

14TH C. 3: SIMPLICITY AND COMPLEXITY

1. Italy in the Fourteenth Century
 - a. Art
 - i. Giotto
 - ii. Andrea da Firenze
 - iii. Jacopo dal Casentino
2. Other Manuscripts and Problems with studying manuscripts.
 - a. Other Florentine manuscripts: Panciatichi, Pit., San Lorenzo 2211
 - b. The Remainder of the picture: Paduan Fragments, other fragments, liturgical books.
3. Simplicity: Cantus Planus Binatim
 - a. Reemergence(?) of simple (pre-Leonin) polyphonic traditions
 - b. Continues at least until 1750 in Europe and until 1920 in Iceland!
 - c. Purely Sacred polyphonic tradition
4. Other Sacred traditions: Cuthbert, “Tipping the Iceberg”
 - a. Working through the numbers
5. Keyboard traditions: the Faenza codex
6. The More Subtle Art
 - a. Old view: Mannerism

“Toward the end of the fourteenth century the evolution of notation led to a phase of unparalleled complexity and intricacy. Musicians, no longer satisfied with the rhythmic subtleties of the *Ars Nova*, began to indulge in complicated rhythmic tricks and in the invention of highly involved methods of notating them. It is in this period that musical notation far exceeds its natural limitations as a servant to music, but rather becomes its master, a goal in itself and an arena for intellectual sophistries. [...]

Frequently these elaborations of notation are mere tricks of affected erudition, since the effects desired could be represented in much simpler ways. In other cases they are indispensable, leading then to a product of such rhythmical complexity that the modern reader may doubt whether an actual performance was ever possible or intended. Regardless of their artistic value, these ‘pathological cases’ are of particular interest to the student of notation.”

(From Willi Apel, *The Notation of Polyphonic Music, 900–1600*. Cambridge, Mass.: The Medieval Academy of America, 1945. © The Medieval Academy of America. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <http://ocw.mit.edu/fairuse>.)

- b. *Augenmusik* — “music for the eyes”

- c. Newer view: struggle between *dulcedo* (sweetness) and *subtilitas* (a more intellectual side). More intellectually sophisticated
 - d. Newest View: Anne Stone, 1990s: *Ars subtilior* as precision
 - i. Prescriptive vs. Descriptive Notation
 - ii. Johnny Hodges's Chorus: The Chronological Duke Ellington and his orchestra 1941. "Things Ain't What They Used To Be" (2:18)
7. Examples of *subtilitas*
- a. Rossi codex vs. Later versions: *Naschoso el viso*
 - b. Later examples of Rhythmic precision: **Mod A**, Zachara Credo no. 21. Rodericus, "Angelorum Psalat"
 - c. Zacara, *Sumite Karissime* (one true *subtilior* work. Ciconia also wrote one)
 - d. Baude Cordier, *Belle bonne sage. Tout par compass*
 - e. Non-"rhythmically precise" *subtilior*: arguments against Anne Stone's view and back toward Willi Apel's: Encoding of Zacara's *Sumite Karissime*.
 - f. "I admire her immeasurably": *Je la remire sans mesure*.
 - g. Earlier (mid-century): Rondeau, Machaut, *Ma fin est mon commencement*
 - h. Solage, *Fumeux Fume*.
8. If time: Zachara (fl. c. 1400), Parody Mass, otherwise, next class

Next class: The End of the Trecento and The Rise of European Music

Johannes Ciconia and the Motet

The English Sound

Fauxbourdon

Early songs of Guillaume Du Fay

Next Thursday: Midterm

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

21M.220 Early Music
Fall 2010

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.