; Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie," 162.

[56] Charles Burney, in his *A General History of Music*, introduces us to the printer John Playford. Burney states, "In 1655, Playford published the first edition of his "Introduction to the Skill of Music," a compendium compiled from Morley, Butler, and other more bulky and abstruse books, which had so rapid a sale, that, in 1683, ten editions of it had been circulated through the kingdom. The book, indeed, contained no late discoveries, or new doctrines, either in the theory or practice of the art; yet the form, price, and style, were so suited to every kind of musical readers, that it seems to have been more generally purchased and read, than any elementary musical tract that ever appeared in this or any other country." Burney, *A General History of Music*, II: 329–330. This quote from Burney could be a paraphrase of Hawkins. See Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 733.

consisted solely of Dr. Campion's tract entitled 'The art of Descant, or composing music in parts, with the annotations of Christopher Simpson;' but in that of 1683 Campion's tract is rejected and instead thereof we have 'A brief Introduction to the art of Descant, or composing music in parts,' without the name of the author, and probably written by Playford himself."[57] Charles Burney gives similarly little time to Campion.[58] Both he and Hawkins were acquainted with his work in music theory and poetry.[59] That is to say, by the end of the eighteenth century, Thomas Campion's work in music theory had become a mere footnote in the larger story of John Playford's dominance in the English music industry. Even during the Restoration, Playford treated Campion's treatise as a modular unit in a larger print that could be included or omitted at will.[60] (For example, the title page of Playford's 1662 edition shown in Figure 4.2 shows how Playford took the entirety of Campion's treatise and made it the third book of his own treatise.)

[57] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 735.
[58] Burney agrees with the assessment of Playford given by John Hawkins in his *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*; although, as is characteristic of his work, Hawkins goes into much greater detail about Playford's print.
[59] See for example Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 479; Burney, *A General History of Music*, II: 118.
[60] Campion's work could also appear with commentary, as in the editions of Playford's *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick* which had annotations by Christopher Simpson. Christopher R. Wilson has dismissed these annotations, writing, "They are intended as commentary and sometimes clarification, although, given the lack of explanations in the original, they do not help much." Campion and Coprario, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts and Rules How to Compose*, 12–13.



A BRIEF
INTRODUCTION
To the Skill of
MUSICK.

In two Books.

The First contains the *Grounds* and *Rules* of *MUSICK*.
The Second, *Instructions* for the *Viol* and also for the *Treble-Violin*.

By *John Playford*, Philo-Muſicæ.

To which is added a Third Book, entituled, The Art of Setting, or Compoſing MUSICK in Parts, By Dr. Tho. Campion. With Annotations thereon by Mr. Chr. Simpſon.

London, Printed for *J. Playford* and are ſold at his Shop in the *Temple* in *Fleetſtreet*. 1662.

Figure 4.2 Playford, *A Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, title page

Though Thomas Campion's legacy as a writer on music is largely due to his inclusion in a number of editions of Playford's popular *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, these editions did not begin to appear until fifty years after the publication of Campion's *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point*.[61] These later editions appeared in an England transformed by the Civil War, the Protectorate, and the Restoration. The musical institutions and way of life changed to a remarkable degree during this period of constant political, religious, and social upheaval.[62] All of this leads to the unsurprising conclusion that when Playford reintroduced Campion's treatise into the market, it was into a world that was very different from the one in which Campion wrote his treatise. While we learn something about Playford and music education at the end of the seventeenth century through his publishing choices, this tells us little about Campion, his influences, and his musical world.

Campion's treatise bears a striking resemblance to John Coprario's manuscript treatise *Rules How to Compose*.[63] The uncertain dating of Coprario's treatise makes it difficult to tell which man drew from the other. Campion and Coprario traveled in similar circles and likely knew each other. Coprario's treatise was complete by 1617 but possibly as early as 1610. Wilson notes the "significant internal similarities and other parallels between Coprario's *Rules* and Campion's *New Way*, which, given the circumstances of their collaboration in other musical events [namely court masques], seem unlikely to be accidental." But neither Campion nor Coprario cites the other. Wilson concludes, "Campion's omission [of an acknowledgment of debt to Coprario] may or may not be significant as regards dating, but the interdependence is

[61] See Campion and Coprario, 12–14.
[62] For more on Playford's audience, see Stephanie Carter, "'Yong Beginners, Who Live in the Countrey': John Playford and the Printed Music Market in Seventeenth-Century England," *Early Music History* 35 (2016): 95–129.
[63] The manuscript is Huntington Library EL 6863.

unequivocal."[64] Because Campion's treatise was published and more widely circulated, the innovations associated with these treatises have largely come to be associated with Campion regardless of whether he was their actual creator.

Campion's desire for novelty is clear in *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point* which plainly paints itself as innovative. This is not a "brief introduction," a "pathway," or a "plain and easy introduction" to music, but something entirely new. Table 4.1 gives an outline of the treatise's contents. In the dedication, Campion gives the justification for his project by comparing and contrasting himself to the ancient Greek physician Galen. He writes

> But why should I, being by profession a Physition, offer a worke of Musicke to his Highnesse? *Galene* either first, or next the first of Physitions, became so expert a Musition, that he could not containe himselfe, but needes he must apply all the proportions of Musicke to the uncertaine motions of the pulse. Such far-fetcht Doctrine dare not I attempt, contenting my selfe onely with a poore, and easie invention; yet new and certaine; by which the skill of Musicke shall be redeemed from much darknesse, wherein envious antiquitie or purpose did involve it.[65]

Campion not only stresses the newness of his enterprise, but he also hints that his method of composition represents a better and more rational mode of inquiry. He presents a certain and almost scientific approach to composition that he contrasts to the uncertainty and darkness of former times.[66]

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[64] Campion and Coprario, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts and Rules How to Compose*, 8–9. See also Joel Lester, "Root-Position and Inverted Triads in Theory around 1600," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 27, no. 1 (1974): 112.

[65] Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts*, B2r–B2v.

[66] If this is a nod to the empirical philosophy of Francis Bacon it is an indirect one, but it does suggest a more inductive and rational approach to composition that is resonant with the emerging scientific thinking of the day. For Bacon's ideas on music see the second and third centuries in Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum*. This experimental approach to music would become much more important in the second half of the seventeenth century. Rebecca Herissone notes, "Nevertheless, Bacon's ideas were slow to gain popularity, and the next theoretical work of this sort to appear in England—William Viscount Brouncker's translation of Descarte's *Compendium musicae* from 1618—was only published in 1653." Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 3. For a full investigation of the rise of experimental studies of music, see Benjamin Wardhaugh, *Music, Experiment and Mathematics in England, 1653–1705* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2008).

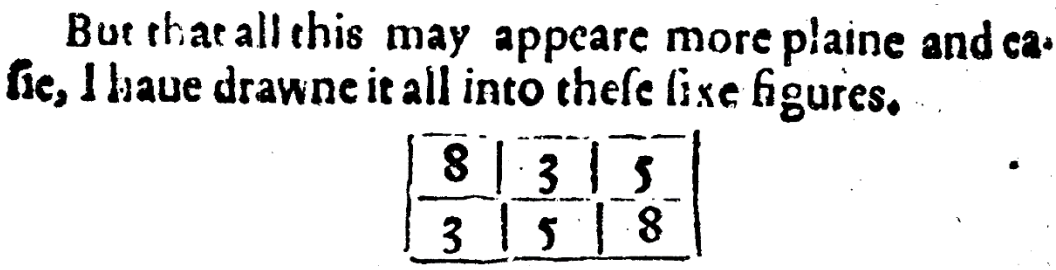
Dedication to Prince Charles The Preface Of Counterpoint [Bass Motions] [Harmonizing Above the Bass] [Use of the Sixth] [Bass Closes] A Short Hymne, Composed After This Forme of Counterpoint Of the Tones of Musicke Of the Taking of All Concords Perfect and Imperfect

Table 4.1 Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point*, contents

The chapter "Of Counterpoint" lays out Campion's new way of writing counterpoint. He begins by discussing the various intervals by which the bass can move. He then shows how the intervals of the third, fifth, and octave (along with their octave compounds) can be stacked above the bass. He provides a table of numbers that summarizes his new way of making counterpoint. It is shown in Figure 4.3.[67] In essence it shows voice-leading for the parts above the bass and works for when the bass rises a second, third, or fourth and when the bass descends a second, third, or fourth. When the bass rises, the table is read from bottom to top. When the bass falls, it is read from top to bottom. Campion gives an example of this for when the bass rises a second. It is shown in Figure 4.4. In this example, the bass rises a second, and the voice that is a third above the bass (the tenor) moves to the octave; the voice a fifth above the bass (the mean) moves to a third; and the voice that is an octave above the bass (the treble) moves to a fifth. This simple and mechanical procedure is the core of his method of counterpoint. After this he discusses the few places where a sixth above the bass is acceptable and how to harmonize them. Wilson notes,

[67] His comment that his table makes things "more plaine and easie" seems to be an obvious jab at Morley.

"So in fact, Campion's treatise is not a new way of making counterpoint in Renaissance fashion but, more significantly, is a very early modern harmony tutor."[68]


But that all this may appeare more plaine and ea-
ſie, I haue drawne it all into theſe ſixe figures.

8	3	5
3	5	8

Figure 4.3 Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point*, B7v

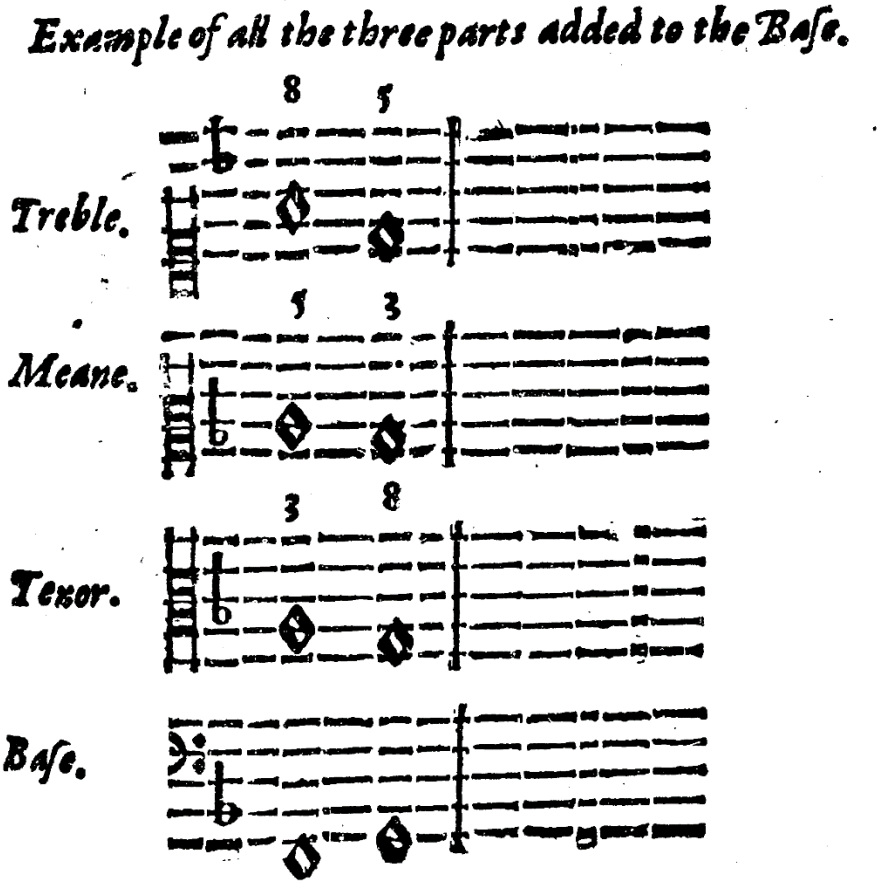


Figure 4.4 Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point*, B8r

[68] Campion and Coprario, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts and Rules How to Compose*, 22.

Perhaps because of Campion's self-promotion, modern commentators have been quick to highlight all that is innovative in this slim treatise. Barry Cooper claims that the treatise as a whole is "full of new ideas" while drawing special attention to the way Campion approaches the chord of the sixth.[69] Describing a situation in which a sixth above the bass should be used instead of the expected fifth, Campion writes, "such Bases are not true Bases…the true Base is a third lower."[70] Joel Lester, picking up on the seeming novelty of this comment, states, "From this remark, it has been inferred that Campion recognized the first-inversion triad as a harmony derived from the fundamental root-position form."[71] Wilson carries this train of thought to its logical conclusion, commenting on the same passage from Campion: "This is an extraordinary statement for its time and breaks new ground because it relates the chord of the sixth to the fundamental bass, though this is not fully explained in the treatise. Indeed, it was a further century before Rameau provided the harmonic reasons in his *Traité de l'harmonie* (Paris, 1722)."[72] While the newness of Campion's treatise is primarily due to its emphasis on composing in four parts vertically, a significant amount of modern attention has been paid to his nascent notion of the *son fondamental*.[73] The difficulty with Campion's position, which Wilson alludes to, is that he does not go into any great detail about how he may have come to this conclusion. Viewing Campion as a voice crying out in the wilderness preparing the way for

[69] Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie," 163.
[70] Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts*, C4v–5r.
[71] Lester, "Root-Position and Inverted Triads in Theory around 1600," 112.
[72] Campion and Coprario, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts and Rules How to Compose*, 25. Lester sees this passage as one of a number that appear in the seventeenth century and "bridge the gap between the theories of Zarlino and Rameau with respect to the recognition of the relationship between root-position and inverted triads." Lester, "Root-Position and Inverted Triads in Theory around 1600," 112. Carl Dahlhaus does not share this view, writing that this innovation surrounding chordal inversion "is of little or at least secondary importance—only through Rameau did it force its way into the general consciousness." Carl Dahlhaus, *Studies on the Origin of Harmonic Tonality*, trans. Robert O. Gjerdingen (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 23.
[73] As Rebecca Herissone points out, Campion's references to triadic inversion were novel, but his rules of counterpoint were actually quite conservative and derived from Calvisius who in turn had derived his rules from Zarlino. Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 142.

Rameau potentially obscures the reform that Campion had in mind for early-seventeenth century English music.[74] Campion was advocating for a practical approach to composing vertically; he was not attempting to theorize the *son fondamental*.

If modern readers may be intrigued by Campion's apparent discovery of the *son fondamental* a century before Rameau, what would have excited Campion's contemporaries? The newness advertised on the title page alludes to Campion's vertical method of part writing that stands in marked contrast to the linear and contrapuntal model that had been advocated (or at least assumed to take place) throughout the Renaissance. Wilson asserts, "The bass-treble orientation of his ayres and their simple triadic harmony are the fundamental principles behind the thinking in *A New Way of Making … Counterpoint*."[75] Not only is simple triadic harmony central to Campion's thinking it is the focus of the vast majority of his slim treatise. Aside from a brief explanation of the scale in the preface and his discussion of "Key or Moode, or Tone" in the chapter "Of the Tones of Musicke," the treatise is remarkably focused on Campion's compositional innovation. But just how new was this new way of making counterpoint?

Campion was the first English theorist to advocate composing from the bass instead of the tenor in a printed treatise, but the idea was not entirely new by the beginning of the seventeenth century. Indeed, there were moves towards this in the early sixteenth century, what Benito Rivera has called "the emancipation of the bass."[76] In 1517 Ornithoparchus calculated intervals from the tenor but also the bass, sowing "the seeds of this departure" from the tenor-

[74] For a discussion of Campion's innovations that places him into the broader context of European counterpoint teaching see Peter Schubert, "Counterpoint Pedagogy in the Renaissance," in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 527.
[75] Campion and Coprario, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts and Rules How to Compose*, 1–2.
[76] Rivera, "Harmonic Theory in Musical Treatises of the Late Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries," 84.

oriented compositional practice.[77] (It should be remembered that John Dowland published his translation of Ornithoparchus's treatise in England in 1609 and that Campion and Dowland knew each other.)[78] Rebecca Herissone finds the earliest English "suggestion of a shift away from the tenor towards the bass" in Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction* where he makes a few referencing to building chords from the bass.[79] Campion's method is certainly new and advocates for composing from the bass with a directness that was not seen before, but it is hardly unprecedented; since the middle of the sixteenth century, Continental theorists had asserted the importance of the bass in this regard, and for the two decades prior to Campion's treatise so had English writers, if somewhat obliquely.[80]

Campion highlights what he sees as his novel contributions. Following the dedication, Campion begins his treatise with a preface on the scale. By itself this follows a common practice of music treatises and is a standard opening gambit.[81] What is new is the reformer's zeal with which he approaches his topic. He begins

> There is nothing doth trouble, and disgrace our Traditionall Musition more, then the ambiguity of the termes of Musicke, if he cannot rightly distinguish them, for they make him uncapable of any rationall discourse in the art hee professeth: As if wee say a lesser Third consists of a Tone, and a Semi-tone; here by a Tone is ment a perfect Second, or as they name it a whole note: But if wee aske in what Tone is this or that song made, then by Tone we intend the key which guides and ends the song.[82]

Immediately following this is a discussion of the many meanings of the word "Note." Campion's diatribe against what are essentially homonyms seems a bit misguided; the meanings of "Tone"

[77] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 122.
[78] In 1595 Campion published a poem celebrating Dowland. In 1597 he also supplied an epigram to Dowland's *First Booke of Songes or Ayres*. See Poulton, *John Dowland*, 46, 220.
[79] Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 122.
[80] For the history of the changing usage of the bass see Thomas Christensen, "Fundamentum, Fundamental, Basse Fondamentale," in *Handwörterbuch Der Musikalischen Terminologie*, trans. Markus Bandur (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2004).
[81] See Campion and Coprario, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts and Rules How to Compose*, 16–21.
[82] Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts*, B3r.

and "Note" in the examples he gives are often reasonably clear based on their context.[83] But he does point to the very real issue of terminological confusion that seems to have confounded English theorists and modern commentators alike.[84] In response to this problem, Campion tells the reader, "In my discourse of Musicke, I have therefore strived to be plaine in my tearmes, without nice and unprofitable distinctions, as that is of *tonus maior*, and *tonus minor*, and such like, whereof there can be made no use."[85] Campion then begins his discussion of "the nature of the scale," during which he dismisses the older system of hexachordal solfege and proposes a four-syllable solmization system that is deeply indebted to William Bathe; this system, as we have seen, would become common in English theory throughout the seventeenth century. There are some quirks in Campion's explanation, but the general outline is clear and appears to anticipate later English thinking on the scale. Wilson concludes that "Campion's theory is evolutionary, not revolutionary…Campion produces new theory, ahead of its time and unfortunately not fully comprehended either by its author or by the contemporary readership."[86] Campion does propose a new (or at least revised) method for learning the scale, but this is not the main goal of his treatise or even the heart of his project of innovation.

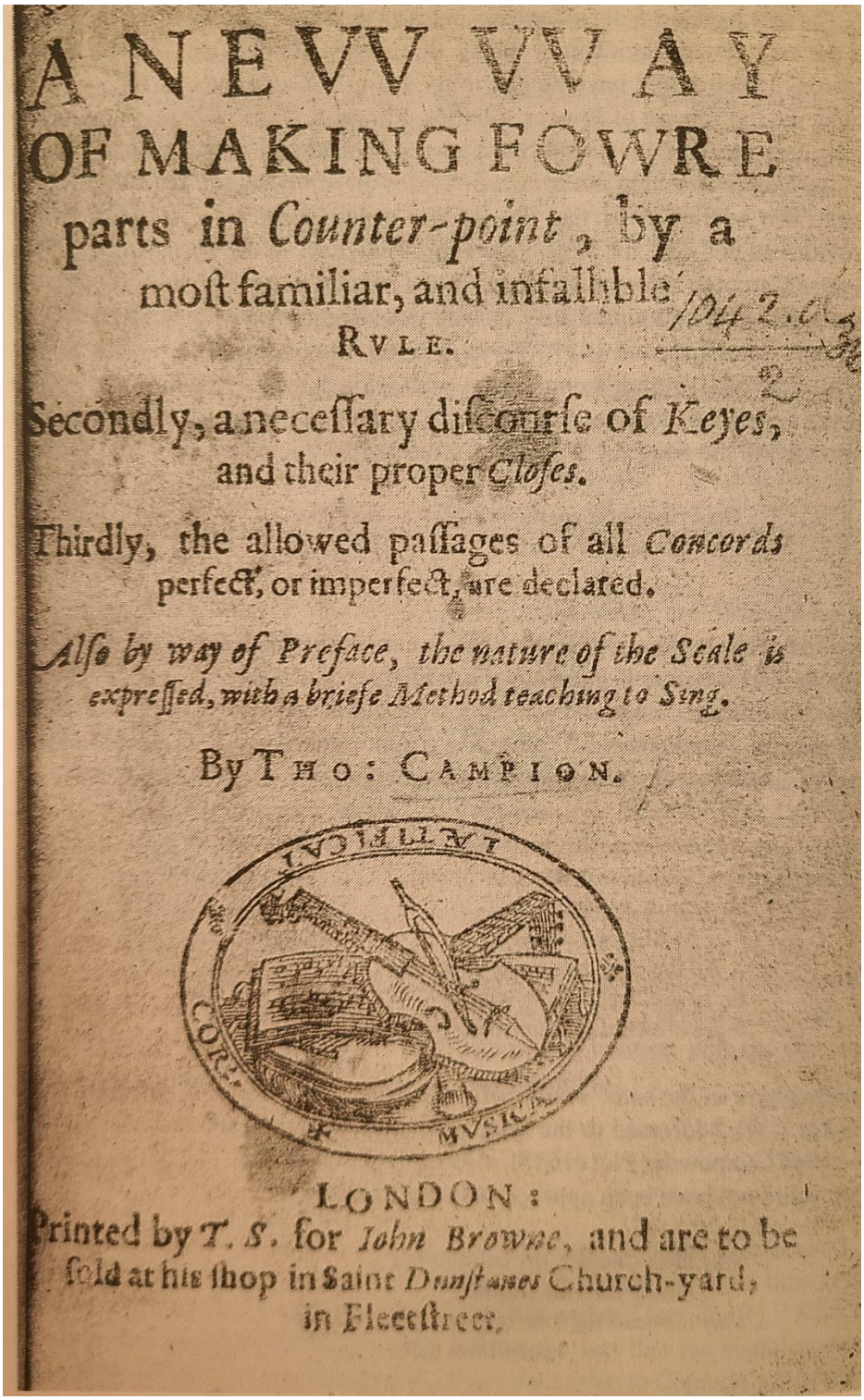
Campion does not allow the reader to miss his novel contribution to writing in four parts. The title page (shown in Figure 4.5) declares four topics, listed by importance and not the order in which they appear. He thus advertises "A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point by a most Familiar, and Infallible Rule. Secondly, a Necessary Discourse of Keyes, and their

[83] For a full explication of the malleable and often unclear meanings of this key term see Bryan Parkhurst and Stephen Hammel, "Pitch, Tone, and Note," in *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Concepts in Music Theory*, ed. Alexander Rehding and Steven Rings (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 3–39. The potential for terminological slippage was even greater in the Latin theory of the centuries immediately preceding Campion's writing. This is explored in greater detail in Margaret Bent, "Diatonic Ficta," *Early Music History* 4 (1984): 1–48.
[84] See Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," 216–30.
[85] Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts*, B3v.
[86] Campion and Coprario, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts and Rules How to Compose*, 21.

Proper Closes. Thirdly, the Allowed Passages of all Concords Perfect, Or Imperfect are Declared. Also by Way of Preface, the Nature of the Scale is Expressed, with a Briefe Method Teaching to Sing." As mentioned, the preface is not deeply connected to what follows, but it does set the reformist tone of the treatise. The three parts that get top billing are more closely connected; the knowledge of all of these aspects is necessary for actually writing stylistically acceptable music in four parts. After laying out the basics of his new system of part writing, Campion declares

> If I should discover no more then this already deciphered of Counter-point, wherein the native order of foure parts with use of the Concords, is demonstratively expressed, might I be mine owne Judge, I had effected more in Counterpoint, then any man before me hath ever attempted, but I will yet proceed a little farther.[87]

[87] Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts*, C2v.



A NEVV VVAY
OF MAKING FOWRE
parts in *Counter-point*, by a
most familiar, and infallible
RVLE.

Secondly, a neceſſary diſcourſe of *Keyes*,
and their proper *Cloſes*.

Thirdly, the allowed paſſages of all *Concords*
perfect, or imperfect, are declared.

Alſo by way of Preface, the nature of the Scale is
expreſſed, with a briefe Method teaching to Sing.

By THO: CAMPION.

LONDON:
Printed by *T. S.* for *John Browne*, and are to be
ſold at his ſhop in Saint *Dunſtanes* Church-yard,
in Fleetſtreet.

Figure 4.5 Campion, *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point*, title page

Campion does not lack confidence in the value of his innovative method of writing counterpoint. Campion is not the first of the English theorists to highlight his own novel accomplishments, but he is clearly among the boldest. Recall how William Bathe insists that his contribution to music pedagogy is actually less important than the work of those who came before him. Discussing the flawed rules given by his forbearers Bathe writes

> After all this that I have said of their rules, I doe affirme that they deserved greater commendations above mee, for finding out the long way, then I above others for laying down the short way. For had they not opened the gappe, touching mee, it might very well hap that I should in no sort enter my selfe, and much lesse in any sort invite others: nothing can at the beginning by perfected, and therefore are they to bee holden excused.[88]

The difference in tone is quite striking. Bragging, by itself, need not be noteworthy. But the extent to which Campion attempts to diminish the precedents on which his theory is built by dismissing the entire history of compositional theory signals a rude break from the rhetorical decorum found in most contemporaneous English treatises (which had tended to be less antagonistic to their predecessors).

If Campion "had effected more in Counterpoint, then any man before [him] hath ever attempted," what did this look like in his own music? This change certainly was not memorable; aside from Wood's passing comment that he was "admired," a comment repeated by Hawkins, little appreciation of his music can be found.[89] Most of Campion's musical output, which is comprised solely of songs or airs, is light and homophonic; it only infrequently dabbles in complicated polyphony or complex rhythms.[90] (To his credit, his method of composition is ideally suited to producing homophonic compositions.)

[88] Bathe, *A Briefe Introduction to the Skill of Song*, 1596, A3r. There is a resonance here with Isaac Newton's remark from 1675 about standing on the shoulders of giants.
[89] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 479.
[90] For an overview of Campion's style see Wilson, "Campion [Campian], Thomas."

Campion was by no means the first English composer to explore the possibilities afforded by homophony.[91] Even a quick comparison of Campion's lute songs to John Dowland's from the same period shows that Campion chose to work in a more contrapuntally and rhythmically pared-down manner.[92] Because Campion's contrapuntal innovation has more to do with compositional process and harmonic conceptualization than it did with advanced contrapuntal techniques or a radical harmonic palette, its newness does not obviously strike the ear.[93] This is true both for the songs contained in *Two Bookes of Ayres* (1613), which immediately preceded the publication of his treatise, and *The Third and Fourth Booke of Ayres* (1617) which followed it.

Even if Campion's contrapuntal innovations were not clearly understood in his day and are not immediately noticeable in his music, his ideas did have a significant afterlife when Playford incorporated Campion's treatise into his many editions of *A Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick* starting in 1660. That Christopher Simpson was called upon to provide annotations to Campion's treatise suggests that it was still considered somewhat confusing five decades after the original date of publication, yet the title page declares that Campion's method is done "By a most familiar and easie Rule," and Playford claims it "hath found so General acceptance" that it had already been printed twice.[94] Once again, the tension between marketing

[91] Megan Kaes Long provides a good discussion of Morley's homophonic settings from 1595 and onwards. Long, *Hearing Homophony*, 145–58.
[92] This appears to derive from a conscious stylistic choice and not a lack of skill as a composer. He pointedly opens his *Two Bookes of Ayres* (1613) with "Author of Light," which prominently features imitative counterpoint in four voices. Also featured in the same collection, and more typical of his style, is the light homophonic air "*Jack* and *Jone* they thinke no ill."
[93] What has struck the ears of many modern listeners is the apparent tonal organization of this music. As Jessie Ann Owens notes, "English music *sounds* tonal and English music theory uses concepts associated with tonality well before either happens on the continent." Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," 183. Megan Kaes Long has recently investigated the tonal expectations baked into homophonic partsongs (both on the Continent and in England) as a site for understanding an emerging tonal practice. See Long, *Hearing Homophony*.
[94] Playford, *A Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, 92.

and ease of use remain unresolved for Campion's little treatise. What has been settled is that the treatise is now marketed directly to the student and makes the assumption that this material could be profitably used without the aid of a teacher. No doubt part of this reflects Playford's business acumen and ability to reach an expanding amateur market, but it also demonstrates the extent to which ideas Campion viewed as radical were absorbed into the mainstream of educating musical amateurs over the course of a few decades. Of course, not all ideas that were once radical eventually got absorbed into the musical mainstream. Thomas Ravenscroft's neglected reforms are a case in point.

Ravenscroft's Historicist Reforms

Appearing around the same year as Campion's treatise and adopting a similarly reformist stance, Thomas Ravenscroft's *A Briefe Discourse of the True (but neglected) use of Charact'ring the Degrees by Their Perfection, Imperfection, and Diminution in Measurable Musicke, against the Common Practice and Custome of These Times* (1614) did not go on to have an extended and influential afterlife. Like Campion, he was also "of little lasting importance as a composer," even though he did produce the widely-used 1621 edition of *The Whole Booke of Psalms*.[95] As the title of his theory treatise clearly states, this is a treatise about reinstating the older system of mensural notation; it is explicitly opposed to the current notational practice of Ravenscroft's day which had greatly simplified the older mensural system. This was something of a hard sell. Whereas Campion's reform of music was based in a new approach to composition, Ravenscroft's was essentially backward-looking: current notational practice needs to be changed to better accord with how things were done in the past. Hawkins assesses the aim and general

[95] Julie Anne Sadie, *Companion to Baroque Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 302.

shortcomings of Ravenscroft's treatise, writing "the drift of it is to revive the use of those proportions, which, because of their intricacy, had long been discontinued." He then questions

> whether, even at the time of his writing his Introduction, any change for the better could have been possibly effected; since he himself has expressly said, that of the many authors who had written on measurable music, and particularly on those branches of it, mood, time, and prolation, with their several varieties, hardly any two of them can be said to tell the same tale.
>
> Upon the whole, proportion is a subject of mere speculation; and as to practice, there seems to be no conceivable kind of proportion, but in the present method of notation may be signified or charactered without regarding those distinctions of perfection, imperfection, and diminution of mood, time, prolation, which this author labors to revive.[96]

Hawkins stops just short of declaring the enterprise doomed from the outset. Ravenscroft appended a lengthy section of "Harmonicall Examples" to the treatise that were presumably intended to justify his notational intervention. But their inclusion might have been counterproductive. As Ross W. Duffin concludes, "The *Harmonicall Examples* are delightful but, in the end, a demonstration of how knowledge of ancient mensural practices was not entirely necessary to the performance and enjoyment of these pieces." This unfortunate fact "probably undermined Ravenscroft's attempt to restore the 'proper' usage, and may actually have contributed to the lack of regard for *A Briefe Discourse*, both at the time and in the decades following."[97] Burney bluntly states that "it seems as if…Ravenscroft wished, in pure pedantry, to revive the old perplexities."[98] In contrast to Campion's forward-looking treatise, Ravenscroft's is much more firmly rooted in the obsolete practices of the past.

Ravenscroft's treatise covers more than its title implies. Table 4.2 outlines the content of the treatise. Its title page is shown in Figure 4.6. Ravenscroft's proposed changes to current

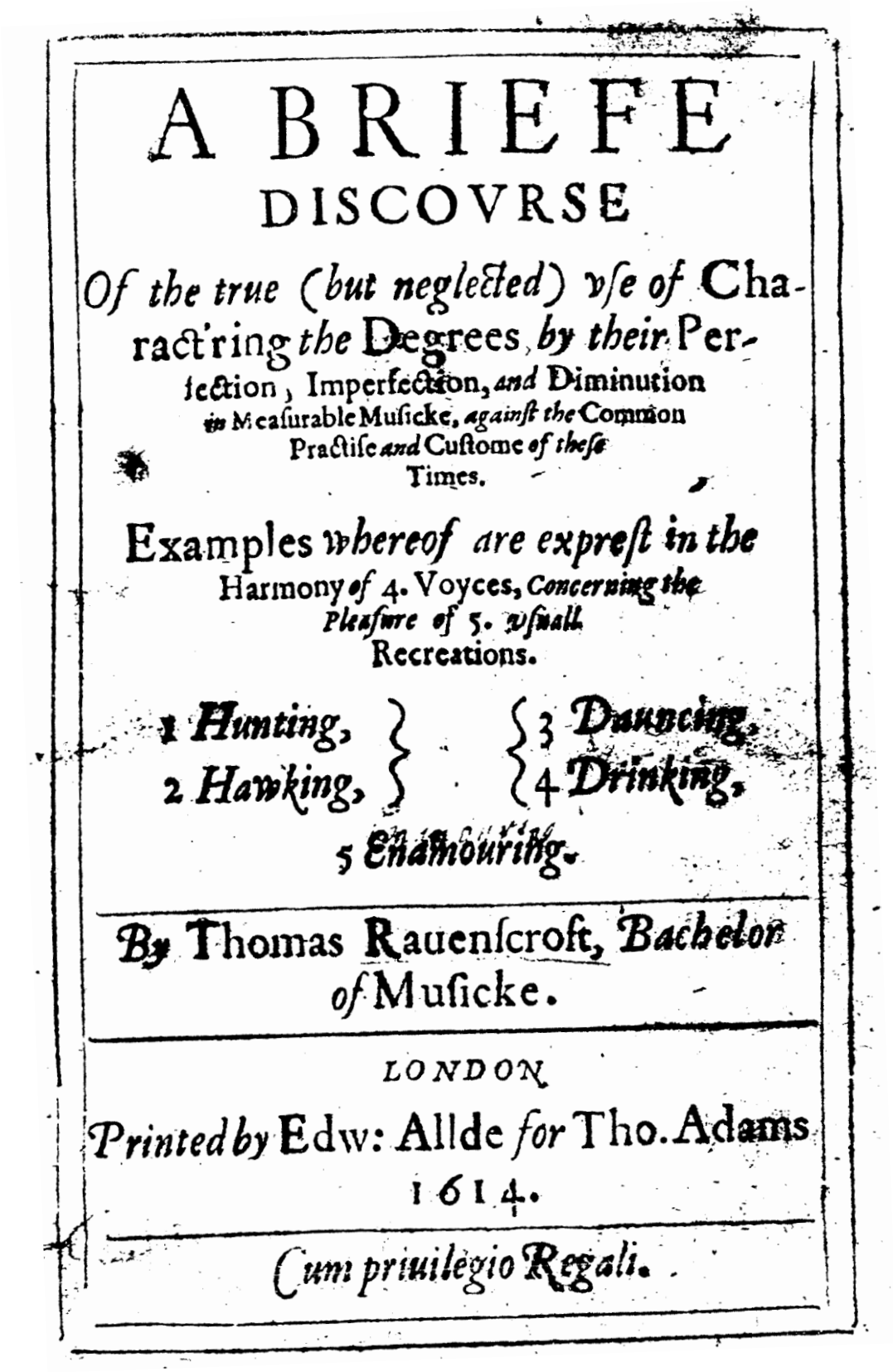
[96] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 567.
[97] Thomas Ravenscroft, *The Music Treatises of Thomas Ravenscroft: Treatise of Practicall Musicke and A Briefe Discourse*, ed. Ross W. Duffin (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014), 75.
[98] Burney, *A General History of Music*, II: 261.

notation take up much less than half of the treatise. *A Briefe Discourse* is a major revision and expansion of an earlier manuscript *Treatise of Practicall Musicke* that Ravenscroft wrote around 1607.[99] The earlier treatise contained a section on musical rudiments that was eliminated from the published treatise. It does not contain the praises of music or "harmonicall examples" that make up the majority of *A Briefe Discourse*, but it does show Ravenscroft's same concern for mensural practice.

Dedication to the Senators of Gresham College
Apologie
[Encomiastic Poems]
The Preface
The Definitions and Divisions of Moode, Time, & Prolation in Measurable Musick
Of Notes
Of Pauses or Rests
Of Degrees
Of Outward Signes
Of Leße Moode Perfect
Of Perfect Prolation
Of Great Diminution
Of Perfect Prolation
Of the Lesse Diminution
Of the Imperfect Prolation
Of Diminution
Of Tact
Of Pricks
Of Signes
Errata
[Harmonicall Examples]
Hunting, & Hawking
Dauncing
Drinking
Enamoring

Table 4.2 Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse*, contents

[99] The exact date of the *Treatise of Practicall Musicke* (British Library Add. MS 19758) is difficult to establish, but Duffin provides ample evidence that a date of 1607 is highly plausible. Ravenscroft, *The Music Treatises of Thomas Ravenscroft*, 52–59.



A BRIEFE DISCOVRSE

Of the true (but neglected) vſe of Characting *the* Degrees, *by their* Perfection, Imperfection, *and* Diminution *in* Meaſurable Muſicke, *againſt the* Common Practiſe *and* Cuſtome *of theſe* Times.

Examples *whereof are expreſt in the* Harmony *of* 4. Voyces, *Concerning the Pleaſure of* 5. *vſuall* Recreations.

1 *Hunting*, 2 *Hawking*, 3 *Daunсing*, 4 *Drinking*, 5 *Enamouring*.

By Thomas Rauenſcroft, *Bachelor of* Muſicke.

LONDON

Printed by Edw: Allde *for* Tho. Adams 1614.

Cum priuilegio Regali.

Figure 4.6 Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse*, title page

True to the title of his published treatise, Ravenscroft presents charts of note values to show how they should properly be treated, against the supposed abuse of contemporary musicians. He pitches his notational advice as having real practical value and not as an exercise in historicism. Ravenscroft follows the definitions of "degrees" found in Morley and *The Pathway to Musicke*, though he does not actually cite either.[100] Morley states

> Those which we now call Moodes, they tearmid degree of Musicke: the definition they gave thus: a degree is a certayne meane whereby the value of the principall notes is perceaved by some sign set before them, degrees of musicke they made three, *Moode*: *Time* and *Prolation*.[101]

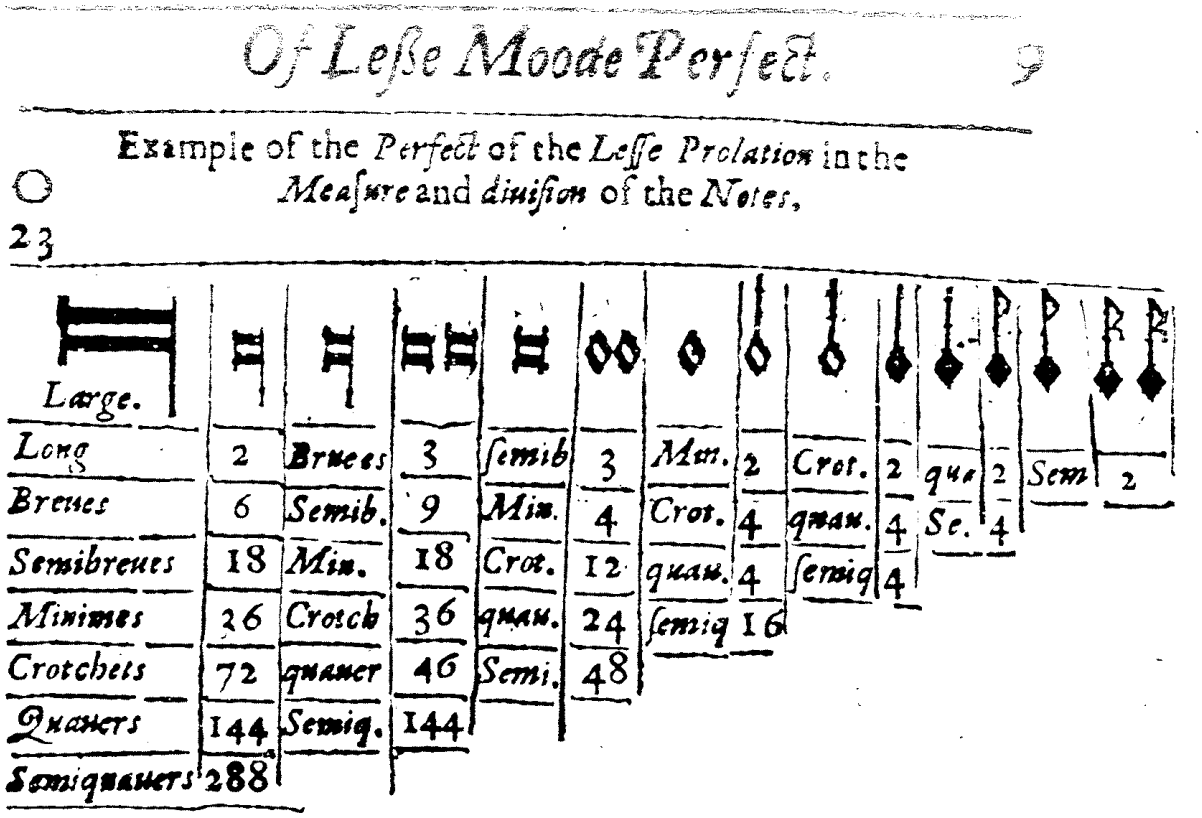
Ravenscroft provides a somewhat more complete though less clear description of what the degrees are.

> *Degrees* were invented to expresse the *value* of the aforesaid principall *Notes*, by a *Perfect* and *Imperfect Measure*. *Perfect Measure* is when all goe by 3.
> *Imperfect Measure* when all go by 2. & *Degrees* are three-fold:
> 1. *Moode*
> 2. *Time*
> 3. *Prolation*[102]

Ravenscroft then goes on to explain what mood, time, and prolation are. Recognizing that the relationships between various note values may be difficult to compute in the abstract, he adds four figures to show the lengths of notes in what he terms perfect of the more, perfect of the less, imperfect of the more, and imperfect of the less. See, for example, his table of "the *Perfect* of the *Lesse Prolation*" shown in Figure 4.7. The general meaning of the chart is clear even if the

[100] Ravenscroft's use of *The Pathway* is somewhat curious. Duffin notes, "Ravenscroft's main source for the fundamentals, however, seems to have been the 1596 *Pathway*, published by William Barley – this in spite of the fact that the *Pathway* comes in for some withering criticism at the hands of Thomas Morley. It is possible that because they both deal with fundamentals of music, it was too tempting a model for Ravenscroft in spite of Morley's critique." Ravenscroft, 59.
[101] Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 12. Morley's definition is very similar to the one found in *The Pathway*, a treatise he heavily criticized. "*What is a degree in Musicke?* It is a certaine rate, by the which the value of the principall notes is measured and known by a certaine marke. *How many degrees in Musicke is there?* Three *Which be they?* Moode. Time. Proloation." *The Pathway to Musicke*, C3r.
[102] Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse*, 4.

graphic design leaves something to be desired. (Note that the vertical lines separating the middles of the groups of like notes at the top row of the table obscure Ravenscroft's point and should not be present.) This chart also contains an unfortunate number of errors.[103] Whether or not these errors were typographical or on the part of Ravenscroft, they were unlikely to cause problems for musicians because, he declared, "These 2. *Perfect Moodes* in these days are of little or no use," an odd admission in a treatise devoted to restoring this practice. But his other tables are more accurate, which is important because



Of Leſſe Moode Perfect. 9

Example of the *Perfect* of the *Leſſe Prolation* in the *Meaſure* and *diuiſion* of the *Notes*,

O

23

Large.		Brues		ſemib		Min.		Crot.		qua		Sem	
Long	2	Semib.	3	Min.	3	Crot.	2	qnau.	2	Se.	2		2
Breues	6	Min.	9	Crot.	4	qnau.	4	ſemiq	4		4		
Semibreues	18	Crotch	18	qnau.	12	ſemiq	4						
Minimes	26	quauer	36	Semi.	24		16						
Crotchets	72	Semiq.	46		48								
Quauers	144		144										
Semiquauers	288												

Figure 4.7 Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse*, 9

[103] There should be seventy-two quavers in a long, six minims in a breve, eight quavers in a semibreve, and eight seimiquavers in a minim. See Ravenscroft, *The Music Treatises of Thomas Ravenscroft*, 138, nn. 66–69.

> These 2. *Imperfect Moodes* following are now only in use, I will somewhat speake of the absurdities committed in the *Characterıng* of their *Measures*, especially for the *Prolations* & *Diminutions*; whereby wee may discover what things are necessarie and *Art-Like*, & reject those *Un-Art-Like Formes* which by Ignorance are crept in.[104]

Ravenscroft has much more to say about abuses committed by contemporary musicians in their use of the imperfect moodes; he seems to have included the perfect moodes mainly for the sake of completeness.[105] There is a significant disconnect between the information presented in his treatise and the type of knowledge contemporary musicians would actually need.[106]

In terms of practical musical instruction, Ravenscoft's treatise misses the mark by heavily emphasizing an aspect of music-making that had little relevance to music as it was performed or composed in Ravenscroft's day. But if we only concentrate on his notational interventions we will miss a significant aspect of the treatise, one that is immediately apparent when looking at its organization. This is more than just a treatise on notation: it is also a defense of music and a songbook. The main body of the treatise is a modest twenty-two pages plus one page of errata. The dedication, "Apologie," encomiastic poems (supplied by nine different commenders), and preface occupy twenty-one pages. After all this are appended approximately fifty pages of "Harmonicall Examples."[107] And then there is the dedication. The treatise is dedicated "To the Right Worshipfull, most worthy Grave *Senators*, *Guardians*, of *Gresham College* in *London*." Ravenscroft mentions that at Gresham College he attended "one particular *Lecture* of *Musicke*

[104] Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse*, 9.
[105] There is a clear connection between this material in Ravenscroft and the tables found in Book II of Ornithoparchus's *Micrologus*, which Ravenscroft cites directly. It should not be surprising that Ravenscroft would be aware of Ornithoparhcus (likely through Dowland's translation), since Dowland wrote one of the commendatory poems for Ravenscroft's treatise. See Ravenscroft, *The Music Treatises of Thomas Ravenscroft*, 66.
[106] Duffin thinks Ravenscroft's "fascination with the lost intricacies of the mensural system" was the result of his university education. Ravenscroft, 70. For a thorough account of notational practices at this time see the section "Mensural Notation from 1500" in Bent et al., "Notation."
[107] This imbalance has led Jessie Owens to categorize this treatise among "collections of music with some sort of didactic introduction," thus significantly shifting the emphasis of the print away from its theoretical contribution and towards its music collection. Owens, "You Can Tell a Book by Its Cover: Reflections on Format in English Music 'Theory,'" 370.

(whereof I was an unworthie *Auditor*)."[108] There is a surprisingly high number of candidates for who might have delivered this lecture, but the lack of specificity does not undermine Ravenscroft's attempt to show his own learning and to pander to the educational institution run by his dedicatees.[109] Duffin dryly notes that "Ravenscroft seems to have been at pains to establish his credibility by printing commendations from a large number of authorities," far exceeding the number seen in previous English treatises (and occupying a disproportionately large amount of the treatise). "The reason, it can be safely assumed, is that Ravenscroft felt the need to demonstrate that respected authorities viewed his work as valuable."[110] The overall effect is of a slim treatise sandwiched between a learned discussion of the history and nature of music and an anthology of recreational songs.

If we take a wider view, Ravenscroft can be seen as navigating the contested division of music. Linda Austern argues, "It is perhaps Thomas Ravenscroft…who most succinctly summarizes the conventional division between ways of knowing music: to the practicing musician belongs direct apprehension of the art by sound, ear, and gesture…To the intellectual spectator, belongs the 'knowledge of [musical] things (not by sound) but by judgment: not by eare or hearing: but by witt and understanding.'"[111] The aims of Ravenscroft's notational reforms are self-evident if not entirely useful: paying greater attention to historical practice and taking more care in properly observing mensural notations should have helped practical musicians both

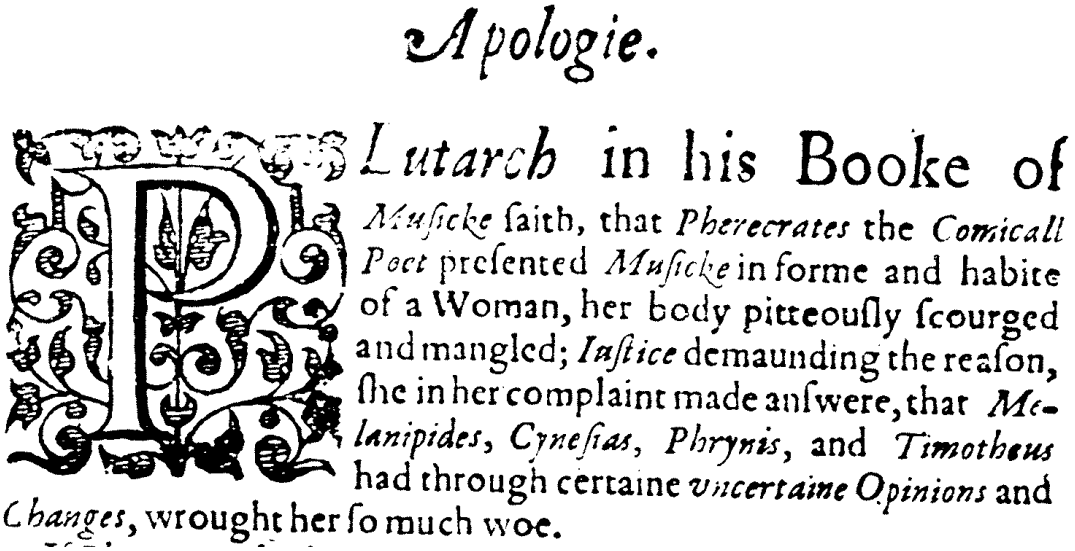
[108] Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse*, ¶3r.
[109] Joseph M. Ortiz, in his edition of John Taverner's Gresham lectures, suggests that Ravenscroft likely attended a lecture by Taverner or possibly John Bull. Ross W. Duffin, in his edition of Ravenscroft's treatise, lists lectures by John Bull, Thomas Byrd, Thomas Clayton, John Taverner, and Matthew Gwynne as ones that Ravenscroft could have attended. Taverner, *On the Origin and Progress*, 18–19; Ravenscroft, *The Music Treatises of Thomas Ravenscroft*, 28–34.
[110] Ravenscroft, *The Music Treatises of Thomas Ravenscroft*, 36.
[111] Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind*, 19–20. The quote is from Ravenscroft's manuscript treatise British Library Add. MS 19758, *A Treatise of Musick*, fol. 2. See also the edition in Ravenscroft, *The Music Treatises of Thomas Ravenscroft*, 77.

when they encountered various mensural and proportional signs and when they chose to employ them in their own compositions. Ravenscroft presents his treatise as a practical intervention, but the fact that his advice did not apply to much contemporary music or composition casts serious doubt on whether his ideas could actually be applied in practice.

It is the intellectual (and at times speculative) aspect of this treatise that provides a useful counterpoint to the practical reforms that the title advertises. Ravenscroft is not subtle in his display of learning. He begins his "Apologie" by boldly referencing Pseudo-Plutarch's writing on music, with a decorated initial drawing extra attention to his classical source. (See Figure 4.8.) He immediately follows this with a quote from the Roman playwright Terence and shortly after that quotes the poet Horace. In his earlier manuscript treatise, Ravenscroft wrote that speculative music was "very harde for any practicall Musitian to attayne unto: Except hee hath the Lattin tongue; then with little paines it maye bee attayned."[112] This claim is somewhat misleading. As Austern has shown, vernacular musical encomia had first appeared in England in the 1560s and had continued to be produced in the following decades, including the substantial *Praise of Musicke* (1586), meaning that knowledge of Latin was not actually necessary in order to engage in learned discourse on music.[113] This was probably good for Ravenscroft, whose facility with Latin apparently left something to be desired.[114] Of more general use but also covering music were commonplace books, which compiled and arranged a selection of sources

[112] Ravenscroft, *The Music Treatises of Thomas Ravenscroft*, 77.
[113] Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind*, 23–24.
[114] In his manuscript treatise, Ravenscroft mistranscribes "Ut queant laxis" as "Ut que aut laxis." Duffin states, "It suggests that Ravenscroft's Latin was not very strong. As in the case of John Bull, it was clearly possible to take a university degree in music and not possess the linguistic skills expected of other university graduates at the time." Ravenscroft, *The Music Treatises of Thomas Ravenscroft*, 60. On the other hand, Austern takes his knowledge of Latin as a given even if it was not needed for him to write his treatise. "Like the university-educated Morley and Ravenscroft, who had presumably first learned Latin as choristers, many simply chose to address a vernacular audience." By this time, the vast majority of publications in English were in the vernacular. Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind*, 23.

that would be useful when discussing music and its proper use.[115] Ravenscroft's citations could thus have been sourced from a relatively small number of commonly available books and would not have required the breadth of learning that he tried so hard to display.[116]


Apologie.

PLutarch in his Booke of Muſicke ſaith, that Pherecrates the Comicall Poet preſented Muſicke in forme and habite of a Woman, her body pitteouſly ſcourged and mangled; Iuſtice demaunding the reaſon, ſhe in her complaint made anſwere, that Melanipides, Cyneſias, Phrynis, and Timotheus had through certaine vncertaine Opinions and Changes, wrought her ſo much woe.

Figure 4.8 Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse*, ¶4r

In light of these shortcomings, what does *A Briefe Discourse* accomplish? Ravenscroft attempts to bridge the intellectual and practical sides of music in a single volume.[117] He stresses his own classical knowledge and awareness of more recent theoretical developments alongside his expertise in properly notating and performing music. Thomas Robinson attempted a similar project on an even more limited scale in *The Schoole of Musicke* (1603), which mixes a little classical learning with a tutor on playing the lute, a selection of pieces in tablature, and then a

[115] For example, John Marbeck's *Booke of Notes and Common Places* (1581) provides a selection of quotes on the proper use of music. For more on musical commonplaces see Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind*, 44–45.
[116] For more on Ravenscroft's sources see Ravenscroft, *The Music Treatises of Thomas Ravenscroft*, 67.
[117] As discussed in Chapter 2, Morley only begrudgingly addressed these two aspects of music and only in a self-consciously disconnected way. In Chapter 5, we will see how Charles Butler attempts a unique synthesis of the practical and intellectual parts of music.

brief primer on singing. Whereas Robinson's book is primarily marketed as a vehicle to help the novice begin the lute, Ravenscroft's book stresses that it is a theoretical contribution that uses the lengthy musical appendix as examples. *A Briefe Discourse* represents an attempt at concisely addressing and combining two of the most important ways that music was thought about in early modern England: as sense experience and as object of intellectual contemplation. He aims for a well-heeled (or at least socially striving) audience that would be concerned with the how and the why of music and not simply practitioners. Ravenscroft ends his treatise by declaring

> This then is it I had now to say concerning the necessary *Rules* of this part of our *Art*, as pertaining to the use of our *Common Practise*. If my *Labours* herein prove as *Acceptable* as they are *True* and *Necessary*, it will give me much incouragement to proceed further in a generall *Survey* by me intended; if not, I shall perhaps become loath to bestow my *Talent* in such a *Fruitlesse Soile*.[118]

The fact that Ravenscroft did not produce another treatise likely answers the question as to if his contemporaries found his labors acceptable. While on the one hand the "fruitlesse soile" in which he toiled did not produce his anticipated harvest, on the other hand the fact that he wrote this treatise shows how one author attempted to come to terms with divergent ideas about music.

A Briefe Discourse shows a path not taken by later writers. His theoretical contribution was to try to reinvigorate interest in and understanding of the mensural system. Unfortunately, this contribution was largely irrelevant to contemporary practice, his encomiastic treatment of music was not original, and his volume was bogged down in attempting to demonstrate that he was qualified to write it. Ravenscroft's treatise represents an acknowledgement of the various uses of music and the social capital that could be attained by displaying both a knowledge of the art and the ability to perform skillfully. Today, the importance of *A Briefe Discourse* lies not in its reception or its original theoretical contribution but in the way that it attempts to merge

[118] Ravenscroft, *A Briefe Discourse*, 22.

multiple, and often divergent, streams of musical thought into one slim volume. The way forward in English theory would hew much more closely to the path set by Campion than by Ravenscroft, especially after the Restoration. The extreme popularity of Playford's *Introduction* attests to this. But before the Civil War, Charles Butler would produce a substantial treatise that countered this nascent trend. It is to this that we now turn.

Chapter 5 Toward a Broader Music Theory: Charles Butler and the Place of Music Theory

In the half century after the first music treatise in English was written, authors were engaged in a number of competing projects that redefined what a music treatise could or should be. It is tempting to take a teleological approach to these writings and suggest that out of the confused writings of Bathe and *The Pathway* emerges the magisterial work of Morley. He corrects previous errors while providing a helpful summation of sixteenth-century theory. One could then argue that Campion builds on this foundation and takes theory forward into a new harmonic tonal consciousness that lays the groundwork for the common practice tonal system that would govern Western music for centuries. The reality is much messier. Dowland's seemingly late translation of Ornithoparchus and Ravenscroft's backward-looking treatise on mensuration ought to be enough to complicate a simple narrative of progress in English theory. We also have the case of Elway Bevin who wrote *A Briefe and Short Instruction of the Art of Musicke* (1631) which purported to be an introduction to music but which in reality was little more than a collection of canons.[1] And then there is Charles Butler's utterly unique treatise (the final treatise discussed here), which brings us back surprisingly close to where we began. In this chapter, I begin with some background on Butler and the religious developments that occurred around the time his treatise was published. I then put Butler's treatise in dialogue with

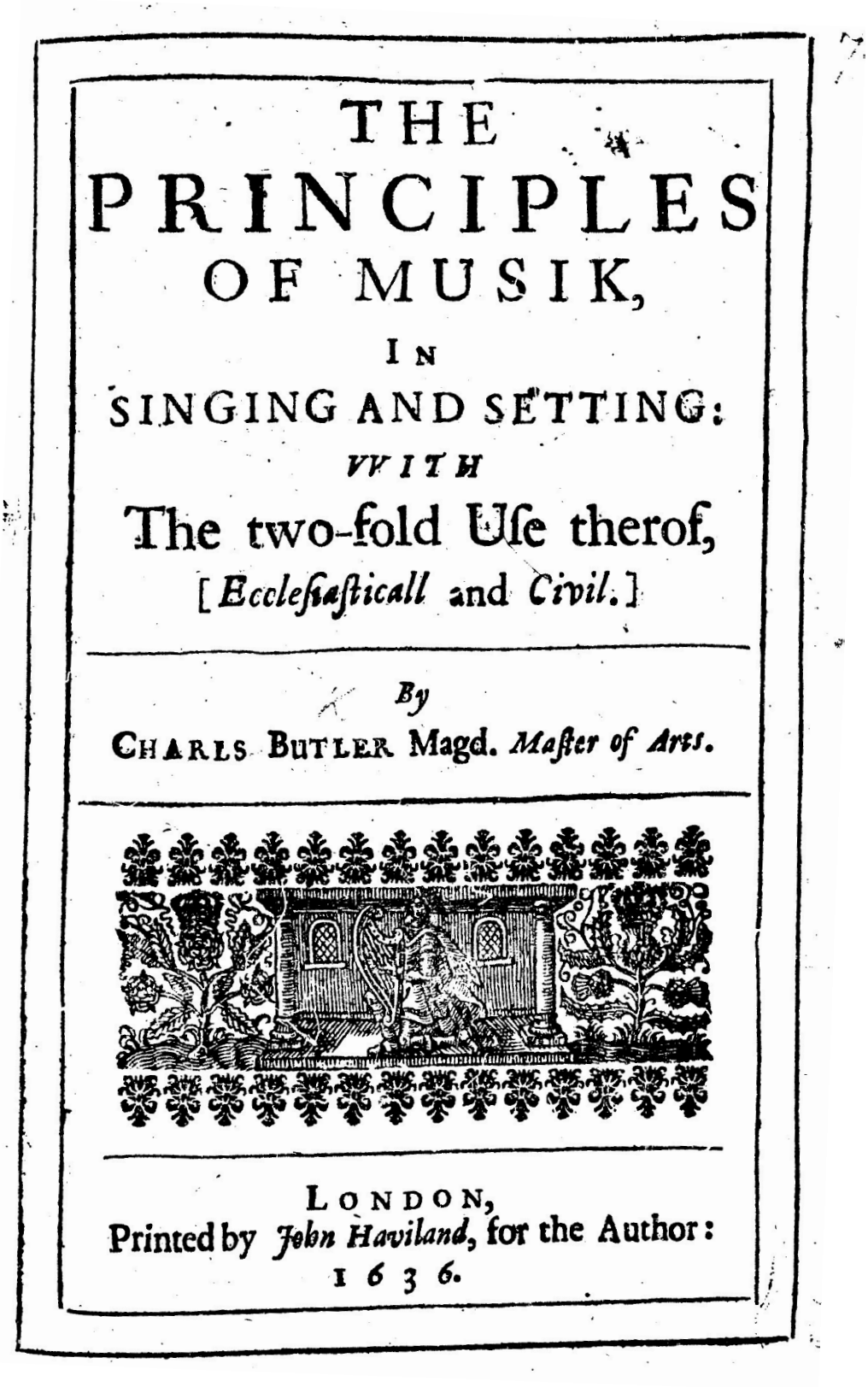
[1] Bevin was not the only British musician to collect canons, but his choice to publish them as something of a music treatise sets his collection apart. The full title makes Bevin's ambition clear: Bevin, *A Briefe and Short Instruction of the Art of Musicke to Teach How to Make Discant, of All Proportions That Are in Vse: Very Necessary for All Such as Are Desirous to Attaine to Knowledge in the Art; and May by Practice, If They Can Sing, Soone Be Able to Compose Three, Foure, and Five Parts: And Also to Compose All Sorts of Canons That Are Usuall, by These Directions of Two Or Three Parts in One, upon the Plain-Song. by Elway Bevin London*. Denis Collins writes, "Plainsong canon collections stand apart from repertoire examples and theoretical writings because of their dedication towards exhaustive exploration of a particular aspect of compositional technique." Elway Bevin, *A Briefe and Short Instruction of the Art of Musicke*, ed. Denis Collins (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 24.

contemporary music-theoretical and apologetic literature and argue for Butler's unique intervention at this intersection.

Background to the Treatise

When Charles Butler published *The Principles of Musik, in Singing and Setting: With the two-fold Use therof, [Ecclesiastical and Civil.]* in 1636 most of its music-theoretical content was hardly new. (The title page is shown in Figure 5.1.) Butler had been at Oxford with Thomas Morley and William Bathe in the 1580s. Bathe published his treatises in 1584 and 1596. Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* was published in 1597. Even though Butler was their contemporary, he did not manage to publish his music treatise for another four decades, yet Butler's theorizing bears remarkable similarities to that of his earliest predecessors. This has led Jessie Ann Owens to question whether *The Principles of Musik* may have actually been written earlier than the 1630s.[2] There is some internal support for this position. In the Epilogue to Book I of his treatise, Butler even goes so far as to recommend that the reader of his book should then go on to read Morley's treatise to learn more fully how to compose.[3] That is, Butler sees his treatise in some sense as a prologue to Morley's treatise which was published thirty-nine years before his own.

[2] Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640," 188–91, 233.
[3] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 92.



THE
PRINCIPLES
OF MUSIK,
IN
SINGING AND SETTING:
WITH
The two-fold Uſe therof,
[*Eccleſiaſticall* and *Civil.*]

By
CHARLS BUTLER Magd. *Maſter of Arts.*

LONDON,
Printed by *John Haviland*, for the Author:
1636.

Figure 5.1 Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, title page

Butler kept busy in the period between his time at Oxford and the publication of *The Principles of Musik*.[4] After holding a series of positions (rector, schoolmaster, Bible clerk) at a variety of religious institutions, he eventually became vicar of Wootton St. Lawrence in 1600. He held this position until he died in 1647. During these years he wrote a surprising number of books on a variety of seemingly unrelated topics. Before the *Principles of Musik*, Butler had already published widely.[5] Although *The Principles of Musik*, *The Feminine Monarchie, or A Treatise Concerning Bees* (1609), and his reform of orthography *The English Grammar* (1633) are his best-known works, he also wrote books on rhetoric (1598), oratory (1629), and in the defense of the marriage of cousins (1625). Most of these works went through multiple editions during Butler's lifetime. His interests were so broad that the *Dictionary of National Biography* categorizes Butler as a "philologist and apiarist" and only makes passing reference to his work on music. His contributions in these areas were significant, with the *Dictionary of National Biography* going so far as to claim "*The Feminine Monarchie* is an outstanding contribution to the literature of apiculture."[6] *The Feminine Monarchie* is noteworthy for musicians since it contains printed music in all three editions that appeared during Butler's life (1609, 1623, 1634), expanding from a simple duet for bees in the first edition to a lengthy four-voice madrigal in the third.[7] Thus at least as early as 1609, Butler worked with a printer who was capable of printing

[4] The biographical information in this paragraph is drawn from James W. Pruett and Rebecca Herissone, "Butler, Charles," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.04456; A. H. Bullen and Karl Showler, "Butler, Charles (1560–1647), Philologist and Apiarist," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2009), https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4178.

[5] For an overview of Butler's publications see Arthur Timothy Smith, "Charles Butler's The Principles of Music in Singing and Setting, with the Twofold Use Thereof, Ecclesiastical and Civil (1636): A Computer-Assisted Transliteration of Book I and the First Chapter of Book II, with Introduction, Supplementary Notes, Commentary, and Appendices" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1974), 20–23.

[6] Bullen and Showler, "Butler, Charles (1560–1647), Philologist and Apiarist." Recently John Owen has suggested that bee-keeping was central not only to Butler's scholarship but also to his satisfaction in life. John Owen, "Bee-Keeping as Holy Distraction in the Life of the Revd Charles Butler, 1571-1647," *Rural Theology* 16, no. 2 (2018): 134.

[7] The 1634 edition is printed in Butler's reformed orthography.

music.[8] *The Feminine Monarchie* hints at some of the blending of practical advice and high-flown speculation that is also present in *The Principles of Musik*.

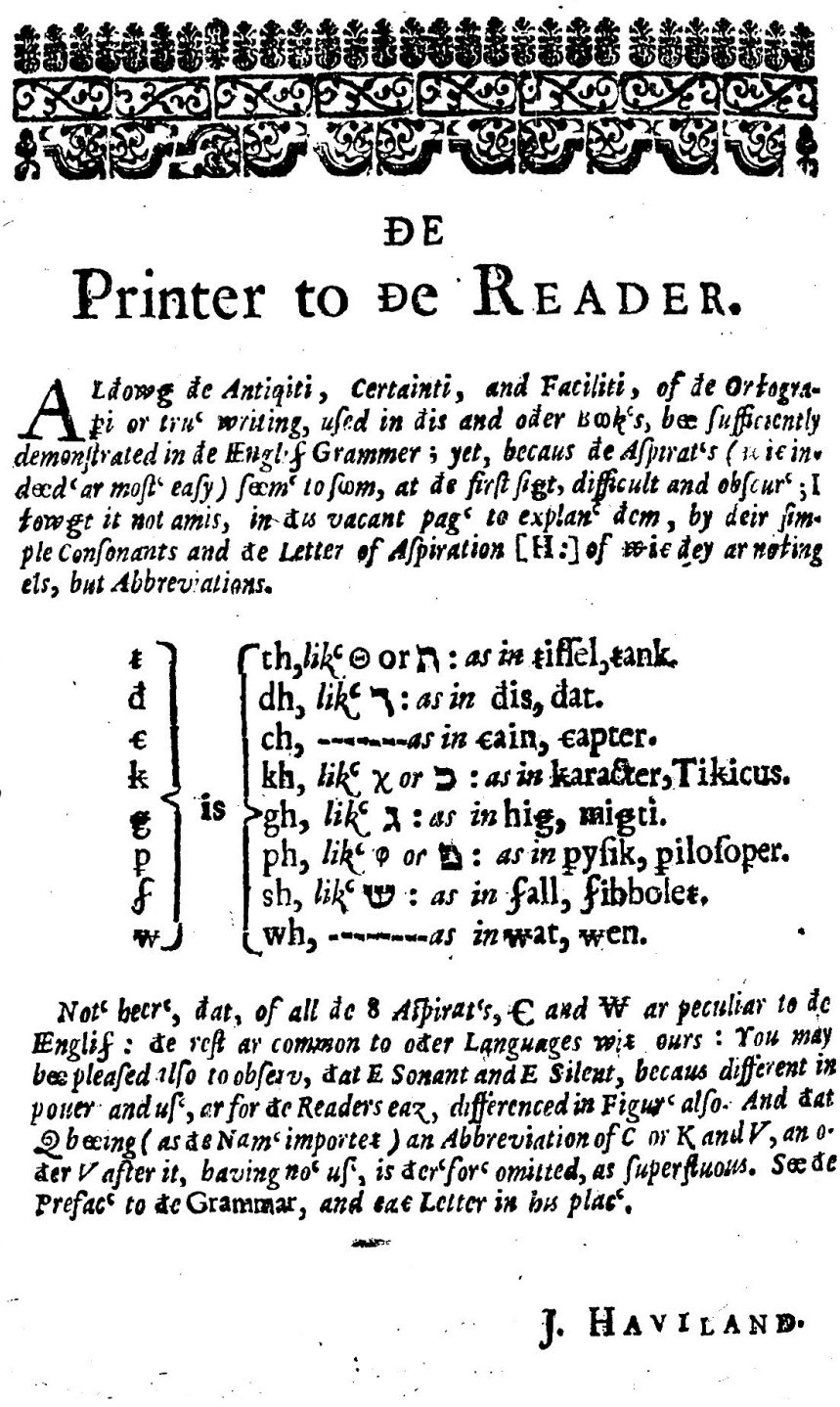
A note on the text of the music treatise is in order. *The Principles of Musik* follows the reformed orthography of the English language that Butler proposed in 1633 in *The English Grammar*. He uses a system of simplified phonetic spelling.[9] Evidently his printer John Haviland thought this orthography might confuse the reader, so he appended a chart that explains the system at the beginning of the treatise, shown in Figure 5.2. Unfortunately for the confused reader, the clarification is written in Butler's new orthography. (Throughout this chapter I transliterate quotes from Butler into standard orthography.) Not all readers were pleased by Butler's reform. In his characteristic style, John Hawkins comments regarding this new orthography, "And of this imagined improvement of his he appears to have been so fond, that all his tracts are printed in like manner with his grammar; the consequence whereof has been an almost general disgust of all that he has written."[10] Charles Burney more tactfully claims the use of unusual letters "render[s] this musical tract somewhat difficult to peruse."[11]

[8] The 1609 edition of the *Feminine Monarchie* was printed by Joseph Barnes. The short musical examples appear to have been printed from a woodblock and not a music font. The 1623 edition was printed by John Haviland, who also printed *The Principles of Musik*. He printed the musical examples from a music font. (It looks to be the same one that he used in *The Principles of Musik*.) The 1634 edition printed by William Turner also uses a music font for its musical examples.

[9] Gilbert Reaney explains the system, "Thus *t*, *d*, *c*, k (hard *c*), *g*, *p*, *s*, and *w* plus an *h* are abbreviated by a horizontal or diagonal stroke through the principal letter. The only points to remember are that an *e* mute is shown as an apostrophe, and *q* is omitted entirely, since it is merely an abbreviation of *c* or *k* plus *u*." Charles Butler, *The Principles of Music in Singing and Setting. London, 1636. Facsimile with an Introduction by Gilbert Reaney* (New York: Da Capo, 1970), vii.

[10] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 574.

[11] Burney, *A General History of Music*, II: 317.



ÐE

Printer to ÐE READER.

ALðowg ðe Antiqiti, Certainti, and Faciliti, of ðe Ortografi or triu writing, uſed in ðis and oðer Book's, bee ſufficiently demonſtrated in ðe Engliſ Grammer; yet, becaus ðe Aſpirat's (wic ie indeed ar moſt eaſy) ſeem to ſom, at ðe firſt ſigt, difficult and obſcur; I towgt it not amis, in ðis vacant pag to explan ðem, by deir ſimple Conſonants and ðe Letter of Aſpiration [H:] *of wic ðey ar noting els, but Abbreviations.*

Theta, or *Thau.*	ŧ	is	th, *lik* ⊙ or ת : *as in* ŧiffel, ŧank.
Dhaleth.	đ		dh, *lik* ד : *as in* đis, đat.
	€		ch, ------ *as in* €ain, €apter.
Khi, or *Khaph.*	ƙ		kh, *lik* χ *or* כ : *as in* ƙaracter, Tikicus.
Ghimel.	ɠ		gh, *lik* ג : *as in* hiɠ, miɠti.
Phi, or *Phe.*	ƥ		ph, *lik* φ *or* פ : *as in* ƥyſik, ƥiloſoper.
Shin.	ſ		sh, *lik* ש : *as in* ſall, ſibbolet.
	ẇ		wh, ------ *as in* ẇat, ẇen.

Not heer, ðat, of all ðe 8 Aſpirat's, € and ẆẆ ar peculiar to ðe Engliſ: ðe reſt ar common to oðer Languages wit ours: You may bee pleaſed alſo to obſerv, ðat E Sonant and E Silent, becaus different in power and uſ, ar for ðe Readers eaz, differenced in Figur alſo. And ðat Q beeing (as ðe Nam importet) an Abbreviation of C or K and V, an oðer V after it, having no uſ, is ðer for omitted, as ſuperfluous. See ðe Prefac to ðe Grammar, and eaċ Letter in his plac.

J. HAVILAND.

Figure 5.2 Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, [¶¶4v]

When Charles Butler's *The Principles of Musik in Singing and Setting* was published in 1636 it was an anomaly, both in terms of contemporary music theory and Butler's own scholarly

output. Because so many of Butler's previous books went through multiple editions, it appears that Butler should not have faced great difficulty in finding a publisher for his music treatise.[12] That is to say that even if Butler had written *The Principles of Music* well before 1636, it seems that its long gestation before publication was unlikely caused solely by his inability to find someone to print it.[13] Why, then, did he wait so long to publish it?

The Rise of Puritanism

The exact reasons for this delay are likely impossible to determine with absolute certainty, but perhaps Butler's treatise was actually responding to the broader religious and political situation in England in the 1630s, and not just rehearsing and refining the views of theorists from a few decades earlier. The majority of Book I on the principles of music describes well a practice that could be roughly contemporary with Morley. Most of the main body of the text is practical and concerns fundamentals that any musician would need to know (note names, intervals, consonance and dissonance, and so forth). The front matter and Book II, on the other hand, present a response to the growing influence of Puritanism and a defense of music against those who saw it as lascivious and inappropriate for use in church.[14] Viewed as part of a broader project of educating musicians and defending their craft against a rising tide of Puritan opponents, a publication date in the middle of the 1630s starts to make more sense.

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[12] The modern term "publisher" did not have the same set of meanings associated with it in the seventeenth century. For this reason Adrian Johns often refers to those involved in the manufacturing and selling of books as "undertakers." Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), xix.

[13] It is significant that the imprint on *The Principles of Musik* reads "Printed by *John Haviland*, for the Author," which appears to indicate that Butler likely financed its production.

[14] It is important to remember that Puritanism was not just a religious movement concerned with the church but had much broader societal goals. Christopher Hill erases the line between political and religious history and writes, "For the new Puritanism was itself a recognition of the fact that the ministers could not achieve the society they wanted without the co-operation of classes who formed part of the electorate of the House of Commons." Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England*, 503.

Some scholars have noted that at least some of Butler's treatise was written against Puritanical views on music, but for most this appears to be something of an afterthought. James Pruett writes, "*The Principles of Musik* has two intents. Primarily, it is a textbook, codifying a musical practice that by the time of writing was already out of date" He continues,

> The secondary purpose is essentially apologetic: Butler pleads the cause for music in both secular and, particularly sacred usages. The rising feeling against church music, which was to have great consequences during the Commonwealth, obviously is the prime mover for Butler's statement on the role of music in the sacred service.[15]

Pruett does not appear to consider that the prime mover for the publication of the less theological Book I of the treatise may also have been the "rising feeling against church music." Peter Le Hurray writes, "It was during the 1630s, too, that anti-Episcopal (and thus anti-musical) literature became once again a serious problem."[16] It is from within this context that the Puritan William Prynne's *Histrio-Mastix*, discussed at greater length below, was published in 1633, a massive volume detailing the many ills of music and other lascivious activities.[17]

Most of the Puritans' views on music derive from the writings of Jean Calvin. In recent years there has been an attempt to rehabilitate Calvin's views on music, showing that they were not as restrictive as has often been thought (or that they need not be interpreted as rigidly as they have been).[18] While this may be true, it was certainly not the prevailing view in England during

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[15] James Pruett, "Charles Butler—Musician, Grammarian, Apiarist," *Musical Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (October 1963): 503. For another similar comment see Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie," 166.

[16] Peter Le Huray, *Music and the Reformation in England, 1549-1660*, Studies in Church Music (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 52. For a case study focusing specifically on music at colleges and cathedrals at this time see also Ian Payne, *The Provision and Practice of Sacred Music at Cambridge Colleges and Selected Cathedrals, c. 1547–c. 1646: A Comparative Study of the Archival Evidence* (New York: Garland Pub., 1993), especially chapters eight and nine.

[17] There had of course been earlier attacks on elaborate church music in England, for example Robert Browne's *True and Short Declaration* from 1583 that attacked the use of imitative polyphony in churches. See Scholes, *The Puritans and Music in England and New England*, 217.

[18] For example, Christopher Richard Joby has attempted to connect Calvin's thoughts on music to his views on visual art and rehabilitate his reception in both of these fields. Jeremy Begbie has recently argued more successfully for treating Calvin as more accepting of music than he has often been seen. See Christopher Richard. Joby, "Calvin, Music and Visual Art: Ontological and Epistemological Similarities between Calvin's Metrical Psalmody and History and Landscape Paintings," Chapter 3 in *Calvinism and the Arts: A Re-Assessment*, vol. 38, Studies in

the first third of the seventeenth century.[19] The general thrust of Percy A. Scholes's assessment of the situation can be affirmed:

> The Puritan attitude towards church music in England and New England was exactly that of Calvin and of the Calvinists in every country. We may state that attitude in a few words by an extract from Calvin's Sermon 66 on 1 Samuel, ch. 18: "It would be a too ridiculous and inept imitation of papistry to decorate the churches and to believe oneself to be offering God a more noble service in using organs and the many other amusements of that kind" ("en employant des orgues et beaucoup d'autres amusements de cette sorte").[20]

David W. Music can also flatly claim, "The Puritans adhered to the Calvinist belief that musical instruments and other 'popish' ornaments had no place in Christian worship."[21] It is from within this environment of the growing intensity of Puritanism and its related attacks on church music that Butler's *The Principles of Musik* emerged. Butler's treatise might be engaged in a project of "codifying a musical practice that by the time of writing was already out of date," as Pruett phrased it, but he is also vigorously engaged in a theological debate on the propriety of music in churches, a debate that had both important contemporary consequences and prominent historical antecedents.[22] Since the connections between Butler's music-theoretical and theological positions have not often been considered, I will explore these in the sections that follow.[23]

Philosophical Theology (Leuven: Peeters, 2007); see also the chapter "Shifting Sensibilities: Calvin and Music" in Jeremy S. Begbie, *Music, Modernity, and God: Essays in Listening* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[19] For an overview of church music in England around the time *The Principles of Musik* was published see Watkins Shaw, "Church Music in England from the Reformation to the Present Day," in *Protestant Church Music: A History*, ed. Friedrich Blume (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974), 697–708.

[20] Scholes, *Music and Puritanism*, 50–51.

[21] David W. Music, *Instruments in Church: A Collection of Source Documents* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998), 85.

[22] Pruett, "Charles Butler—Musician, Grammarian, Apiarist," 503.

[23] Noteworthy studies of Butler that deal with the music-theoretical content but not the socio-religious context include Gilbert Reaney's introduction in Butler, *The Principles of Music*; Rosamond McGuinness, "Writings about Music," in *The Seventeenth Century*, ed. Ian Spink, vol. 3, The Blackwell History of Music in Britain (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 406–20; Owens, "Concepts of Pitch in English Music Theory, c. 1560–1640"; Candace Bailey, "Concepts of Key in Seventeenth-Century English Keyboard Music," in *Tonal Structures in Early Music*, ed. Cristle Collins Judd (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 247–74; Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*; Smith, "Charles Butler's The Principles of Music: A Computer-Assisted Transliteration."

Butler and English Music Theory

The question of Charles Butler's place in seventeenth-century English music theory naturally arises. Does the typical claim of English theory being unpretentious and practical apply to his treatise? In this case that seems doubtful. Much of this dissertation has demonstrated that most of the early English writings on music are less straightforwardly practical than is often assumed; in Butler's case this does not really need to be argued. Any scholar discussing Butler at even moderate length feels obliged to note his many peculiarities and exceptional place in English theory.[24] In one of the few instances of somebody discussing Butler without dwelling on his peculiarities, Hawkins writes with approval,

> His Principles of Music is however a very learned, curious, and entertaining book; and by the help of the advertisement from the printer to the reader, prefixed to it, explaining the powers of the several characters made use of by him, may be read to great advantage, and may be considered as a judicious supplement to Morley's Introduction…This book abounds with a great variety of curious learning relating to music, selected from the best writers ancient and modern, among which latter the author appears to have held Sethus Calvisius in high estimation.[25]

Butler's learning is hard to miss, and so is his treatise's relationship to Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction*. Burney makes both of these points explicit, writing,

> It is, however, better digested, more compressed, and replete with useful information, than any work of the kind that appeared for more than a century after Morley's *Introduction*. The quotations are perhaps too numerous, and the display of musical erudition may be thought to border on pedantry; yet, allowing these to be censurable, the

[24] James Pruett writes, "Charles Butler, 17th-century English clergyman, musician, grammarian, and—not least of all—apiarist, was obviously a man of many interests." Pruett, "Charles Butler—Musician, Grammarian, Apiarist," 498. Linda Phyllis Austern cannot resist referring to Butler as a "champion of church music and of the human capacity to improve on apian musical industriousness." Linda Phyllis Austern, "'Tis Nature's Voice': Music, Natural Philosophy and the Hidden World in Seventeenth-Century England," in *Music Theory and Natural Order from the Renaissance to the Early Twentieth Century*, ed. Suzannah Clark and Alexander Rehding (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 44. Barry Cooper gives a somewhat more sober opinion of the treatise that still notes its exceptional character: "The treatise is clearly the work of a wise, educated musician. It is peppered with quotations from the Bible, from Latin and Greek writers and also from modern theorists, especially from Sethus Calvisius." Cooper, "Englische Musiktheorie," 165. My translation.

[25] Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 574–75.

> book contains more knowledge, in a small compass, than any other of the kind, in our language.[26]

Butler's treatise is thus not one with "unpretentious didactic aims," and it does not show any "intellectual insularity."[27] What both of these authors imply without directly stating is that it is a very learned text masquerading as an introductory primer for the novice student. Certainly, this is no ordinary introduction to music.

Intellectually *The Principles of Musik* is a remarkably sophisticated and learned text. As Gilbert Reaney puts it, "The blending of erudite musician and country parson is ever-present in Butler's *The Principles of Musik*."[28] Perhaps Reaney sees the country parson in Butler's clear explication of the fundamentals of music, explanations that are often devoid (at least in the main text) of much abstract theorizing. His erudition is shown through the depth and accuracy of his citation of both musical and theological sources. Among his contemporaries only Morley cites anywhere close to the number of authors as Butler does, but Morley concentrates mostly on writers on music. By way of contrast, Thomas Campion's *A New Way of Making Fowre Parts in Counter-Point* only once acknowledges a source, in this case Calvisius. Butler shows much greater depth in his citation of theological sources than his contemporaries.[29] In this regard, Butler's treatise aligns much more closely with apologetic literature like *The Praise of Musicke* than it does with music theory texts.[30] The next English music treatise to deal with theological issues and sources to the same extent as Butler does not appear until Thomas Mace's *Musick's*

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[26] Burney, *A General History of Music*, 317–18.
[27] This characterization of English theory is found in Christensen, "Review of Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England by Rebecca Herissone; Music Theory and Natural Order from the Renaissance to the Early Twentieth Century by Suzannah Clark and Alexander Rehding," 178.
[28] Butler, *The Principles of Music*, xiv.
[29] For a comparison of the sources cited by Morley, Campion, and Butler see Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 286–91.
[30] For more on apologetical literature in England at this time, see the introduction to Kim, *The Praise of Musicke, 1586*.

Monument in 1676. Rare is the page in *The Principles of Musik* that does not have at least one marginal citation or note. Butler does not let the reader miss that the author is an educated man who has read widely in a number of fields that have some bearing on music.[31]

Butler and the Practice of Music

A closer look at the material that frames Book I will help to bring the treatise's larger project into greater focus. The entire treatise except for the dedicatory epistle to King Charles I is written in the reformed orthography of the English language that Butler proposed in *The English Grammar* from 1633. The dedication contains many of the standard praises of the erudition and intelligence of the king along with citations from Aristotle and other authorities on the importance of music. Since Butler's treatise is on the two-fold use of music (ecclesiastical and civil) it is not surprising that Butler in the dedication writes, "No Science, but Musick, may enter the Doores of the Chyrch. By this we praise and blesse the Creator of the world." What immediately follows is somewhat more pointed if still potentially conventional:

> This use did that religious, wise, valorous, and victorious King of the holy Land, [the man after Gods own heart] make of it: who was a skilful practicer both of vocall and instrumentall Musik, set to those sacred, eloquent, and Majestik Meeters, which himself composed, both for the present Service of his gracious God, who had doon so great things for him, and also to remain, for Instructions, Devotions, and Patterns, to be learned, exercised, and imitated of Gods people, in all ages, and languages, to the worlds end.
>
> The Example of which devout and zelous King, many Christian Princes, Kings, and Emperours did follow with like zele and devotion.[32]

Butler gives the example of the biblical King David praising God with vocal and instrumental music, and notes that this example has been followed by many other Christian rulers, with the

[31] This stands in stark contrast to Morley who relegated his learned discussions in *A Plaine and Easie Introduction* to the section of annotations that was appended to the treatise late in the publishing process. In *The Principles of Musik*, the notes and annotations are fully integrated into the main text.
[32] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, ¶3r–¶3v.

strong implication that Charles should follow their lead. Could it be that Butler is appealing to the Arminian and anti-Calvinist sympathies of Charles I in his dedicatory epistle? The image of David praising God with his harp was certainly well-known and venerable by the time of Butler's writing, but a number of factors within the treatise along with the broader political situation in England at that time suggest that Butler's invocation of the Psalmist is more than mere convention; David, the musician and king, is put forth as model to which Charles I should aspire.

Yet this treatise is still grounded in English practice. The treatise covers the main topics on the basics of music that have filled many of the other English treatises covered in this study. Table 5.1 summarizes the contents of the treatise. Book I on The Principles of Music, at ninety-two pages, contains the bulk of the treatise's overtly "music-theoretical" content. It mainly covers familiar topics that had been standard in England since at least Bathe's treatises. Butler directly claims that his book should be used as preparatory study before going on to the more advanced techniques found in Morley's treatise. For a treatise that has been praised for its practicality, it most certainly does not begin in practical manner.[33] In Chapter I "Of the Moodes," Butler continues his tour of authorities on music that he began in the prefatory material. The body of the chapter is only two pages long, but it is followed by six and half pages of notes that cite Aristotle, Boethius, Glarean, and a number of others. The first two sentences alone of Chapter I have four footnotes (primarily in Latin) that take up an entire page. He writes,

> Musik is the ([a]) Art of ([b]) modulating Notes in ([c]) voice or instrument. The which, having a great ([d]) pouer over the affections of the minde, by its various Moodes produceth in the hearers various effects.[34]

[33] Butler's treatise seems to have been well regarded for its clarity by Roger North and Charles Burney. See Smith, "Charles Butler's The Principles of Music: A Computer-Assisted Transliteration," 28.
[34] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 1.

Table 5.1 Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, contents

(The opening sentences and their annotations are shown in Figure 5.3.) Although the appearance of the text is somewhat cluttered and disorienting, its content is not particularly confusing. The rest of Book I continues to give clear explanations in the body of each chapter and then provides extensive explanatory notes. As a rule, the meaning of the body of each chapter is intelligible apart from the notes that follow it. For example, Butler quickly lists seven concords, including the fourth (citing Glarean in the text). For the reader concerned about the consonance of the fourth, Butler provides a two-page note that lays out what a number of theorists from the ancient Greeks to the relatively contemporary Calvisius said about it and its status as a consonance. Butler appears to always treat the fourth as a consonance, but its usage is carefully controlled. A fourth above the bass is allowed in certain controlled circumstances; a fourth between upper voices is always allowed.[35] That is, a reader could only look at the main body of the text and get a practical and usable account of the elements of music that was reasonably current with English practice. But it is impossible to miss the importance Butler places on the annotations. Of the ninety-two pages of Book I, approximately thirty-eight are made up of annotations and only fifty-four are the main body of the text.[36]

[35] Butler, 48, 53–54.
[36] As a comparison, Part I of Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction* is sixty-eight pages long and it has a little over fifteen pages of annotations. The ratio of Butler's annotations to the main text is approximately twice the ratio for that of Morley.

MUSIK is de (a) Art of (b) modulating Not's in (c) voic' or inſtrument. De wie, having a great (d) pouer over de affections of de mind', by its various Mod's produce in de hearers various effects. (a) (b) (c) (d)

ANNOTATIONS to CAP. I.

(a) AN Art. So *Ariſtotle*:* *Veteres inter Diſciplinas Muſicam collocaverunt, ex eo quòd Natura quærit non ſolùm in negotio rectè, verum etiam in otio laudabiliter poſſe verſari.* And *Boetius*: *Cùm ſint quatuor Matheſios diſciplinæ; cæteræ quidem ad inveſtigationem veritatis laborant: Muſica verò non modò ſpeculationi, verùm etiam moralitati conjuncta eſt.*

* *Politic. l. 8. c. 3.*

(b) *Modulating.* So dω'z †S^t *Auguſtin'* defin' it: *Muſica eſt ſcientia bene modulandi.* De proper differenc' wer' of he dω'z dus der' maintein.

† *De Muſica, l. 1. c. 2.*

Modulatio *poteſt ad ſolam Muſicam pertinere; quamvis* modus, *unde flexum verbum eſt, poſſit etiam in aliis rebus eſſe.*

(c) *Voic' or inſtrum.* Dus in effect dω'z dat holy *Fader divid'*: *Sonus triplex eſt: aut in voce animantis, aut in eo quod flatus in Organis faceret, aut in eo quod pulſu ederetur.* By de firſt, meaning vocal Muſik; (wie is de elef) by de ſecond, de muſik of Organs and oder wind'-inſtruments; by de thiid, de Harp or Lute, or oder inſtrument dat ſounde by toue or ſtrok'.

* *Tom. 1. de ordine l. 2.*

(d) † Tullius. *Aſſentior ego Platoni, nihil tam facilè in animos teneros atq; molles inſluere; quam varios canendi modos: quorum dici vix poteſt, quanta ſit vis in utramq; partem. Nam & incitat languentes, & languefacit excitatos; & tum remittit animos, tum contrahit: civitatumq; hoc multarum in Græcia interfuit, antiquum vocum ſervare modum; quarum mores lapſi ad mollitiem, pariter ſunt immutati cum cantibus.* Dus *Plato*: and after him * *Ariſtotle. In melodijs ipſis ſunt imitationes morum: & hoc eſt manifeſtum: ſtatim enim † harmoniarum diſtincta eſt natura; ita ut qui audiunt aliter diſponantur, nec eodem modo ſe habeant ad unamquamq; ipſarum: ſed ad quaſdam flebiliter & contractè magis, ad quaſdam mollius ſecundùm mentem: ad aliam verò mediocriter & compoſitè plurimùm; ut videtur Dorica facere ſola omnium* *harmoniarum.* Dεſ' various effects were lik'wiſ obſerved by † *Macrobius. Omnis habitus animi, cantibus gubernatur: nam dat cantus ſomnos, adimitq;: nec non curas immittit, & retrahit: iram ſuggerit, & clementiam ſuadet: &c.* And by S^t * *Iſidor'*: *Omnes affectus noſtri, pro ſonorum diverſitate, vel novitate (neſcio qua occulta familiaritate) excitantur magis, cùm ſuavi & artificioſa voce cantatur.* Alſo by *Caſſiodorus*, or rader King † *Theodorius*, mor' at larg' : *Muſica cum de ſecreto Naturæ, tanquam ſenſuum Regina, tropis ſuis ornata proceſſerit, reliquæ cogitationes exiliunt; omniaq; facit ejici, ut ipſam ſolummodo delectet audiri. Triſtitiam maxiam jucundat: tumidos furores attenuat: cruentam ſævitiam efficit blandam: excitat ignaviam, ſoporantemq; languorem: vigilantibus reddit ſaluberrimam quietem: vitiatam turpi amore, ad honeſtum ſtudium revocat, caſtitatem: ſanat mentis tædium bonis cogitationibus ſemper adverſum: perniciosa odia convertit ad auxiliatricem gratiam: & (quod beatum genus curationis eſt) per dulciſſimas voluptates expellit animi paſſiones: incorpoream animam corporaliter mulcet, & ſolo auditu ad quod vult deducit.*

† *De legibus l. 2.*

* *Polit. l. 8. c. 5.*

† *1. Modorum.*

* *Seu modorum.*

† *L. 2. de Somnio. Scip.*

* *De Eccleſiaſt. officiis. lib. 1. cap. 5.*

† *Epiſt. ad Boetium Muſicum:* wie is de 40. Epiſt. in *Caſſiodorus.*

Figure 5.3 Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 1–3

The Epilogue to Book I is of particular note. After laying out what he sees as the foundation of musical practice, Butler implores the aspiring composer to "let him first see that hee bee furnished with Natures gifts."[37] After this qualification is satisfied, he should

> thoorrowly peruse & studdi the learned and exquisite Precepts of that prime Doctor Mr *Thomas Morley*, (concerning the Setting of 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 Partes) in the second and third Partes of his Introduction: and lastly, let him heedefully examin, observ, and imitate the Artificial woorks of the best Authors.[38]

Butler more or less directly claims that Book I of *The Principles of Muisk* should be used as a substitute for Part I of Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction*. This is a fairly reasonable claim to the extent that the first sections of both of these treatises cover approximately the same content. It is less clear that this represents a practical solution to a real problem facing prospective students. While both of these volumes discuss the basics of music, it would appear that most of the appeal and innovation in Butler's treatise would be found in his learned annotations. A student wanting more fully to explore composition (and who already has access to Morley's treatise) would likely be better served by starting with Morley. None of this addresses the problem that Morley's treatise was nearly forty years old when Butler's treatise came out. The student wanting more up to date ideas about composition would find more current ideas in Campion's treatise. After sending the reader to explore Morley's treatise, Butler then provides a list of composers ("the best Authors") that the student should imitate; it includes Clemens Non-Papa, Lasso, Marenzio, and Tallis among others. Most of these composers are Continental or Catholic. It is immediately after praising the Catholic masters of polyphony that Butler begins his defense of church music in Book II.[39]

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[37] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 92.
[38] Butler, 92.
[39] Butler makes no direct reference to new trends and innovations in musical practice on the Continent, letting his list of composers provide a sufficient starting point for the investigation of contemporary musical practice.

In Defense of Music

If Book I contains Butler's especially erudite take on the standard topics found in many music treatises, Book II is unique among English treatises of this period for its careful description of instrumental music and full-throated defense of music in churches. Much of this specifically concerns defending the propriety of instrumental music in church. Butler sees this second book as the logical and necessary follow-up to the first book, answering the question of what one is to do with their newfound knowledge of music. He begins Book II:

> To the essence of an Art 2 things ar requisite [a *Systema* or constitution of Rules and Precepts; and soom profitable Uses or Ends, whereunto they ar referred.]
>
> The Principles and Precepts of this Art, in Singing and Setting, beeing declared; coom we nou to the profitable Uses thereof: which, thowgh they bee many, may bee all reduced unto two: [one Ecclesiastical, for the Service of God; the other Civil, for the Solace of Men.]
>
> These 2 Uses ar diversly performed: [by Voice, or by Instrument, or by bothe:] whereof, Musik is divided into Vocal, Instrumental, and Mixt.[40]

The unwieldy punctuation of the text notwithstanding, Butler lays out a clear justification for the existence of Book II: the student should know how to profitably use what they learned in Book I. Previous English theorists did not feel the need to take this second step, suggesting that the rise of Puritanism and the changing religious landscape created a need for this justification.[41] He then proceeds to divide music into three types: instrumental, vocal, and mixed. Here we are provided with lists of various instruments and genres which have been an area of some focus by musicologists.[42] Butler's lists of instruments provide a useful record of the types of instruments that were available in England at the time, but the specifics of the list are mainly a footnote to his larger argument.

[40] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 93.
[41] It could also be that previous writers took the use of music to be self-evident and found no need to justify it.
[42] See for example Gilbert Reaney's comments in the introduction to Butler, *The Principles of Music*, xi; Pruett, "Charles Butler—Musician, Grammarian, Apiarist," 507–8.

Even though Butler's defense of music was likely motivated by contemporary factors, he was joining a long tradition of writers who took up the topic. His approach, though, differs from his predecessors. The anonymous *The Praise of Musicke* (1586) devotes more than thirty pages to "the lawfull use of church musicke proved by authorities out of the Doctours" and other defenses of music.[43] This section is largely comprised of quotes from a wide selection of theologians. Hyun-Ah Kim cautions us to not be awed by all these citations, writing, "At first glance, one may be impressed by the author's wide reading of the patristics. He apparently read Augustine, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Tertullian, Eusebius and other Fathers for the specific purpose of composing. But he did so either through Latin translations or English versions, scattered in various commonplace books, Biblical commentaries and theological treatises."[44] *The Praise of Musicke* is thus largely a collection of the highlights of others and follows in the *laus musicae* tradition. It lets their words mainly stand on their own and does not get bogged down in careful analysis or argumentation.[45] Taking a rather different approach while acknowledging the same problem, Henry Peacham in *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622) only briefly addresses the topic of the instruments and singing in church. Peacham notes that people have opposed music, but he quickly dismisses their view. He writes,

> Never wise man (I thinke) questioned the lawfull use hereof, since it is an immediate gift of heaven, bestowed on man, whereby to praise and magnifie his Creator; to solace him in the midst of so many sorrowes and cares, wherewith life is hourely beset: and that by song, as letters, the memorie of Doctrine, and the benefits of God might be for ever preserved.[46]

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[43] *The Praise of Musicke Wherein Besides the Antiquitie, Dignitie, Delectation, & Vse Thereof in Ciuill Matters, Is Also Declared the Sober and Lawfull Vse of the Same in the Congregation and Church of God* (Oxford: Ioseph Barnes printer to the Vniuersitie, 1586), 116–52.
[44] Kim, *The Praise of Musicke, 1586*, 21–22.
[45] John Taverner's Gresham lectures also follow in this same tradition, but, as Joseph M. Ortiz notes, "with a philological rigor that is rarely found in such works." Taverner, *On the Origin and Progress*, 27.
[46] Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman*, 96.

In less than two pages he summarily dismisses any religious opposition to music as a belief only held by those of "brutish stupiditie." Butler's defense of church music would need a different approach.

Beginning with Chapter II, Butler sets out his comprehensive case for the propriety of music in church, both vocal polyphony and instrumental music.[47] Solidly in the spirit of the Reformation, Butler's main recourse is to direct citation of the Bible. He does cite a number of theologians in the annotations, but the core of his argument is based on his quotations and interpretations of biblical passages. Understandably most of Butler's references are to the Old Testament with a heavy emphasis on the Psalms, but he also seeks out the few New Testament passages that address the use of music in the church. Of course, a few citations will not be enough to convince his Puritan opponents of the rightness of his view, so Butler gives a broad exposition of the biblical passages on music, citing as many instances as he can find.

Butler's citation of New Testament passages relating to church music deserves special attention. The rhetoric of Chapter II §II, "Of the Continuance of Chyrch-Musik," is especially interesting. Butler notes the presence of church music since the time of the Israelites but claims that it "coold not bee so complete" due to their "warz and wandrings."[48] He feels no need to overstate the New Testament witness on instrumental music in churches. He writes,

> What Musik was used in the Apostles days, (wheither vocal onely, or instrumentall also with it) is not apparent: althowgh the Apostles exhortation seemeth to reqire as wel the Melodi of Instruments, as the concent of voices: *Bee ye filled with the spirit: speaking to your selvs in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs; singing and making Melodi in your harts to the Lord* [Ephesians 5:18–19].[49]

[47] For an overview of the English practice of church music at this time see Lionel Pike, "Church Music I: Before the Civil War," in *The Seventeenth Century*, ed. Ian Spink, vol. 3, The Blackwell History of Music in Britain (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 66–96. For more on how English church music developed after the Reformation see Chiara Bertoglio, *Reforming Music: Music and the Religious Reformations of the Sixteenth Century* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2017), 333–81.
[48] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 105.
[49] Butler, 105.

On the surface this is not an unambiguous passage about instrumental music, but Butler inserts a lengthy note at "making Melodi" that explains how the term in the original Greek "signifyeth to play on a string-instrument."[50] Butler follows this by quoting Revelation 14:2–3 as Biblical evidence of mixed music: "And the holy ghost, alluding to this mixt Musik of the Chyrch militant, dooest thus expres the heavenly Harmoni of the Chyrch triumphant: *I heard the voice of Harpers, harping with their Harps. And they sung as it were a nue Song before the throne &c*."[51] There is a subtlety to this scriptural passage. English translations of Revelation 14:2 have an interesting discrepancy. The King James Version from 1611 gives the same reading as Butler, as does the Geneva Bible from 1560. The Wycliffe Bible gives the passage as "and the voice which I heard, was as of many harpers harping in their harps."[52] Hearing a voice that sounded *as* that of harpers harping with their harps does not help Butler's cause, but hearing the voice *of* harpers harping with their harps does. If Butler is trying to argue for the propriety of instruments in Anglican churches, he was wise to avoid the Wycliffe Bible. Also he sidesteps possible charges of Catholic sympathy. (Wycliffe made his translation from the Vulgate and not from the Hebrew and Greek sources.) Using the same reading as is found in the King James Version also makes political sense: it was authorized by the father of Charles I, the dedicatee of the treatise. After his quote from Revelation, Butler then goes on to claim that after the early church had recovered from its "poverti and persecution" instruments became part of worship: "But housoever this ordinance of God might for a time bee interrupted; yet so soone as the Chyrch obteined rest, and, thereby, means and opportuniti; they straightway reneued this religious duty, and rejoyced

[50] Butler, 108.
[51] Butler, 105.
[52] Both of these variants can be found in modern English translations. (Martin Luther's German translation of this passage corresponds with Wycliffe's.)

therewith to prais the Lord, in their great Congregations."[53] For Butler, there might be financial and practical reasons that make it difficult to use instruments in churches, but there are not any theological reasons to avoid instruments.

As would be expected in a learned defense of church music, Butler does not restrict himself to the Bible. He cites numerous Church Fathers and medieval writers in support of music in the church. These citations, however, rarely have to do with the theological arguments that these authors make. He instead treats these Church Fathers as reporters of liturgical practices. Isidore of Seville, St. Jerome, Athanasius, and Eusebius are all cited for their observations about church music, especially the singing of Psalms.[54] Significantly in this instance, Butler does not treat any of these writers as authorities because of their status as patriarchs or doctors of the church. Isidore is cited as an authority on liturgical practice on "the old Chyrch of the Jues, the Primitive Chyrch." Jerome is cited for writing about churches maintaining choirs. Eusebius is cited for what he reports about Egyptian churches singing Psalms. These three happen to be important theologians, but Butler uses them mostly as witnesses to earlier practices in the church. Their theological discussions on the role of music do not figure at this point, only their descriptions that music was heard in various ancient churches.

Butler's approach to these Church Fathers does not arise from ignorance of the content of their writings but instead appears to be a very intentional rhetorical stance taken in order to better position himself in respect to the theological views of his Puritan opponents. When one of his sources makes a point that is especially relevant to the English context, Butler is sure to discuss it at some length. For instance, Athanasius, "that good orthodox Bishop of Alexandria," is quoted for his interpretation of the Psalms and how they should be sung. This varies somewhat from his

[53] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 105.
[54] Butler, 105–6.

treatment of the aforementioned authorities. Here Athanasius's interpretive authority appears to have some relevance. Butler comments,

> To sing *Psalms* artificially, is not to make a shew of cunning Musik; but an argument that the cogitations of our minds do aptly agree with our Musik: and that Reading which observeth the law of Feete & Numbers, is a signe of a sober and qiët affection of the minde. For to prais God upon the wel-tuned Cymbals, upon the Harp, and Psalteri of ten strings, is a note and signification that there is such a concent betweene the partes of the body, as there is among the strings.[55]

For Butler, singing psalms is a sober and reasoned activity in praise of God and not a display of hedonistic virtuosity. Even though Butler agrees with Athanasius on the propriety of singing Psalms and thinks that instruments should be used in the church, he does not expect the simple fact that Athanasius wrote in support of something to be enough to convince his readers. It is precisely Athanasius's concern for sobriety in music in general while still supporting instrumental music that drives home Butler's point. Athanasius's positive allusion to the biblical King David should also be read alongside Butler's early admonition for Prince Charles to model himself on the harp-playing monarch after God's own heart.

Butler's pragmatic citation of a slew of early Christian writers supports the view that he was more concerned with the historical usages described by these writers than he was in accepting their theological views. Theodoret, Sozomen, Isidore, and Basil the Great are cited simply because they described the use of antiphons.[56] It would probably be overstating the facts to claim that Butler took a low view of these patriarchs and historians of the early Christian church, but Butler does carefully position himself so that his claims cannot easily be dismissed. A Puritan reader of Butler's treatise who does not bestow any particular authority on previous interpreters of scripture must still contend with the historical use of psalms described by these

[55] Butler, 106.
[56] Butler, 107.

writers. Butler has not completely answered the charges of the Puritan opponent to various types of church music. However, by directly going back to the practice described in scripture and then contending (with the help of various early witnesses) that this was also the practice in the early Apostolic church, he is able to claim a certain continuity for a practice that is directly biblical. Butler ends this section by claiming, "Since these Times this sacred Musik has ever been used by the godly in the hous of God, for his Divine Service and woorship, unto this day. And if at any time it have been abused, it is a poore Reason, that therefore it shoolde not bee restored to its ancient right use again."[57] Abuses of music are to be condemned, but that need not condemn all music. Indeed, Butler's main goal is to establish a biblical precedent for the use of instruments in churches.[58] Butler's closing comment thus acts to connect Books I and II, bridging the practical instructions for properly making music with his moral instructions.

The Epilogue to Book II is akin to a benediction exhorting the reader to carefully consider all Butler has written and to follow his advice. Although containing fewer footnotes than some chapters, the Epilogue still displays the rhetorical drive of the rest of the treatise. Biblical citations abound, along with quotes from and citations to Augustine and Horace. While this chapter contains a small amount of French, Butler feels compelled to give a poem by Guillaume Du Bartas in English translation.[59] Interestingly, after the poem Butler cites the Reformed theologian Peter Martyr Vermigli.[60] There appears to be a typographical error in

[57] Butler, 108.
[58] Butler does not only display this rhetorical strategy when discussing the religious uses of music; for example, the opening of Book I Chapter I "Of the Moodes" is filled with the same extensive citations from writers on music from the preceding two millennia. Whereas in Book II Chapter II §II many of the citations were foregrounded by their placement in the text or as marginal citations (drawing special attention to Butler's biblical sources), most of the citations in Book I Chapter I are in the notes at the end of the chapter.
[59] The reader is evidently expected to have a command of Latin and know at least some Greek and a little Hebrew, but a knowledge of French is not assumed.
[60] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 133. See Pietro Martire Vermigli, *The Common Places of the Most Famous and Renowmed Diuine Doctor Peter Martyr Diuided into Foure Principall Parts: With a Large Addition of Manie Theologicall and Necessarie Discourses, Some Neuer Extant before. Translated and Partlie Gathered by Anthonie*

Butler's citation, but the passage he apparently intended to reference suggests that Butler's views on music could actually be in harmony with Reformed theology.[61] Instead of mounting a theological argument against this prominent theologian, Butler instead keeps his argument more narrowly focused and concentrates on the areas where they are in agreement. Here he concurs with the theologian about the potential abuses of various types of recreation ("inveying against the shameful Apostaci of some lewd Poetasters"); by removing "all these dangerous stumbling-bloks" that come from improper activities, children "in their holsom and necessari Recreations, they might, without let, walk safely and upright."[62] Butler turns a potential theological enemy (and friend of the Puritans) into an ally who also expects the same degree of sobriety in all aspects of life. Butler chooses not to make a broad theological argument; instead, he focuses narrowly on the propriety of the sober and proper use of instruments in churches.

Presenting a theological defense of practical music was a timely and practical decision for Butler. There are strong resonances between his warnings against lasciviousness in the Epilogue to Book II and William Prynne's *Histrio-Mastix* of 1633 which frequently decried music for being lascivious. (Prynne's title page is shown in Figure 5.4.) Prynne's discussions of music are primarily concerned with its use in the theater, but the general stance he takes against music is noteworthy.[63] He does acknowledge that music has been historically affirmed by the

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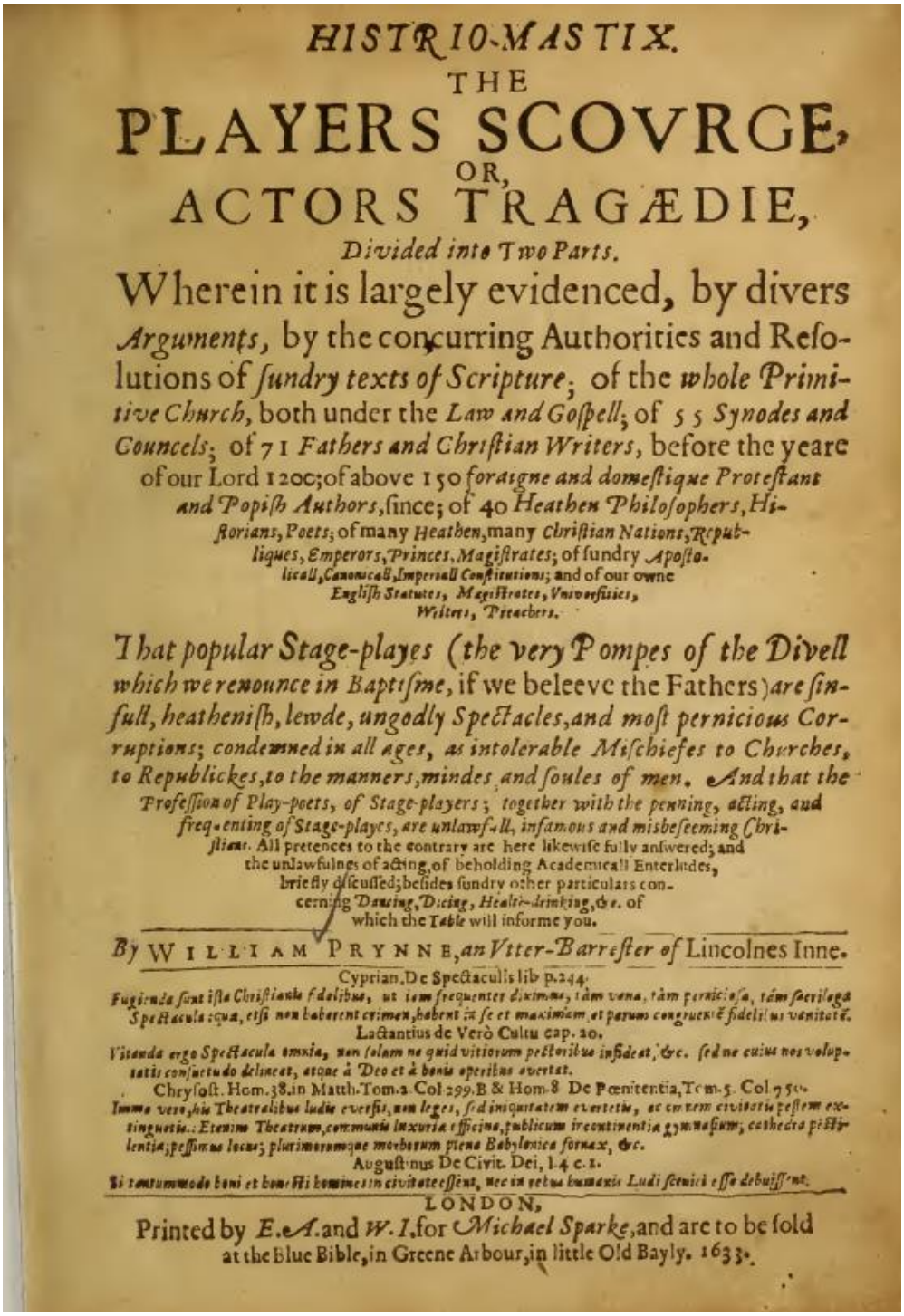
Marten, One of the Sewers of Hir Maiesties Most Honourable Chamber, trans. Anthonie Marten (London, 1583), section 3, chapter 3, paragraph 26.

[61] Butler's citations typically appear to be accurate, though they are usually given in abbreviated form. Butler's marginal note to "*Martyr*" is to "*Locur. commun. Classis 3. C. 3. Parag. 25*." The relevance of this passage is somewhat unclear as it is mainly a discussion of the Apostle John's treatment of the theological concept of adoption as sons of God. The reference should probably be to paragraph 26 which has the marginal label "What is to be said of them which live unpurelie and yet confesse that the articles of the faith be true" and concerns right standards of Christian living.

[62] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 134.

[63] John Hollander notes that contrary to what Prynne might have wanted, the extent of legal restriction of music was somewhat limited in the decades immediately following his writing. "But despite cases like that of Prynne, it has been observed that the 'puritan' (in the strict sense) legislation against music during the Commonwealth was directed against ecclesiastical rather than against civil uses." Hollander, *The Untuning of the Sky*, 260.

Bible and theologians, but he is rather skeptical of many of its uses. As part of his larger attack on all things theatrical, Prynne clearly lays out his argument against music.



HISTRIO-MASTIX.

THE

PLAYERS SCOVRGE,

OR,

ACTORS TRAGÆDIE,

Divided into Two Parts.

Wherein it is largely evidenced, by divers *Arguments*, by the concurring Authorities and Resolutions of *sundry texts of Scripture*; of the *whole Primitive Church*, both under the *Law and Gospell*; of 55 *Synodes and Councels*; of 71 *Fathers and Christian Writers*, before the yeare of our Lord 1200; of above 150 *foraigne and domestique Protestant and Popish Authors*, since; of 40 *Heathen Philosophers, Historians, Poets*; of many *Heathen*, many *Christian Nations, Republiques, Emperors, Princes, Magistrates*; of sundry *Apostolicall, Canonicall, Imperiall Constitutions*; and of our owne *English Statutes, Magistrates, Universities, Writers, Preachers.*

That popular Stage-playes (*the very Pompes of the Divell which we renounce in Baptisme*, if we beleeve the Fathers) *are sinfull, heathenish, lewde, ungodly Spectacles, and most pernicious Corruptions; condemned in all ages, as intolerable Mischiefes to Churches, to Republickes, to the manners, mindes, and soules of men. And that the Profession of Play-poets, of Stage-players; together with the penning, acting, and frequenting of Stage-playes, are unlawfull, infamous and misbeseeming Christians.* All pretences to the contrary are here likewise fully answered; and the unlawfulnes of acting, of beholding Academicall Enterludes, briefly discussed; besides sundry other particulars concerning *Dancing, Dicing, Healths-drinking*, &c. of which the *Table* will informe you.

By WILLIAM PRYNNE, *an Vtter-Barrester of* Lincolnes Inne.

Cyprian. De Spectaculis lib p. 244.

Fugienda sunt ista Christianis fidelibus, ut tam frequenter diximus, tam vana, tam perniciosa, tam sacrilega Spectacula: quæ, etsi non haberent crimen, habent in se et maximam et parum congruentem fidelibus vanitatem.

Lactantius de Verò Cultu cap. 20.

Vitanda ergo Spectacula omnia, non solum ne quid vitiorum pectoribus insideat, &c. sed ne cuius nos voluptatis consuetudo delineat, atque à Deo et à bonis operibus avertat.

Chrysost. Hom. 38. in Matth. Tom. 2. Col. 299. B & Hom. 8 De Pœnitentia, Tom. 5. Col. 750.

Imme vero, his Theatralibus ludis eversis, non leges, sed iniquitatem everteris, ac omnem civitatis pestem exstinguetis. Etenim Theatrum, communis luxuriæ officina, publicum incontinentiæ gymnasium, cathedra pestilentiæ, pessimus locus; plurimorumque morborum plena Babylonica fornax, &c.

Augustinus De Civit. Dei, l. 4 c. 1.

Si tantummodo boni et honesti homines in civitate essent, nec in vetus humanis Ludi scenici esse debuissent.

LONDON,

Printed by *E. A.* and *W. I.* for *Michael Sparke*, and are to be sold at the Blue Bible, in Greene Arbour, in little Old Bayly. 1633.

Figure 5.4 Prynne, *Histrio-Mastix*, title page

> That which is alwaies accompanied with effeminate lust-provoking Musicke, is doubtlesse inexpedient and unlawfull unto Christians.
>
> But Stage-playes are always accompanied with such Musicke.
>
> Therefore they are doubtlesse inexpedient and unlawfull unto Christians.
>
> The Major is easily confirmed, by proving effeminate lust-enflaming Musicke, unlawfull. That Musicke of it selfe is lawfull, usefull, and commendable; no man, no Christian dares denie, since the *Scriptures*, *Fathers*, and generally *all Christians*, *all Pagan Authors extant, doe with one consent averre it*. But that lascivious, amorous, effeminate, voluptuous Musicke, (which I onely here incounter,) should be either expedient, or lawfull unto Christians, there is no so audacious as to justifie it, since both Scripture, Fathers, moderne Christian Writers; yea and Heathen Nations, States, and Authors, have past a doome upon it.[64]

This passage, like so much of Prynne's extremely verbose book, is filled with marginal citations of all the authorities he mentions. Although his attack is specifically on the use of the "amorous Pastoralls, lascivious ribaldrous Songs and Ditties" that were the topic of the previous section, Prynne's lack of musical specificity and wide-ranging prose make it clear that he is suspicious of a significant portion of all music.[65] In spite of the length of his criticisms (the book is more than 1000 pages long), the specifics of what Prynne disagrees with are difficult to pin down. Linda Phyllis Austern notes, "Religiously motivated writings on music, from official Church of England documents to radical pamphlets, rarely give a sense of how English people actually engaged with the art."[66] This is certainly true for Prynne, who begins from an unshakeable moral position and argues from there, not letting the specifics of actual practice trouble his argument. Even though he gives a caveat that all Christian writers approve of some type of music, one could be forgiven for coming to the conclusion that all music is suspect.[67]

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[64] Prynne, *Histrio-Mastix*, 274–75.

[65] The section after this argues that laughter is sinful; Prynne is by no means making a narrow argument about the theater but is involved in a much larger project of purifying social life in general. See Prynne, 262, 290ff.

[66] Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind*, 53.

[67] See how Prynne approvingly quotes the words of St. Basil in no uncertain terms: "Of those arts which depend upon the studie of vanity, whether it be the art of Musicke, of Dancing, of sounding Pipes, or such like, as soone as the action it selfe hath ceased, the worke it selfe declareth it selfe, and that altogether according to the Apostles sentence; whose end is destruction and perdition: Let these things suffice to be spoken against those who thorow overmuch effeminacy give themselves wholy over to delights, and that continually; Or else against those who in the dayes of mirth or gladnesse suppose of marriages or feasts, doe more diligently procure Waites, Musicke, rounds

Prynne mounts an attack that anyone in Butler's position would feel compelled to answer. Instead of objecting directly to Prynne's position, Butler again mostly agrees with his potential opponent, stressing instead the importance of a properly sober life. Butler writes, "This our Sobrieti, as at all times, so chiefly in our Pastimes, is to bee used: that by Intemperance and luxuri we abuse not our liberti, nor pollute our honest mirth, with any kinde of turpitude or Lasciviousnes: which ar things in themselvs so odious, that by the common verdict both of good and bad, of godly and profane, they are condemned."[68] Butler deflects the specifics of Prynne's attack on certain uses of music by claiming that everyone knows that these are indeed abuses. The types of church music that Butler praises must be of a different sort entirely. For Butler, the true Christian (and also the Anglican church) can and must support the use of vocal and instrumental music in churches while still objecting to the ills that its abuse can cause. It is on this note stressing personal sobriety while still supporting the use of elaborate church music that Butler ends his treatise with a final benediction:

> Yea let us, in our whole conversation, eschew evil and dooe good: let us bee zelous in the service of God, abhorring Sacrilege and Superstition: let us bee faithful in the loov of our neighbour, abhorring Robberi and Oppression: and let us so use the transitori Pleasures of this life; that wee lose not the permanent joys of the life to coom.[69]

In his closing remarks we are left with the image of Charles Butler the country parson more than of Butler the music theorist.

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and dancing, when as none of these is required of us: who have learned by the teaching of the Scripture, that the wrath of God is bent against all such studies and conversation of life. Therefore for feare of imminent evill from hence-forth amend this wicked customs of your life." Prynne, *Histrio-Mastix*, 278. The conclusion that Prynne really wanted to get rid of all music goes too far. As Austern writes, "Contrary to long-standing assumption, not one of the English interlocuters with a genuine agenda of social or religious reform was categorically opposed to music or supportive of all current practice. The art itself was never in danger; there was no coordinated 'anti-music movement.'" Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind*, 15.

[68] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 132.

[69] Butler, 135. Butler's closing passage is reminiscent of 1 Peter 3:10–13, but the somewhat generic benediction shares resonances with many passages from the Pauline Epistles.

From the opening Dedication to Charles to the closing Epilogue, *The Principles of Musik* presents a thorough defense of the propriety of music in the church. My reading of Butler's treatise challenges the idea that music theory in seventeenth century England was practical and insular. For Butler the "principles of music" are not simply the fundamentals that one must know in order to read and perform music (although, this is certainly part of Butler's idea). These principles also extend to the fundamental nature and uses of liturgical music. After all, this treatise is entitled *The Principles of Musik, in Singing and Setting: With the two-fold Use therof, [Ecclesiastical and Civil.]*. Butler provides principles for singing and writing music but also principles about ecclesiastical and civil music. His comprehensive treatment of music extends beyond the simple didactic elements that comprise most of Book I to his impassioned defense of the propriety and utility of a number of types of liturgical music that makes up the majority of Book II. The second book is no mere addition to an otherwise practical treatise. Rather, the entirety of Butler's treatise works toward the goal of justifying the employment of music in the church and society while providing practical steps to ensure the propriety of this music.

English Music and Butler's Argument

Butler's *Principles of Musik* occupies a unique place among English music theory treatises written before the Civil War in that it provides both practical information on the basics of music and a thoroughgoing defense of music in the same volume. Of the other treatises, only Thomas Ravenscroft's *A Briefe Discourse of the True (but Neglected) Use of Charact'ring the Degrees* (discussed in Chapter 4) attempts something similar, but in his case he combined learned discussions about the importance of music with a lengthy songbook. (The music-theoretical content advertised in the title makes up very little of the treatise.) Ravenscroft does not approach the level of sophisticated argumentation found in Butler. However, Ravenscroft and

Butler are responding to a society that wanted music to be satisfying both intellectually and aurally.[70] By no means were they the only authors who picked up on this trend. The authors of conduct manuals had long included discussions of music in their works along with instructions that the reader should gain some musical proficiency. We have seen how Morley drew on these models from conduct manuals to stress the importance of a good musical education. We have also seen how *The Praise of Musicke* and John Taverner's Gresham lectures gave historical and ethical defenses of music.

All of this shows that Butler was not a trailblazer when he decided to defend music from its critics, but Butler's treatise has a timeliness and urgency to it that the others lack. Book II of *The Principles of Musik* is largely a defense of instrumental music in churches, a practice that had increasingly come under suspicion in the 1630s. Although *The Praise of Musicke* and Taverner's Gresham lectures were both produced in a similar context around the turn of the seventeenth century, they are more deeply steeped in an older *laus musicae* tradition that was more concerned with historical arguments than contemporary society and its evolving views on music. By the time Butler published his treatise, the politics of defending music had changed. He appears acutely aware of this. As a vicar and a writer on music, Butler was ideally positioned to expertly explain the technical details of music and to make a careful theological defense of the proper use of the art. Prynne's attack on music is all-encompassing and yet vague; it is difficult to pin down exactly what is so bad about music aside from its association with the theater, which he views as inherently evil.[71] Butler, on the other hand, mixes a general defense of music with

[70] This is the "both from the ears and mind" that Austern refers to in her title. For a broader investigation of this see Austern, *Both from the Ears and Mind*.
[71] Christopher Marsh neatly summarizes Prynne's view of the theater: "William Prynne did not like any of it." That puts it mildly. Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 132.

actionable guidelines for performers.[72] *The Principles of Musik* models a type of music theory that is actively engaged in broader social issues while also being concerned with the practical necessities of basic musical instruction.

The Principles of Musik highlights so many of the ideas and tensions that motivated English writers on music for the previous half century and attempts to condense them into a single volume that is usable by the novice musician and the learned scholar. *The Principles of Musik* is musically backward-looking while socially forward-looking. Butler makes no attempt to hide his admiration for and indebtedness to Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction* even though it was published thirty-nine years before *The Principles of Musik*. Indeed, that is the most recent music-theoretical source that Butler cites. At the end of Book I, Butler instructs the student who wants to learn more advanced compositional writing to read Morley. A student who has mastered what Butler presented could easily progress to Campion's treatise instead, but Butler makes no such suggestion. Butler appears quite content to keep most of his theorizing rooted in the late sixteenth century. (The most obviously innovative feature of the treatise is it use of the reformed orthography that Butler proposed in 1633.) This conservatism makes the timeliness of Book II all the more surprising. It is quite up to date, of the moment, and concerned with musical life in the 1630s. Not only is his defense of instruments in church timely, his concern for civil music shows his awareness of the increasing social opportunities for music-making. In this way, Butler's treatise looks forward to the even greater flowering of instrumental music (and related books on how to play instruments) that occurred after the Restoration. That later writers recognized this is shown in how frequently Butler was cited in Playford's various editions of *A Brief Introduction*

[72] See for example Butler's instructions for how singers should present themselves in church. Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, 116–17.

to the Skill of Musick.[73] Clearly Butler's treatise had something to offer later generations of English musicians.

[73] Herissone provides a helpful appendix of these citations throughout the many edition of Playford's treatise. Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 253–70.

Conclusion: The Practice of Music Theory

> The Art of Musik, (Musical Reader) for the important and manifold Uses thereof, is found so necessari in the life of Man; that even in these giddy and nuefangled times, it is stil retained by the best, and in some mesure respected of all.
>
> —Charles Butler, *The Principles of Musik* (1636)[1]

Charles Butler speaks for all of the writers on music covered in this dissertation when he affirms the continuing need for music in the "giddy and newfangled" times brought on by a changing world. In the half century covered here, authors provided a variety of justifications for the study of music: to fit in socially, to provide recreation, to praise God. These writings had a similar diversity in their forms, ranging from rudimentary primers to full-blown and learned treatises on composition. This body of writings is also notable for what it does not cover; these treatises largely avoid detailed discussions of modal theory and eschew the speculative aspects of music theory, even though both of these topics were important in Continental theory from around this time. Part of what made these times so newfangled was how distinctly English they were. In the preceding decades, England had increasingly become religiously divorced from much of continental Europe. And for the first time, there was a significant number of authors writing about music in English. In this era English was not an international language. While the English market was attuned to the latest trends in music being written on the Continent, it was far less concerned with the latest music theory coming from across the channel.

Periodization in history is always arbitrary to a certain extent. While the reigns of monarchs or the outbreaks of wars make neat start and end dates, their direct relevance to other

[1] Butler, *The Principles of Musik*, ¶¶1r.

aspects of life is often less clear.[2] The decision to begin this study with the earliest extant music treatises printed in English (starting with Bathe's treatise and *The Pathway*, both published in 1596) was not foreordained; but it does provide a convenient starting point, and suggests that this is a new body of work disconnected from earlier writing on music from the British Isles.[3] Deciding to end this study before the outbreak of the English Civil War (1642–1651) might appear even more arbitrary than my choice to start with the earliest treatises in English. I do not claim that the Civil War itself led to a radical reconceptualization of music theory, but a variety of factors came together to produce a distinct body of work in the latter half of the seventeenth century. There is a gap in English treatises from Butler's treatise in 1636 until the first edition of John Playford's *A Breefe Introduction to the Skill of Musick* appeared in 1654.[4] Playford's publications would come to dominate the English market for most of the rest of the century. Around this same time, the English translation of Descartes' *Excellent Compendium of Musick* (1653) was first published. (It was written in 1618 and circulated in manuscript but was not published until 1650.) This publication is an important watershed in the development of scientific thinking about music in England.[5] Following the Restoration in 1660, the Royal Society was founded and there was an explosion of instrumental tutors. That is, the second half of the seventeenth century saw a much greater interest in scientific thinking and practical

[2] This issue did not arise only from modern scholarship. There were prominent debates over periodization and the law throughout seventeenth-century England. Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty*, 59.
[3] This suggestion is not entirely out of line, since relatively little work on music theory in England was produced for the better part of a century before Bathe wrote his treatises.
[4] Playford published *A Musicall Banquet* in 1651. It begins with a brief primer on playing the viol, but it is primarily a music book. For a timeline of the music treatises published in England during the long seventeenth century see Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 249–52.
[5] It is for this reason that Wardhaugh begins his study in this year. Wardhaugh, *Music, Experiment and Mathematics in England, 1653–1705*. Earlier in the century Francis Bacon produced pioneering studies about the physics of sound and acoustics, but others did not follow his lead in earnest until a few decades later. Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 34–35.

instruction on playing instruments. These ideas were nascent in the period covered by this dissertation, but they had not yet become dominant.

As we have seen, even this relatively small group of treatises written before the Civil War displays remarkable diversity in coverage, approach, and goals. For example, Elway Bevin's *A Briefe and Short Instruction on the Art of Musicke* (1631) and Charles Butler's *The Principles of Musik* (1636) both claim to be introductory texts on music, but they could not be more different from one another. We may recall from Chapter 5 that Bevin's volume is comprised almost entirely of a collection of canons and provides very little instruction of any kind apart from the canons themselves. Butler's treatise, on the other hand, combines an erudite historical and religious defense of music into an introductory textbook.[6] Even though most of these treatises were aimed at musical amateurs, that does not mean that they shared similar expectations for their users.[7] A complete novice could open *The Pathway to Musicke* and get a reasonable sense of the basics of how written music works. The student who comprehended its content could have a realistic expectation of being able to adequately sing from a partbook. It is a modest book with modest goals. Morley's student in *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597) is similarly supposed to know next to nothing about music and must begin with the very basics. From there these two books dramatically diverge. Morley continues to introduce more complex topics and eventually progresses to composition in half a dozen voices. Mastering the content of this treatise would entail a significant amount of work and a serious time commitment. Only at

[6] Taking an entirely different third approach, Francis Bacon's writing on music explored acoustics and took an experimental approach to the study of sound. (His fullest explication of this was only published posthumously in 1626.) As influential as they would eventually become, Bacon's writings do not appear to have been generally known by the music treatise writers discussed here.

[7] Herissone notes that this focus on amateurs continued throughout the entire seventeenth century. Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England*, 6.

the shallowest level are they both useful for the musical novice. Which is not to say that they were unconcerned with musical practice.

In a sense, all of the treatises I have covered are concerned with practical music, focusing on the performance and composition of music and not discoursing on *musica mundana* or similar speculative topics. But as this study has shown, "practical music" is a broad and diverse category that can encompass a huge range of interests and abilities on the part of the reader. We need not severely delimit what can properly be thought of as music theory. Instead, these treatises encourage us to have a more open and capacious notion of what music practice texts are about and how flexible they can be in their content and use. A narrow view of *musica practica* ignores the frontmatter to these publications and leaves us only with formalist instructions on how to sing and compose music. A broader view presses us to rethink our received notions of what "practical music theory" is. In the case of Thomas Ravenscroft's *A Briefe Discourse of the True (but Neglected) Use of Charact'ring the Degrees* (1614), to only acknowledge its narrowly practical aspects is to willfully misread the book, the majority of which is made up of a defense of music, encomiastic poems, and a songbook. In an ironic twist, the *a priori* assumption that all discussions of the technical aspects of music must be practical obscures how strange and divorced from practice some of these passages can be. (Bathe's highly obtuse Musical Sword for aiding in composing might be a high point in this category of impractical practical theory.)

It is tempting to put some of the blame for the problem of what "practical music" is on the reception of Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*. As the best-known English treatise from this time, it is the only work discussed here that actually uses the term "practical" in its title. And for good reason. The bulk of the treatise indeed appears to deal with actual musical practice. If Morley's treatise is the touchstone for English theory at this time,

it is easy to see why these treatises have all been grouped together into something we label an "English practical tradition." This dissertation has argued that this characterization is not so much wrong as it is incomplete. These treatises are practical but in a qualified sense. And it is precisely in those qualifications where so much of their interest lies. The preceding chapters have attempted to show just how diverse and multi-faceted the seemingly uniform world of "practical theory" can be.

As I have noted many times throughout this dissertation, the music-theoretical content of most of these treatises is well known and has already been exhaustively studied by musicologists such as Cooper, Owens, and Herissone. My aim has been instead to put the music-theoretical claims of these treatises in dialogue with the broader intellectual and social worlds of England around the turn of the seventeenth century. Thus, I am less concerned about precisely which mensuration signs Ravenscroft included in his treatise and am more concerned about the type of work that a discussion of mensuration signs does for his larger project. The example of Dowland's translation of Ornithoparchus's *Micrologus* offers another example: what importance could an English translation of a century-old German treatise have for an early-seventeenth century English reader, not to mention in Dowland's own professional life? In trying to answer questions such as these, seemingly simple pedagogical texts of musical practice reveal more than we might suspect about this period and its authors. From Bathe to Butler we are presented with an array of options for what the practice of music theory can be.

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