https://theses.gla.ac.uk/

Theses Digitisation:

https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/research/enlighten/theses/digitisation/

This is a digitised version of the original print thesis.

Copyright and moral rights for this work are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This work cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Enlighten: Theses
https://theses.gla.ac.uk/
research-enlighten@glasgow.ac.uk

Contrafactum in Central European Manuscripts:

Case Studies from Trent 90

Sanna Raninen

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music

School of Culture and Creative Arts

College of Arts

University of Glasgow

September 2010

ProQuest Number: 10754025

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript
and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed,
a note will indicate the deletion.

ProQuest 10754025

Published by ProQuest LLC (2018). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.
This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

GLASGOW
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

Contents

Manuscript Sigla iv

1. Introduction 1

1.1 Preliminary Studies 1

1.2 Contrafactum – Second-hand, Second Best? 2

1.3 Modern Approaches to Fifteenth-Century Text-Music Relations 3

1.4 Methods and Structure 4

2. The Relations between Text and Music in the Fifteenth Century 7

2.1 Methods of Notation in the Fifteenth Century 7

2.2 Thoughts from the Fifteenth Century about Text-Music Relations 8

2.3 Poetic Structures Influencing the Music 11

2.4 Theories on Text Setting Practices and Contrafactum 14

3. Scribal Practices in the Fifteenth Century 15

3.1 The Significance of Written Music in Medieval Memory 15

3.2 The Scribal Work as a Scribal Performance 16

3.3 The Fifteenth-Century Scribes at Work 19

3.4 Johannes Wiser, the Scribe of the Trent Codices 20

4. Latinizing the Vernacular Song: *O Rosa Bella, O Tu Mi Maria* 23

4.1 Porto, ff.54v-56 24

4.2 Wolf, ff.34v-36 25

4.3 Tr90, ff.361v-362 26

5. Textless Vernacular Song in Two Contrafacta 29

5.1 The Original Chanson: *Puis Que Fortune* 29

5.2 Tr93/90, ff.366v/296v: *Refove Unice* 30

5.3 Spec, p.386 (f.K15v): *Regi Seculorum* 32

6. Dufay's *Le Serviteur* Reworked 35

6.1 Dij. ff.89v-90 35

6.2 Wolf, ff.24v-25 37

6.3 Tr90, ff.358v-359: *Superno Nunc Emittitur* 38

7. English Song in Contrafactum 40

7.1 Mel, ff.61v-63: *So Ys Emprentid* 41

7.2 Tr90, ff.283v-284: *Sancta Maria Succurre Miseris* 42

8. English Song Once More 45

8.1 Mel, ff.65v-67: *Myn Hertis Lust* 45

8.2 M5023, ff.13v-15: *Ave Verum Gaudium* 46

8.3 Tr90, ff.462v-463: *Beata Es Virgo Maria* 48

9. Conclusion 51

Bibliography 53

Manuscript Sigla:

Dij	Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 517
Esc	Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo del Escorial, Biblioteca y Archivo de Música, MS IV.a.24
F176	Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl.XIX.176
M5023	Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod.lat.mon. 5023
Mel	New Haven, Yale University, Beineke Library for Rare Books and Manuscripts, MS91
Pix	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, f.fr. 15123
Porto	Porto, Biblioteca Pública Municipal, MS 714
Spec	Hradec Králové, Krajske Muzeum, Knihovna, MS II A 7
Tr88-92	Trento, Castello del Buonconsiglio, Monumenti e Collezioni Provinciali, MSS 88-92 (1375-1379)
Tr93	Trento, Museo Diocesano, MS 'BL'
Wolf	Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, MS Guelf.287.Extrav

1. Introduction

A contrafactum is a musical composition whose original text has been replaced with a substitution. The term covers all types of text substitutions, and relates to practices that were common in Europe in medieval and early modern times. In the second half of the fifteenth century, contrafacta are mostly compositions in which the vernacular text is replaced with one in Latin. Even a brief glance through David Fallows's comprehensive *Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs 1415-1480*[1] shows how commonplace the text replacement practice was during the period, and also how a majority of songs remain untexted. Manuscripts from Germanic territories are especially notable for their repertories of French, Italian and German songs with Latin text substitutions. These Latin texts rarely resemble the original vernacular texts they replace in length or metrical structure.

1.1 Preliminary Studies

While references to contrafacta in general and citations of particular examples are quite common in present-day musical literature, discussions of contrafactum as a cultural phenomenon are few. Gennrich's 1965 book on contrafactum in medieval monophonic songs, in which he observes that the text substitution in songs is as old as songwriting itself[2], is one of the first of its kind. There are, however, studies about the musical culture and the song traditions of the fifteenth century, some of which treat the subject of contrafactum very briefly, but which provide understanding about the cultural context in which the phenomenon existed.

---

[1] David Fallows: *Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs 1415-1480* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999)
[2] Friedrich Gennrich: *Die Kontrafaktur im Liedschaffen des Mittelalters*. Summa Musicae Medii Aevi, vol.12 (Langen bei Frankfurt 1965), p.4.

Reinhard Strohm's *The Rise of European Music, 1380-1500* is a wider study on late medieval musical culture. It notes the increase of imported polyphonic music in Germanic areas towards the mid-fifteenth century, due to western European influences on court chapel repertory. Through the court chapels the local musicians in and around the chapel received an opportunity to copy music used in courts for their own use in universities, cathedrals and schools, thus assimilating the polyphony to a part of local musical activities[3]. Contrafacta, then, made use of the well known songs, adding texts to them that were used in seasonal religious feasts or in veneration of local saints[4].

Marco Gozzi has studied contrafacta in closer detail, focussing on the Trent codices. In his study he has identified the contrafactum songs and their texts and observed their usage in the local liturgical practice[5]. He has pointed out that the songs with contrafactum texts were ones that were relatively easy to adapt and make accessible for singers still in learning stages, most likely students at the cathedral school. According to Gozzi, the contrafactum texts written in the manuscripts were not copied with the performer in mind, as the pupils would learn the songs first by imitation, with familiar songs aiding the memory[6]. Apart from pedagogical use, Gozzi has also suggested that the songs were performed by small ensembles in the local churches and processions; he also considers the possibility that similar repertory would have been used in local monasteries and convents around Trent[7]. Gozzi's study has provided a vital source on locating the texts and putting the contrafactum texts in Trent codices into a local context.

1.2 Contrafactum - Second-Hand, Second Best?

The existence of the practice, then, is well known and studied. What remain absent are studies about the phenomenon of text replacement, beyond the pedagogical performance practice. My interest in contrafactum arose during an edition project on fifteenth-century music. I was puzzled by the absence of further studies and the slight indifference towards the practice, as the texts are not originals and often are not considered to match with the music at all. The contrafactum practice

---

[3] Reinhard Strohm: *The Rise of European Music 1380-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993), p.504.
[4] Strohm, p.511.
[5] Marco Gozzi: 'I codici più recenti nel loro contesto storico-liturgico: i contrafacta' *Codici Musicali Trentini: Nuove scoperte e nuovi orientamenti della ricerca*, ed. by Peter Wright. (Trent: Castello del Buonconsiglio, 1994), p.55-80
[6] Gozzi, p. 73
[7] Gozzi, p.75

certainly does not conform to the forms and rules of 'good' metrical and syllabic music setting, but how much of this attitude is due to our modern standards on how we expect the text and music to work in vocal music? Considering how widespread the practice of contrafactum is according to the multiple examples found in manuscripts, the attitude of 'inferior practice' feels unsatisfactory. Even though the practical usage of contrafactum is discussed in Gozzi's study, it does not consider the relation between text and music much further. If, as Gozzi suggests, the contrafacta were widely used, would they have been treated and considered as something 'second best'?

1.3. The Modern Approaches to Fifteenth-Century Text-Music Relations

The relationship between text and music has been of significant interest to early music scholars, which makes the absence of studies about contrafactum even more notable. In particular, many studies have pained over the issues of text setting in fifteenth century vocal music, and the fifteenth century scribes' attitude towards the text underlay is often described in negative terms. The existence of contrafacta texts could be considered as an example of the random relations between text and music, but how much of this kind of thinking is evident in the manuscripts? While fifteenth century manuscripts might prove frustratingly vague for us in regard to establishing the assumed correct syllabic deployment, what has been noted is the correspondence between the general spatial alignment of the poetic and musical lines on the page. But is there anything to support the hierarchical view that we seem to hold with regard to the exact nature of text deployment in relation to the music? If not, what do the manuscripts display about the correspondence between text and music? It is generally known that the manuscripts served other purposes than what the modern notation represents for us; for instance they often are not written for direct performance purposes. Aside from catering to the needs of a performer, written notation can be considered as a representation of the musical thinking of its writer. As we obviously have no opportunity to hear the oral performance of the music, the writings of an individual scribe are the closest we can get to seeing how the music was understood and processed by a contemporary.

1.4. Methods and Structure

In this thesis I am concentrating on viewing the examples of contrafacta in manuscripts as individual scribal representations ('scribal performances') of the music. My main focus is on the manuscript known as Trent 90[8] in particular. The Trent codices are an impressive anthology of music, originating from the mid-fifteenth century, which have one of the most notable collections of contrafacta among the usual forms of sacred music. A notable portion of the codices was collated by Johannes Wiser, a schoolmaster at the cathedral of Trent and also the main scribe of the codices. As the contrafactum texts could be often added later to the notation, what do the settings found in the Trent codices tell us about what Wiser heard when adding the words to the music? What can the examples tell of how the music and text were imagined by the scribe, and most importantly, are the contrafacta significantly different in this sense from the manuscripts with original texts? The Trent codices escaped the interest of scholars for many years due to their relatively modest appearance. Closer studies on the dating of the codices revealed them to be a much earlier source than previously expected, which reassessed its importance as a first source for many compositions, and brought new clarity on their relation to other manuscripts.

Although the Trent codices have an ample number of contrafacta, I have chosen five case studies to fit the limitations of this thesis. The cases chosen represent different aspects of the relation between words and music. Fallows's excellent catalogue has enabled me to find concordances from other manuscripts of the period from which I have chosen examples of the songs with the original words. The manuscripts containing the original words tend to enjoy more valued status as sources than manuscripts with contrafacta sources, as they are often richly decorated, elegant music collections from courtly origins. Along with the original texts, I have also included other sources of contrafacta to be compared to Wiser's work. Do the different contrafactum texts for the same song show a difference in how the music was imagined by the scribe?

Three of the five case studies are compositions ascribed to the English composer Bedyngham. This might seem to be creating a rather heavy emphasis on English music, but it must be noted that Bedyngham's music was very popular in the mid-fifteenth century, and therefore it has multiple concordant sources offering interesting text variants[9]. The concept of the original text can be rather

---

[8] Trent, Castello del Buonconsiglio, Monumenti e Collezioni Provinciale 1377, from now on referred to as Tr90.
[9] David Fallows: Ways of Judging importance and influence. Paper given at the Med-Ren conference at Royal Holloway, 6.7.2010 (unpublished).

stretched in the case of songs in English in continental sources, as is the case with *So ys emprentid* and *Myn hertis lust*. The two songs are often paired together due to the stylistic similarities. Bedyngham also composed possibly the most known song of the fifteenth century, *O Rosa Bella*, and it is no surprise that a contrafactum text was added to the song. According to Fallows, Bedyngham enjoys a rather special place in Tr90, and he pointed out that it is one of the first sources to name him as the composer[10]. Dufay's songs are among the most copied in the fifteenth century, especially *Le Serviteur*, with seventeen known concordances. The song appears in whole at two of the Loire valley chansonniers, which gives a good insight on the scribal methods of the luxury manuscripts, and how they compare to Wiser's scribal efforts. Many songs of the fifteenth century are known only by their name as an incipit, or by a short stanza. Sometimes the assumed original words of the song have survived separately from the music. Pullois's *Puis que fortune* is one of these. It also shows the significance of the contrafactum practice in preserving the song repertory; the text has been preserved in a poetry manuscript, but the musical setting of the song has survived only as two contrafacta.

Each manuscript example is approached as an individual 'scribal performance', a single scribe's rendition of the musical and textual material at hand. I attempt to look at the songs and their texts beyond the aesthetics of metric and syllabic structures, and seeing how the different scribal performances treat the text. What are the different considerations the scribes have with regard to the setting of text and music on the page? More importantly, are the contrafactum texts really treated as something random and unsatisfactory in relation to the music, and are there any grounds for considering the contrafactum examples as something second-hand and corrupt?

The main focus is on Johannes Wiser's scribal work and his treatment of the text, which I have compared to the work of the other scribes in concordant source manuscripts. The examples in modern notation are from Tr90, and they serve to illustrate the boundaries of the set text in each case. I have deliberately chosen to avoid distinct syllabic setting of the text in places where it is not evident in the manuscripts. As my primary concern is with the relation between the text and music, I have not added *ficta* signs, ligatures or melodic variants in the examples. Also, I have left the other voices out, as they often do not bear text in the manuscripts.

Contrafactum as a term is multi-faceted, as it can refer to any type of text replacement, including the change of one vernacular text to another. In this thesis, I am examining contrafactum only from the view of Latin sacred texts on vernacular chansons. Of course, this is only one side in the wider

[10] Fallows: Ways of Judging importance and influence.

context of text replacement practice in the fifteenth century. Still, I hope that this study offers further considerations on the practice as a whole.

Compared to other musical forms of the fifteenth century, the phenomenon of contrafactum is still waiting to catch the interest of scholars. My observations are at most preliminary; I hope, however, that they are able to open further thoughts about contrafactum as a musical practice rather than as an anomaly or corruption of the 'original composition'. Studies of contrafactum lead to wider questions about the concepts of replacing and borrowing of musical material in fifteenth-century musical practice. Aside from the standard literary-poetic angle, it might prove useful trying out new ways of examining the aspects of flexibility between the musical and textual material in the fifteenth century.

2. The Relations between Text and Music in the Fifteenth Century

2.1 Methods of Notation in the Fifteenth Century

Prior to the mid-fifteenth century the text was usually copied first and the music was spaced above the text accordingly, sometimes by a separate music scribe. By the mid-fifteenth century the notation technique changed to copying the music first. Lawrence Earp has suggested that this is partly due to the increasingly melismatic characteristics of the songs and more pronounced presence of the additional voices, all of which made it very difficult for a separate text scribe to estimate the gaps needed by the music in the text layout[11]. The music-first approach produced more evenly spaced notation, but in turn left less space for what we perceive as a clearly set out text. The text setting practices show notable variance even within manuscripts from the same provenance. The fifteenth century notation practices are often compared to the techniques used in the sixteenth century, which often leads to judgments of the fifteenth century practices as unsystematic and careless[12]. Also, studies about the setting of the text to music prior to 1400 lay claim that there was a distinct interest in creating and expressing musical and textual structures that were closely linked together[13]. It would seem odd that prior to and after the fifteenth century there would have been distinct concern over the unity of text and music, and that the mid-fifteenth century would represent a sudden void between these. Warwick Edwards has pointed this out as something of a paradox: "[...] just as we enter the period commonly known as the 'Renaissance', when words and music are supposed to come even closer together, the manner in which scribes present text in musical manuscripts suddenly seems to suggest anything but."[14].

---

[11] Lawrence Earp: 'Texting in 15th-century French chansons: a look ahead from the 14th century', *Early Music*, vol. 19, no.2, 1991, p.195.
[12] Earp, p.195.
[13] Jonathan King: 'Texting in early fifteenth-century sacred polyphony' (PhD, Oxford University, 1996), p.30
[14] Warwick Edwards: The Great Word-Note Shift. Paper given at All Souls, Oxford, 29.1. 2009 (unpublished)

The increased circulation of music in the fifteenth century required less time-consuming copying practices, and Earp suggests that the change to copying music-first points to the copyists "giving up" on attempts to show the correlation of words and music[15]. He also adds that the change in text setting could relate to widely understood norms of performance practice, which dealt with the text placement, or that composers suddenly lost interest in the projection of the text in their composition[16].

While it is obvious that the fifteenth century text copying style involves a practice allowing flexibility and variance, some research has tried to establish some possible ground principles in order to gain some insight into the inner structures of what appears to our understanding as seemingly indifferent practice. While these studies excel in their attention to detail and understanding of the wider concept around the song traditions, what place do contrafacta have in the theories of text setting? It is interesting how a notable portion of the known contrafactum repertory from the fifteenth century coincides with the shift in text-setting techniques. This certainly raises questions about the prevailing ideas and attitudes about the 'correct' relations between text and music.

2.2 Thoughts from the Fifteenth Century about Text-Music Relations

Egidius de Murino's treatise from 1400 usually gets a mention in discussions about the text-music relations of the late medieval period, especially with regard to the text's significance in the compositional process. The treatise comments briefly on text setting practices for motet composition:

> Postquam cantus et factus et ordinatus, tunc accipe verba que debent esse in moteto et divide ea in quatuor partes; et sic divide cantum in quatuor partes; et prima pars verborum compone super primam partem cantus, sicut melius potest, et sic procede usque ad finem.
>
> When the music is made and ordered, then take the words which are to be in the motet and divide them into four parts; and likewise divide the music into four parts; and compose the first part of the music as well as you can, and thus proceed to the end.[17]

---

[15] Earp, p.197
[16] Earp, p.200
[17] King, p.33, translation from Daniel Leech-Wilkinson: Compositional Techniques in the Four-Part Motets of Philippe de Vitry and his Contemporaries. *Outstanding Dissertations in Music from British Universities* (New York & London: Garland 1989), pp.18-22

Egidius's comment is considered to refer to a compositional process where music is composed first, and the words added later. Don Harrán considers the comment in the treatise as evidence of the prevailing casual attitude towards the text, but the slightly diplomatic "sicus melius potest" would refer to some level of certain rules existing[18]. Jonathan King feels that Egidius's text is not trying to present all-encompassing rules on text setting, but rather offering one summary of practical procedures in composition[19].

A fragment of Antonius de Leno's treatise on musical practice has sparked some debate about its position as evidence on contemporary ideas about text setting. The debate of one paragraph has been of particular concern:

> È da saper corno non è reson nessuna in dever assetar le parolle a nullo cantaro altro che l'intelecto de coluy che l'ha a notare.

Harrán has translated the phrase as "Let it be known that there is no other logic in having to adapt words to a melody than the intellect of him who has to write it in notes". In his view, this would refer to "the composer determining his own procedure for aligning the text"[20]. This would refer to the syllables being set by the composer in a fixed state, from which the singer is not to deviate. Ironically the example of text setting in the treatise is rather vague about its precise syllabic positioning, which makes it look as though the earliest treatise known about text placement was ruined by yet another uninformed scribe. Harrán sees the existence of the treatise fragment as an important early example about a call for "clarity of intention in the setting of text"[21].

The fragment has also been studied and translated by Jonathan King, who reached different conclusions from Harrán. His translation of the paragraph concerning text setting is "One should know that there is no rule according to which one must adapt words to a melody other than the understanding of whoever has to place them."[22]. King does not see this as referring exclusively to the composer setting the text, since the verb "notare" does not refer directly to the process of composing. He suggests that this would most likely refer to the person with a job of "notare": the scribe. This interpretation brings the scribe out as an active element in the transmission of music, and questions the element of fixity of the text in music. The scribe's method of text placement

---

[18] Don Harrán: *Word-Tone Relations in Musical Thought From Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century*, Musicological Studies & Documents 40 (American Institute of Musicology: Hänssler Verlag, 1986), p.66-67
[19] King, p. 34
[20] Harrán, p.70
[21] Harrán, p.74
[22] King, p.53

would not come directly from the exemplar, but from "l'intelecto" of the individual scribe, or as King says: "The primary source for the manuscript image is the music as it exists in the scribe's mind". King considers the fragment to be from a treatise made for an amateur rather than a person with a professional approach to music, let alone to a composer, due to its simple concepts, brief nature and the choice of language[23]. He views Harrán's interpretation and edition of the fragment as coloured by his assumption of the fragment's ties to the emergence of the humanistic ideas and theoretical concepts of the sixteenth century[24].

The best-known theorists of the second half of the fifteenth century, Tinctoris and Gaffurius, left the question of the text-music relations for the most part untouched. While the theorists of the fifteenth century have remained quiet about the practice of text setting and text replacement, the attention of modern scholars has focussed on the emergence of humanism in the late fifteenth century, and how many of the ideas familiar from the sixteenth century can be applied to the music.
The most quoted comment from Gaffurius about text and music is from his *Practica Musicae*:

> The composer of a melody should especially strive to fit the music to the words by seeing to the smoothness of its melody. When the words speak of love or are a plea for death or are about any kind of sorrow, he ought as best he can to construct and convey doleful sounds (as the Venetians are wont to do).[25]

Here the relation between music and emotion is the primary concern, rather than the 'fit' between the text and melody. In Harrán's view, Gaffurius's ideas about the music and emotion are linked to the emergence of humanist attitudes towards the music[26]. Warwick Edwards, however, sees the matter differently. In his view, Gaffurius's comment relates to the choice of modes, which at this stage were not associated with antiquity, and therefore did not yet represent prevailing humanistic thinking in late fifteenth-century music[27].

The practice of contrafactum gained no mention from the theorists and writers of the fifteenth century. Considering that the practice itself is not a fifteenth-century invention, there seems to have been little concern about its existence and practice . Moreover, the whole concept of the fixity of text in music and word-sensitivity in the fifteenth century can be questioned, as there are barely any

---

[23] King, pp.54-55
[24] King, p.52
[25] Franchinus Gaffurius: *Practica Musicae*, Translation and transcription by Clement A. Miller, Musicological Studies and Documents 20 (American Institute of Musicology, 1968) p.149
[26] Harrán, p.94
[27] Warwick Edwards: 'Text treatment in Motets around 1500: The Humanistic Fallacy', *On the Relationship of Imitation and Text Treatment, The Motet around 1500* (Tours: Centre d'Études Supérieures de la Renaissance. In press), p.8

contemporary comments or even expectations about it that we know of[28]. The text-setting rules regarding polyphony as a whole are very few and far between. King has suggested that this is due to the rapid changes within the practice, which would prevent the writers making universal and permanent rules, something that would have been the aim of writing in the first place[29]. Rebecca Gerber notes that possibly the composers facing the new challenges of the polyphonic compositional style might have seen text setting as a lesser concern[30].

2.3 Poetic Structures Influencing the Music

While no universal rules were written down by the fifteenth-century writers, there have been many attempts at trying to understand the process by which the text and music relate, and moreover, how that relation within the composition can be determined.

Leeman L. Perkins has studied the element of text in the compositional process through the recognised traditions of the fifteenth century, and suggests that text and music relate to one another on several different levels and that it is possible to distinguish this relation, and that composers of the fifteenth century made decisions regarding the levels of the relation, consciously or intuitively[31]. He has then further distinguished six different levels of text-music relations: declamatory, formal, syntactical, rhetorical, mimetic and affective. As Perkins' scope deals only with the process of composition, contrafactum receives no mention. The category of affective relation between the text and music is rather problematic from the fifteenth century point of view, which Perkins himself admits. Before the second half of the sixteenth century, the idea of the affective qualities of music is not fully supported due to the vagueness of the contemporary comments, as is the case with the quote from Gaffurius mentioned earlier[32]. The idea of music reflecting affects of the text is an attractive and familiar idea to us; however, there seems to be little to support it as an important element of fifteenth-century thought. The absence of the affective relationship between the words and music forces us to reconsider the practice of contrafactum; as the text-music relations do not

---

[28] Edwards: The Great Word-Note Shift
[29] King, p.33
[30] Rebecca Gerber: 'Ligature and Notational Practices as Determining Factors in the Text Underlay of Fifteenth Century Sacred Music', *Studi Musicali*, vol.20 (1991), p.56
[31] Leeman L. Perkins: 'Towards a Theory of Text-Music Relations', *Binchois Studies*, ed. by Andrew Kirkman & Dennis Slavin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) pp.314-315
[32] Perkins, p.328

carry the weight of affective practice, perhaps that allows text replacement practice to be something neutral, without what we might see as making the music 'not as good'.

The book *Word-Tone Relations in Musical Thought From Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century* by Don Harrán is one of the most noted studies on the topic; however, lately his book has received some critique over too much emphasis on instilling humanistic ideas of text-music relations prior to the latter half of the sixteenth century. As the book's main focus lies on the theoretical writings, the fifteenth century does not have a prominent role in the book, due to scarce mention of the topic by contemporaries. Harrán argues that the clear representation of text placement is "corollary of an expressive setting", and that the music has carried the requirement of reflecting the content of its text from the ancient times onwards[33]. To him, the more "vague" text setting does not indicate a disinterest from the composer about the exact syllabic setting of the music; such a conclusion in his view would "invalidate a study on word-tone relations"[34]. This is a rather peculiar view, as it would not take any other treatment of word-music relations into account than that of the composer. Harrán does however note the existence of contrafactum, although he refers to it as "inferior text placement", stating "where the earlier version may display a sensitive correlation of words and music, the contrafactum is apt not to, and any attempt to force it into the mould of the original is clearly misguided."[35]. It seems, then, that for Harrán, there is no other way of correct text setting than the one thought of by the composer originally, which thereafter will suffer corruption under the hands of scribes. Contrafactum obviously does not fit into this picture at all. He does mention the long tradition of contrafactum in medieval music, but there is no contemplation on why such a violating and uninformed tradition survived in large amounts, and furthermore, that nobody seemed to see it as an issue worth raising in any known treatise.

Honey Meconi has suggested that the lack of consistency in text placement in the fifteenth century could refer to a wide variety of acceptable practices instead of just one. This could partially explain the flexible attitude towards text setting in the manuscripts especially during the shift from music overlay to text underlay: "With text underlay, extra care would be needed to ensure a word-tone match, and most scribes did not take the trouble."[36]. This could be dismissed as a careless and indifferent practice in indicating the text setting, but it could also refer to a stronger reliance on memory in the musical practice. Meconi reckons that most professional singers learned to sing from

---

[33] Harrán, p.8
[34] Harrán, p.8
[35] Harrán, p.350
[36] Honey Meconi: 'Is Underlay Necessary?', *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music*, ed. by Tess Knighton and David Fallows (London: J.M. Dent & Sons 1992) p.286

memory from an early age, and strict text setting was not a necessity for producing something that would be considered as a good performance. She also makes the important point that composers could have been capable of writing their music so that the underlay would be clear, but in most cases it does not seem to be an issue. This does not necessarily make the text completely trivial to music, as she notes that for instance in *forme fixe* chansons, the textual form and the musical form are in clear correspondence. This feature in chansons is well noted by other scholars as well, as Earp has established that in the latter half of the fifteenth century the chansons have a distinct character by which the text corresponds to the shape and number of musical phrases in the song[37]. Meconi's idea of more than one existing text placement practice could include contrafactum more easily to the fifteenth century musical thinking; however, she does not mention it. It could be still argued that contrafactum in chansons would break against the unity between the poetic and musical structure, but there is no mention from contemporaries that such strict adherence to an assumed rule should take place. Meconi notes that two controlling assumptions have affected the earlier studies of text underlay: the reflection of later sixteenth century ideas to the earlier century, especially the idea that the music is a servant of the text, and that there is only one possible solution to text placement; in order to understand the fifteenth century text setting we should move from asking what is "correct" to what are the options[38].

While the possibility for multiple presentations of the text has been noted, the relationship between text and music cannot be considered anarchic. Some efforts are aimed at understanding the aesthetic of text setting, such as Graeme Boone's study of Dufay's early repertory. His main aim seems to be to establish the phrase and syllabic categories in Dufay's songs and finding techniques for syllabic setting that would support the declamatory and expressive properties set into the text-music relations of the song. Such focus on expressivity of the chansons promotes a strong fixity of the text in music, which would again exclude contrafactum as a secondary practice. Boone touches on contrafactum practice briefly in his analysis of the song *Craindre vous vueil doulce damme de pris*, which he suggests to be a contrafactum in French from an Italian song, due to its ill fit with the categories and techniques he has developed. While Boone explains that his purpose is not to malign the French version which enjoyed more popularity than the Italian, he does conclude that the Italian text is "perfectly suited" to the music[39]. With his analysis technique, Boone seems to have tried to pass the scribal inconsistencies and find the 'correct' text underlay for Dufay's songs. The study is confined only to Dufay and his early repertory, and it does not seem to attempt to be an answer to

---

[37] Earp, p.203
[38] Meconi, p.287
[39] Graeme Boone: *Patterns in Play. A Model for Text Setting in the Early French Songs of Guillaume Dufay* (University of Nebraska Press, 1999), pp.146-148

text setting in a wider context of the fifteenth century. Indeed, Boone's methods seem to strive towards an assumed 'original setting' or an ideal, but do not contemplate how such detail was used or even mattered in musical practice.

Such detailed studies as Boone's are undoubtedly interesting regarding the examination of the relation of the poetry to the compositional process, but they do not comment on the reception of the composition. How important were such details for contemporaries, and how much would the composers strive to maintain a detailed text setting? In a study of the transmission of Dufay's Mass repertory, Rob C. Wegman has suggested that Dufay made efforts to distinct textual units, but left the general underlay open to the performer[40]. While it could be argued that the Mass repertory perhaps has different approach to text declamation than chansons, it is notable that the similar method of dividing text as units under the music seems to be the chosen method of displaying text-music relations in the manuscripts. The emphasis on the composer's intentions with regards to performing the music has perhaps more to do with our expectations and aesthetics of how the text and music correspond together. It seems to be difficult to fit our aesthetics with a period that quite possibly did not see variance as indicative of something at fault.

2.4 Theories on Text Setting Practices and Contrafactum

The studies striving to establish the relations between the musical and poetic structures are valuable, as the connections are at places very evident. Such studies do however overlook the variants, especially contrafactum. This could possibly overlook a whole section on fifteenth century ideas about the relations of text and music. Considering that there are some cases when it is not clear whether the assumed original text is actually a contrafactum, it is surprising how little attention the matter has received. Rather than settling on flagging the instances of contrafactum, it has yet to be studied how the text was treated by the contemporaries. If the text was approached and treated similarly to original text, is there anything to indicate that the text replacement would have been of inferior status? As the fifteenth century theorists are silent regarding our questions about the treatment of the text, the work of other contemporaries becomes more important towards the research. The text treatment could become clearer through understanding the working methods and position of the scribes in the broader fifteenth-century context.

---

[40] Rob.C. Wegman: 'Miserere supplicanti Dufay: The Creation and Transmission of Guillaume Dufay's Missa Ave regina celorum' *Journal of Musicology*, vol.13, no.1, 1995, p.30

3. Scribal Practices in the Fifteenth Century

The work done by the scribe is an essential element in the transmission of music prior to printing. As with any human work, variances occur even when working from a template. Prior to the scribe starting his work, he has made multiple decisions regarding how he understood the music and what it was intended for; if he was working on a luxury manuscript employing not only musical scribes but also text scribes and illustrators; or perhaps the end product was for the personal use of the scribe. From a modern point of view, it might be easy to think of the scribe as someone standing in between the composer and the reader or performer of the music. Scribes are often accused of corrupting the music, by making errors in the notation, misspelling or indeed replacing the text altogether, all of which could be seen as meddling with the assumed original intentions of the composer. But can it be assumed that this kind of thinking took place in the fifteenth century, did the contemporaries simply put up with incompetent scribes? Instead of considering the scribe as a necessary evil, he can also be seen as an important component in the transmission of the music.

3.1. The Significance of Written Music in Medieval Memory

The idea of scribes slavishly copying from an authoritative exemplar has long been under doubt as the sole working method. King has noted that the plural nature of the sources indicates that we cannot assume all manuscripts to relate to an elusive exemplar that would represent the compositional authority[41].

Our expectations of textual accuracy and "clarity", as we understand it, might stand in the way of evaluating the position of scribes in the process of music transmission. Mary Carruthers in *The*

[41] King, p.45

Book of Memory points out that our expectations on accuracy might have not been such a virtue to the medieval scholar; as the manuscripts represent "occasionalness and plenitude" which is "at odds with modern textual fundamentalism"[42]. Carruthers states that the medieval culture was "fundamentally memorial, to the same profound degree that the modern culture in the West is documentary"[43]: the nature of a book or a manuscript is "mnemonic" rather than aspiring to be a fixed "work". Carruthers also notes how the role of memory is often associated more with oral traditions, and its role in literal traditions is undervalued. Indeed the strong polarisation of these two and viewing literary culture only through literacy could be misleading, as she states: "Literacy privileges a physical artefact, the writing-support, over the social rhetorical process that a text both records and generates, namely, the composition by an author and its reception by an audience."[44].

Of course, the use of exemplars in scribal work is not called to question as a whole, but the emphasis on their authoritativeness might refer more to modern expectations and aesthetics. The copying process was not necessarily reliant on being faithful to the assumed original or indeed to the authority of the composer and the absence of these elements was not of particular concern to the contemporaries. The scribe presents in each manuscript what he deemed as important in the presentation of music, and this could be dictated by a specific function of the manuscript, the scribe's personal understanding of the music, or even the environment in which the copying took place. Scribal work, then, displays many aspects related to performing music. Could the scribe be a performer in his own right?

3.2. The Scribal Work as a Scribal Performance

Rather than treating variance between the sources as a defect, King offers the idea of examining the manuscripts as "scribal sound-images", where the positioning between the text and music could be dictated by how a scribe imagines it, which may or may not be invoked by an exemplar[45]. This approach does not concentrate solely on the compositional intentions or finding the assumed correct way of text deployment, as King states that the "manuscript text placement has a direct correlate in

---

[42] Mary Carruthers: *Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.160
[43] Carruthers, p.8
[44] Carruthers, p.11
[45] King, p.47

contemporary musicianship, which is the image of the music in the mind of the scribe"[46]. This would ease some of the problems regarding variation between sources, and it could also allow contrafactum to be included to the study of the repertories, as comparing different scribal sound-images could establish the elements that were fixed in the music and how much was open to alteration. This would also raise a question whether contrafactum as a practice could be considered symptomatic of the period, and a variant (but not second-rate) source of information regarding text-music relations. The text could, then, be replaced, and could still provide insight on what the text corresponds with other elements on the page and how the text could convey clues about the treatment of the text and music as a whole. Scribal sound-image is evident in the clear efforts made during copying to ensure particular alignment of syllables and notes, the spacing of the syllables and the occasional diagonal line pointing from the text to the notes[47]. These tools of expression might not be prescriptive enough for the modern reader, but they can still be considered as distinctive efforts of conveying the text-music relations by the scribe, to the best of his understanding. The relation between the text and music could be evident, even in the case of contrafactum, but it might not relate to how we perceive these two elements to work together.

Margaret Bent has also written of "scribal intention" in fifteenth century text setting, which "may include the composer's intention, but unless the 'intention' is composed organically into the music and cannot be separated from it, we can only safely assume that we are receiving the scribe's interpretation"[48]. More importantly, the hallmark of a 'good' scribe does not necessarily entail catering for our modern aesthetics, as she points out: "I think we can do better than to assume that any scribe's testimony can be lightly overruled by application of our own anachronistic aesthetic"[49]. It would seem that the fifteenth century musician, be it the performer, scribe or even the composer, was much more receptive towards variance, and that this proves to be more problematic for modern understanding than what it was for fifteenth-century contemporaries.

Bernard Cerquiglini's *In Praise of the Variant* examines the concepts of authority and originality in the context of a medieval French vernacular manuscript, developing the important point that "the author is not a medieval concept"[50]. The ideas of textual (or musical) authority and an identifiable

---

[46] King, p.48
[47] King, p.60
[48] Margaret Bent: 'Text Setting in Sacred Music of the Early 15th Century: Evidence and Implications', *Musik und Text in der Mehrstimmigkeit des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts, Göttinger Musikwissenschaftlige Arbeiten, Band 10* (Bärenreiter Kassel, 1984), p.293
[49] Bent, p.292
[50] Bernard Cerquiglini: *In Praise of the Variant. A Critical History of Philology*, translated by Betsy Wing (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999) p.8. Special thanks to Dr. Kate Maxwell for introducing this idea for my thesis.

"original" source, and their significance, are much later constructs, which are ill at ease with medieval thinking[51]. Instead, Cerquiglini introduces the thought of multiple authoritative sources: "[...] every manuscript is a revision, a version."[52]. The cases in Cerquiglini's book date from an earlier period, but I find the concept very fitting in the fifteenth-century context as well. The contents of a manuscript should not be perceived as one-dimensional and be evaluated through, for example, provenance, status, or whatever we assume to be valuable or corrupt in the material, but we should consider the variance caused the scribal process as an integral part of the presentation, in which the scribe has an important role.

Kate Maxwell took on Cerquiglini's idea about the plurality of the manuscript, and forming an idea that "every manuscript is a performance"[53]. The manuscript performance has three roles: author-performer, scribal-performer and reader-performer, all of which are not mutually exclusive, and whoever interacts can assume multiple roles, treating the nature of the performance as descriptive, not prescriptive[54]. This allows the scribe to be seen as a part of the process of the presentation, or performance, of the page. Furthermore, the scribal-performers are allowed to have an identity on the page: "He is not a machine, and the work which passes through his eyes, ears, mind and hand will also bear his imprint."[55]. Maxwell also addresses the previously held implicit assumption regarding manuscripts that there would be an elusive original that would be considered as 'the best', with the rest of the manuscript sources being more or less corrupt thanks to the scribes[56]. In the context of fifteenth-century manuscripts, if the concept of 'being close to the original' refers to the close dating of the source with the assumed composition date, it raises questions about some contrafactum sources. The Trent codices especially are in many cases much earlier sources of chansons than some of the more esteemed manuscripts. The practice of contrafactum, then, has a very immediate relation with contemporary music practices, the scribes being very close to the 'original sources' and familiar with the musical currents within their surroundings. This hardly gives the impression of ignorance or indifference towards the music by the scribes writing contrafacta.

---

[51] Cerquiglini, pp.8-10
[52] Cerquiglini, p.38
[53] Sheila Kate Maxwell: 'Guillaume de Machaut and the mise en page of medieval French sung verse' (PhD, University of Glasgow 2009) p.26
[54] Maxwell, p.48
[55] Maxwell, p.222
[56] Maxwell, p.43-44

3.3. The Fifteenth Century Scribes at Work

While the scribal methods of the fifteenth century are recognised and documented, surprisingly little investigation has concentrated on asking questions why particular methods were used at a given time, and what it tells us about the text-music relations. Elizabeth Randell Upton has studied the text placement methods in the Chantilly Codex, dating from the fourteenth century[57]. She concluded from her analysis that it would be unsustainable to assume that there would be a direct relationship between the visual appearance of the page and the sonic results produced through performance, and that there would have been consistent scribal practices regarding the alignment of the words and music[58]. According to Randell Upton, the symmetry of the page seemed more important to the scribe (or scribes) than establishing exact text-music relations, thus separating the scribal intentions from our modern expectations[59]. She however does not contemplate whether the scribes were even expected to adhere to presenting the sonic unity between the text and music on the page, or if Codex Chantilly is somehow exceptional in this case. The manuscript is famous for its stylised and visually impressive pages, and the efforts evident in the creation of the pages clearly demonstrates concern over presentation. But the concern of the contemporary scribes might not lie in the preciseness of the musical alignment in all manuscripts.

As regards to fifteenth-century notation, Warwick Edwards has pointed out that the common feature of the word phrases and musical phrases being dislodged owing to the layout of the page cannot be considered a defect; the scribal underlay of the text phrases is "as close as convenient" considering the overall requirements of the page. Despite the different page setting, the "aural concept", how the scribe heard the song, is not necessarily too distant from the possible manuscript concordances[60]. Discounting the scribe's skills ignores the training and experience required for doing the task, as scribes most likely did understand the melody and syllable deployment while working on the music, but the presentation on the page could differ from that of preceding scribes, as Edwards states: "We need to find ways of understanding how scribes set out words at this time that seek to *explain* difference rather than to decry it. One way of doing this might be to relinquish the idea of

---

[57] Chantilly, Musée Condé MS 564

[58] Elizabeth Randell Upton: 'Aligning Words and Music: Scribal Procedures for the Placement of Text and Notes in the Chantilly Codex', *A late Medieval Songbook and its Context, New Perspectives on the Chantilly Codex (Bibliothèque du Château de Chantilly, Ms.564, ed. by Yolanda Plumley & Anne Stone.* , (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2009), pp.116-117

[59] Randell Upton, pp. 119, 123

[60] Edwards: The Great Word-Note Shift

composer-controlled *expression of words* in favour of a view of text placement driven by varying approaches to *musical articulation* such as might arise in performance."[61]

3.4. Johannes Wiser, the Scribe of the Trent Codices

My interest in this thesis is in one scribe in particular: Johannes Wiser, collector and the main scribe of the Trent codices[62]. The codices have received much scholarly interest, not least by the impressive amount of the musical material preserved, and Wiser has been described as one of the most prolific scribes known from the fifteenth century[63].

Wiser arrived in Trent from Munich in 1455 as a succentor to the schoolmaster, and later received the position of a schoolmaster himself in 1457-8[64]. The codices were a personal anthology of music for Wiser to use at his work at Trent Cathedral. Strohm has pointed out that Wiser's geographical position was excellent for collecting music, as Trent had a lot of visitors passing between Innsbruck and Venice, and Wiser was in a good professional position to make contacts with musicians passing by[65]. The concordances between the repertories found in the Trent codices and other southern and central European sources have brought Strohm to suggest an inner network between the scholars and musicians in the court chapels and cathedrals of the area[66]. The contrafactum repertory in the Trent codices certainly has concordances with many central European and Bohemian manuscript sources, but these are most often songs famous all around Europe. Nevertheless, Wiser was in a good position to be aware of the musical trends of his time, as Strohm describes the schoolmasters and succentors representing "the cutting edge in musical progress of the day"[67].

Tr90 is known to be for the most part a copy of Tr93, and they represent the first parts of the codices in Wiser's possession. Tr93 consists of two parts, and most of the contrafacta are found in

---

[61] Edwards: The Great Word-Note Shift
[62] Tr90, 88, 89, 91
[63] Rebecca L. Gerber: 'An Assessment of Johannes Wiser's Scribal Activities in the Trent Codices', *Musica Disciplina*, vol.46, 1992, p.51
[64] Peter Wright: 'Watermarks and Musicology: The Genesis of Johannes Wiser's Collection', *Early Music History*, vol.22, 2003, p.253
[65] Strohm, p.510-11
[66] Strohm, p.511
[67] Strohm, p.290

the latter part, 93-2, which was compiled separately from the main part of the manuscript[68]. It is thought that Wiser started copying Tr93 for accumulating a musical library that might benefit him in securing employment[69]. Suparmi Saunders and Peter Wright have studied the paper used by Wiser and its watermarks to determine the provenance and dating of the Tr93 and 90. Saunders suggested that Tr93 dates from c.1450-6 and 90 from 1452-8[70]. Wright suggests slightly earlier dates: his detailed study dates the latter part of Tr93 to c.1452-5, and narrows the Tr90 compilation time to 1453-6[71]. According to Wright, it is very likely that Wiser began copying Tr90 in South Bavaria, before arriving in Trent[72].

Margaret Bent has investigated Wiser's scribal style, regarding him as "a highly literal copyist, tending to replicate not only page changes but often line ends as well"[73]. This however does not suggest Wiser was insensitive to the material he worked with, as Bent notes the musical awareness of how he wanted to use the music, recognising the musical material he copied[74]. Rebecca Gerber has pointed out how the lack of repetition in the Trent codices shows Wiser's remarkable ability to recall the large amount of music he possessed, something which stands as a testament to Wiser's musical memory[75]. Unlike some of his contemporary scribes, any changes made to the music by Wiser did not include altering compositions[76]. On the relations between text and music on the page, Gerber notes how Wiser seems not to have concentrated on the correspondence between the two, but copied the text in the same relative place as it appeared in Tr93[77]. Considering the musical awareness noted by Bent, it would seem that Wiser's concerns about text placement would not be any different from that of his contemporary scribes.

Since the fifteenth century text deployment methods are seen as not relating to the musical line, it is curious that Wiser chooses to see the effort on placing the text close to how it is presented in the exemplar. This could either be understood as Wiser not understanding the music and settling for replicating copying style, or that there was no need for him to alter the page. This is what I am

---

[68] Wright, p.262
[69] Strohm, p.510
[70] Suparmi Elizabeth Saunders: 'The Dating of Trent 93 and Trent 90', *I Codici Musicali Trentini, A Cento Anni Dalla Loro Riscoperta. Atti del Convegno Laurence Feininger la Musicologia Come Missione, Trento, Castello del Buonconsiglio 6-7 settembre 1985*, ed. by Nino Pirrotta & Danilo Curti (Trent: Servizio Beni Culturali, 1986) pp.68-70
[71] Wright, p.283
[72] Wright, p.294
[73] Margaret Bent: Trent 93 and Trent 90: Johannes Wiser at Work. *I Codici Musicali Trentini, A Cento Anni Dalla Loro Riscoperta. Atti del Convegno Laurence Feininger la musicologia come missione, Trento, Castello del Buonconsiglio 6-7 settembre 1985*, ed. by Nino Pirrotta & Danilo Curti (Trent: Servizio Beni Culturali, 1986) p.93
[74] Bent, pp.93, 95
[75] Gerber, p.58
[76] Gerber pp. 55, 60
[77] Gerber, p.55-56

interested in with my case studies: how different is Wiser's understanding of the relation between text and music on the page from other sources, and more importantly, how does contrafactum reflect the fifteenth century text-music relations of the page? Through Wiser's treatment of contrafactum I want to examine whether the scribal processes bear similar traits regardless of whether the text is the original or not, or is there something intrinsically 'inferior' in the way the songs are treated with contrafactum text. The silence about the contrafactum practice is notable both in fifteenth century sources and in contemporary studies. While a few case studies can hardly give a universal view on a practice that has almost always been there, observing the songs through Wiser's work might provide a glimpse on the aesthetics and practicalities of the mid-fifteenth century musical page.

4. Latinizing the vernacular song: *O rosa bella, o tu mi Maria*

O rosa bella is one of the most popular songs survived from the mid-fifteenth century. The song was at first thought to be by Dunstable, as his name appears in one of the earliest sources[78]. David Fallows has built a convincing case for attributing the song to Bedyngham, whose name appears more in the manuscript sources. Whereas in the collection of complete works by Dunstable, Manfred Bukofzer relies on the earliest known attribution and considers the attributions to Bedyngham to be false, Fallows points out that Dunstable's name was often used as a general reference to "an English composer"[79]. The Trent codices support the argument for Bedyngham, as Trent 93 is an early source of the song, preserving the contratenor in a gathering filled with other songs attributed to Bedyngham.

The song itself is a curious one. A setting by an Englishman of a Giustiniani poem, the composition bears "north Italian regionalisms", as described by Strohm, such as word repetitions and echo imitations[80], as did an earlier setting of it by Ciconia. Such was its popularity that Strohm even describes an "O rosa bella-effect" where numerous different adaptations and versions emerged, and which would later be repeated in other English or continental songs[81]. Little surprise then that *O rosa bella* was also set as a Latin contrafactum. However, before turning to this we should consider aspects of how the song was transmitted with its original text.

---

[78] Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb.lat.1411
[79] David Fallows: 'Dunstable, Bedyngham and *O rosa bella*', *Songs and Musicians in the Fifteenth Century* (Aldershot: Variorum 1996), IV, p.289
[80] Strohm, p.157
[81] Strohm p.413

4.1 Porto, ff.54v-56

Porto[82], a small manuscript dating from the early 1460s that includes music theory and nineteen songs, is thought to have originated at Ferrara[83]. The music is written in black and red notation, which is considered to be a rare feature in the notation of the latter half of the fifteenth century[84]. The manuscript is particularly interesting in the case of *O rosa bella* because Bukofzer in his edition of the song considers it as the "best reading of words in a musical source"[85]. Futhermore, Fallows states that Porto is set apart from other sources of the same time by its attempts at careful text underlay[86]. In the preface to the facsimile of Porto, Manuel Pedro Ferreira considers the book to have been used directly in a performance situation[87]. Rather exceptionally the text is set with tenor voice as well, and also the contratenor bears small portions of the text. The page layout has also placed the tenor at the bottom of the page and spread it along the opening, thus dividing the three voices on the page into clear segments. Also, the small text-hand of the scribe facilitates the easy allocation of the text to the musical phrases. This kind of display would enable a performance to take place straight from the manuscript. The possible direct performance usage of Porto makes it even more interesting as a point of comparison with Trent codices; if Porto represents something that is considered as "careful text underlay", it provides a point of comparison to see whether the contrafactum version found in Trent has anything significantly different about its text deployment.

Figure 1: Porto176, ff.54v-55

[82] Porto, Biblioteca Pública Municipal, MS 714
[83] Fallows: Dunstable, Bedyngham and *O rosa bella*
[84] Manuel Pedro Ferreira: *Oporto 714: Um Manoscrito Precioso* (Porto: Campo das Letras 2001), p.47
[85] Manfred Bukofzer: John Dunstable, Complete works. *Musica Britannica VIII* (London: Stainer & Bell 1970), p.202
[86] Fallows, *Catalogue*, p.38
[87] Ferreira, p.42

4.2 Wolf, ff.34v-36

The Wolfenbüttel chansonnier[88] belongs to a group of chansonniers made in the Loire valley during the 1460's. These beautifully illustrated manuscripts represent the most luxurious music books of their time, with plenty of care involved in their making. The text underlay is considerably different from the other examples, mostly because of the large text-hand of the scribe. The phrase distinction is evident in poetic verses in the small gaps, which dislodge the text even further from the musical phrasing, but which work as a visual aid in reading the poetry. In f.35v the text setting differs most notably. The words "dolente degio finire" on the second stave are assigned under repeating melismatic patterns, but rather than assigning the words to the melismas, the exceptional placement is due to the lack of space between the staves. The scribe's main motivation in the setting of the page seems to be the clear representation of the notation and the text, which in places leads them to be separate elements from each other. By all means this should not be seen as a defect, as luxury chansonniers like Wolf are unlikely to have been designed for direct performance use. Also, Wolf is not the earliest source of the song (1467)[89], and the song must have been very well known by then. Thus the representation of the poetic verse in relation to the musical verse must have not been an issue for the reader, nor a main concern for the scribe.

Figure 2: Wolf, f.35v

[88] Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, MS Guelf.287.Extrav
[89] Fallows: *Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs*, p.545-550

4.3 Tr90, ff. 361v-362

O Rosa Bella appears multiple times in the Trent codices. In Tr93 (f.371r), only the contratenor has survived. Tr90 has a contrafactum written with exceptional double note values (ff.361v-362), gymel sections, and a later added fourth voice written in the lower margin of the page. Tr90 also has a textless setting (ff.444-445), as does Tr88 (ff.119v-120). The settings found in Tr93 and the contrafactum in Tr90 are considered to be in direct relation with each other, as they are set apart from the concordant sources by the use of double note-values. Also, Wright's watermark studies of the Trent codices show that the settings found in Tr90 and Tr93 date from about the same time span, 1454-6[90]. Fallows believes the use of double-note values to be an example of how English notation was sometimes adapted in continental sources, in this case by the Tr93 scribe. Wiser certainly knew the original note values, since the added contratenor in the lower margin of f.361v is written in original note values, as are the untexted versions elsewhere in the Trent codices.

The contrafactum text in Tr90 is often described as a "latinized" version of the original poem, and it follows the syllabic and phonetic properties of the original poem. Gozzi believes that the contrafactum text is probably derived from the setting originally in Tr93[91], so the text is not likely to be Wiser's own invention. In this sense, the *O rosa bella* as a contrafactum is quite different from other contrafacta to be discussed in the case studies that follow, since it shows clear intent in imitating the original text. The imitation and adaptation of the text is not a surprising feature in songs; the version of the text in Wolf displays some "frenchified" elements, which would suggest that the process of text setting is connected to how the scribe heard and understood the text, rather than relying solely on an exemplar. Even if Wiser worked from an exemplar text in Tr90, the setting shows familiarity with the song, evident in the division of the text and the syllabic breaks in melismatic passages ("veniam deprecare", "eternaliter"). The many reworkings of *O rosa bella* in Tr90 can be regarded as exemplary of the flexibility in the use of the songs.

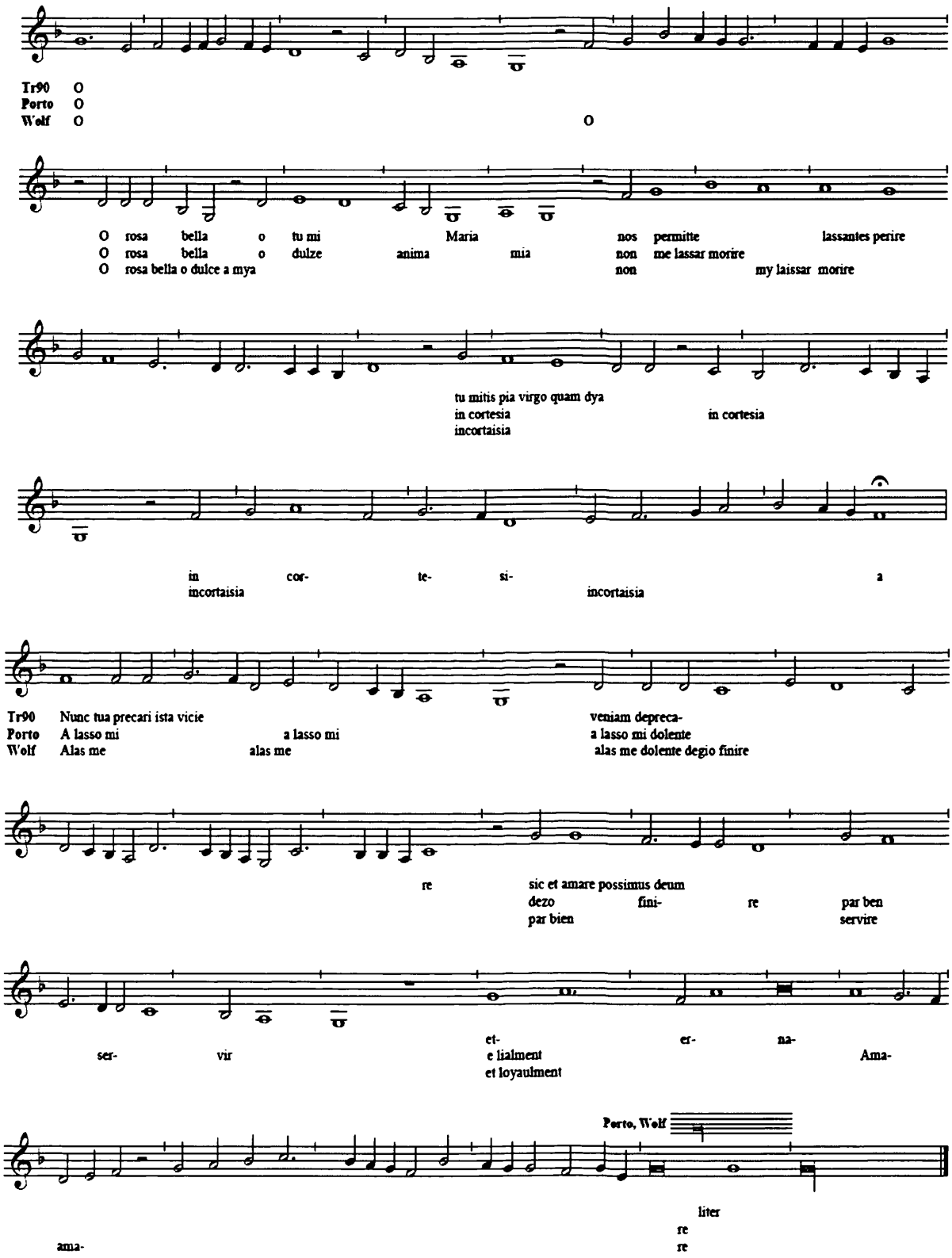
All three manuscripts differ in their provenance, assumed usage and the design of the page. Compared to the careful and artistically pleasing pages of Porto and Wolf, the contrafactum in Tr90 might appear more careless, maybe even second-hand. All manuscripts do however show elements of the scribes recognising what they are writing, and understanding the relationship between the musical and poetic elements of the song. The different styles of the manuscripts show the varying

[90] Wright, see tables 1(p.268) and 5 (p.286)
[91] Gozzi, p.60

emphasis the scribe has considered necessary for text underlay, but none of the cases show a total lack of interaction between the text and music. It is possible that in the case of *O rosa bella* the wide familiarity with the piece lessened the number of variants in the text underlay. Also, Bedyngham's musical setting leaves little doubt about the syllabic and melismatic points in the melody, which could have inspired the Tr93 scribe (or his exemplar) to create a new Latin text for the song.

Figure 3: Tr90, f.361v

O rosa bella


Tr90 O
Porto O
Wolf O
O
O rosa bella o tu mi Maria nos permitte lassantes perire
O rosa bella o dulze anima mia non me lassar morire
O rosa bella o dulce a mya non my laissar morire
tu mitis pia virgo quam dya
in cortesia in cortesia
incortaisia
in cor- te- si- a
incortaisia incortaisia
Tr90 Nunc tua precari ista vicie veniam depreca-
Porto A lasso mi a lasso mi a lasso mi dolente
Wolf Alas me alas me alas me dolente degio finire
re sic et amare possimus deum
dezo fini- re par ben
par bien servire
ser- vir et- er- na-
e lialment Ama-
et loyaulment
Porto, Wolf
liter
re
ama- re

5. Textless Vernacular Song in Two Contrafacta

The relation between Tr93 and Tr90 was already evident in *O rosa bella*, but as the discantus part has not survived in Tr93, the comparison of text setting relations between the two sources remains unanswered. Fortunately, *Puis que fortune* by Johannes Pullois has been preserved complete in both sources. This song by Pullois in both Tr93 and Tr90 may serve to illustrate the textual relations between the two, which in turn give more insight into Wiser's methods of text placement; how reliant he was on exemplars, and how consistent is the treatment of the text between the two.

5.1 The Original Chanson: *Puis Que Fortune*

Like many songs from the fifteenth century, *Puis que fortune* has survived only in contrafacta. Fortunately, however, its assumed original French text, an anonymous rondeau with four-line verse with eight syllable lines, has survived in full in the poetry MS, Lansdowne 380[92]. Pullois was a Franco-Flemish composer active in the mid-fifteenth century. His residence in Italy during the 1450s left several of his compositions in Italian sources, and many of them also circulated abroad, for example in the German Trent codices, one of the main sources of his works[93]. In such sources his vernacular settings are usually transmitted either without their texts or, as is the case of *Puis que fortune*, with contrafactum texts. The songs preserved only as contrafacta might seem unsatisfactory for some, since the relation between the original text and the music is not to be seen. However, could something about the treatment of the song be studied from the way the contrafactum text is deployed?

---

[92] London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 380, f.247v
Fallows: *Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs*, p.330

[93] Pamela F. Starr: 'Johannes Pullois', *Grove Music Online*, http://www.grovemusic.com [accessed 9.8. 2010]

5.2 Tr93/90, ff. 366v / 296v: *Refove Unice*

As mentioned earlier, Wiser's style of copying has been described as "literal", often replicating what was in front of him in the exemplar. When comparing the setting of *Refove unice* in Tr93 and Tr90, the pages share similar features, such as the grouping of the words. The spacing of the notes is also very similar, although Wiser fits the discantus to two lines instead of the three used by Tr93 scribe. It is notable that in Tr90, the folios around *Refove unice* contain other songs attributed to Pullois: ff.296r-344v include ten out of fourteen known chansons by him, which states the importance of Tr90 as a source of Pullois's works. According to the watermarks on the paper and the gatherings, the songs would have been added about the same time to the collection in 1454-6[94]. Such a cluster of Pullois's works has not survived in Tr93, which makes Wiser's scribal work more than just straightforward copying; gathering a collection of a single composer's works shows engagement with the musical sources and recognition of the material copied. The text *Refove unice* is an adapted versicle from a nativity sequence by Notker Balbulus,[95] also used in Tr93 for Dufay's *Par le regart*[96]. The text proves rather interesting, as it is altered slightly every time it appears in the Trent codices. *Par le regart* shares a similar poetic structure with *Puis que fortune,* which also reflects on the musical form. *Refove unice* has slightly longer musical phrases though, especially in the first phrase. This might have resulted in the Tr93 scribe adding the word "genite" in the first phrase. Wiser also altered the text a little for Tr90, by adding the word "formam" to the fourth musical phrase. The element of 'literal' copying in Wiser's texting methods is perhaps evident in how the extra word is laid on the page. In Tr93, the last phrase of the song has five word boundaries, places of intentional breaks in the text ('assumpsisti sup-plices tu-os'). Wiser solves the adding of the word 'formam' by maintaining the word boundaries in the same places as in his exemplar, but does not break the word "supplices". The word boundaries are thus not changed with the alteration by Wiser. It would be rather strange

Refove unice
Notker
Christe, patris unice, qui humanam nostri causa formam assumpsisti, refove supplices tuos
Tr93/**90** Refove unice (genite) eterni regis qui humanam **formam** nostri causam assumpsisti supplices tuos

Table 1: the treatment of the text Refove unice

[94] See Wright, pp.269 (Table 1) & 298 (Table9) and Saunders pp.69-70 (Table 3)
[95] *Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi*, vol.53 ed. by Clemens Blume & Henry Bannister (Leipzig : O.R. Reisland 1911), p.20-21
[96] f.318v

for Wiser to take so much effort in preserving the text placement so precisely, if he felt that the words would be entirely arbitrary. As Bent has observed, Wiser has a preference for replicating many of the elements of the page[97], here however the line division and the words are not exact replicas of Tr93, but the word boundaries are. This could indicate awareness by Wiser about what he copied, and how he wanted it to look on the page.

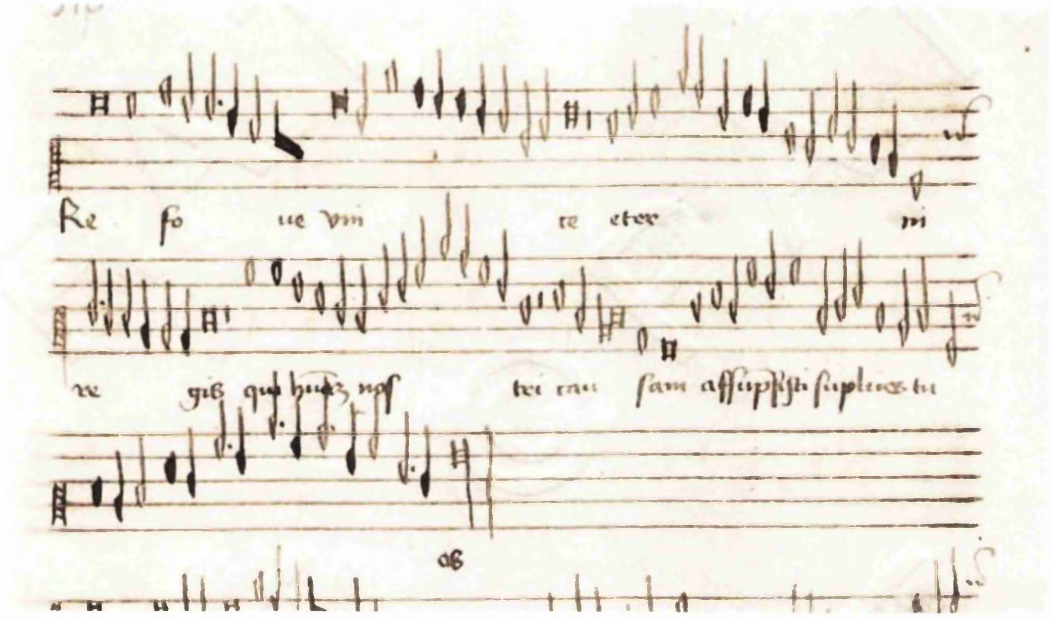


Figure 4: Tr93, f.318v

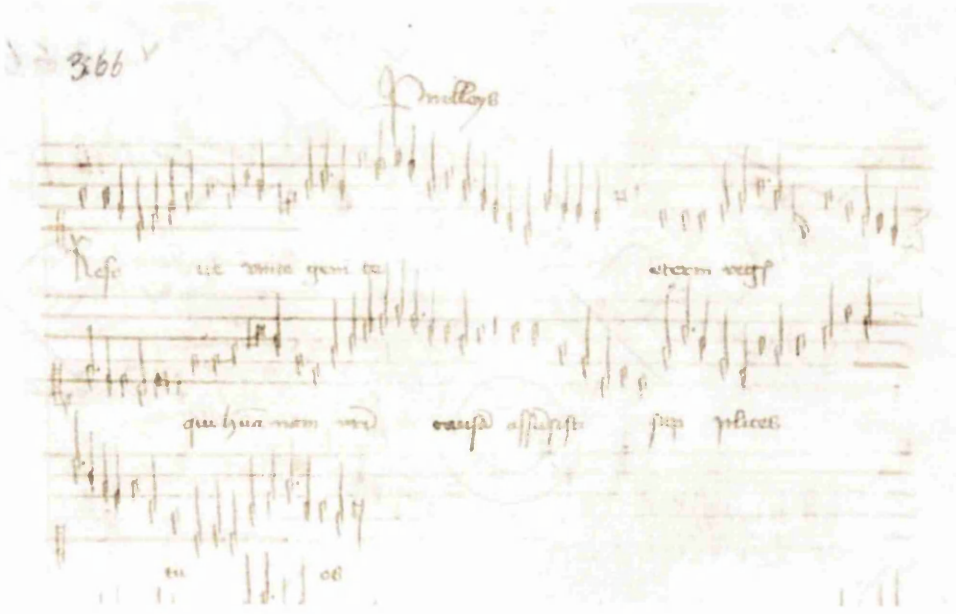


Figure 5: Tr93, f.366v

[97] Bent: 'Trent 93 and Trent 90: Johannes Wiser at Work', p.94

Figure 6: Tr90, f.296v

5.3 Spec, p.386 (f.K15v): *Regi Seculorum*

Another source of the song is Codex Speciálník[98], a compilation of polyphonic music from a Bohemian provenance. The dating of the manuscript spans between the years 1480-1540[99], which makes it a considerably younger source than Tr93 and Tr90. Due to the long period of compilation, there are altogether thirty scribal hands recognised[100]. The song bears no incipit, which is described as a common feature in the manuscript[101]. Another feature of the manuscript is the texting of all the voices. The contrafactum text *Regi seculorum* is derived from a biblical verse 1Tim:17. As in the Trent codices, the text is not a direct copy from its source, but it is adapted to the new use. The scribe has shown remarkable care in positioning the text and defining the word boundaries, with

[98] Hradec Králové, Krajske Muzeum, Knihovna, MS II A 7
[99] Fallows: *Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs*, p.44-45
[100] Lenka Mráčková: 'Behind the stage: some thoughts on the Codex Speciálník and the reception of polyphony in late 15th-century Prague', *Early Music*, vol.37 (2009), p.37
[101] Mráčková, p.39

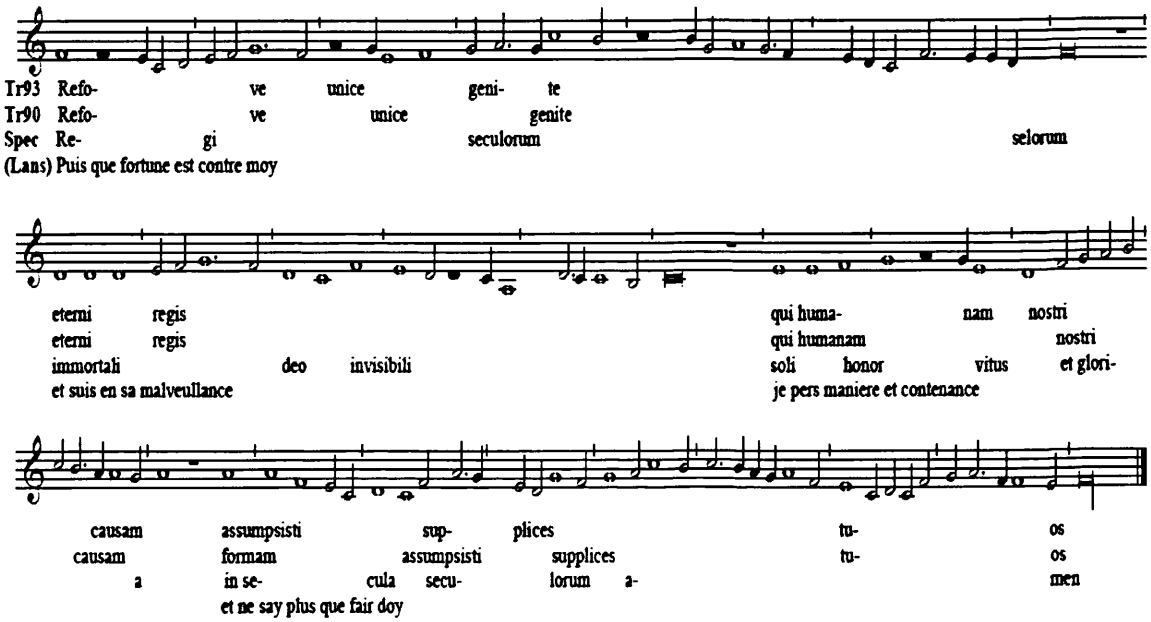
frequent syllabic breaks. In addition, the fermatas and longas indicate the cadential points very clearly. In a study of Spec, Lenka Mráčková reckons that the scribes of the manuscript understood the material they copied, which is reflected in their scribal work[102]. The scribe of *Regi seculorum* has certainly understood and underlined the musical structure of the song, and the exceptional care taken in the layout of the page could indicate that the book was accessible perhaps to some who needed more guidance in recognising musical and textual forms, unlike Wiser's scribal work, which was more for personal use.

All the three sources compared show a notable unity in recognising and understanding the musical form, and relating the contrafactum text to it. In these cases the Latin text was not merely pasted over the song without further consideration, but reworked to how the scribe imagined the word boundaries within the musical phrases. This would have required individual consideration and musical thinking during the text setting process. It is also notable how, despite the different syllabic and metric structures of *Refove unice* and *Regi seculorum* (or the original poem), the word boundaries are recognised very similarly. Again, the employment of the syllables of the text is not a primary concern, but the text setting in all cases clearly differentiates smaller textual units within the musical phrases.

Figure 7: Spec, p.386 (f.K15v)

[102] Mráčková, p.47

Puis que fortune / Refove unice / Regi seculorum



6. Dufay's *Le Serviteur* Reworked

The chansonniers were briefly introduced through Wolf in the case of *O rosa bella.* I would like to compare further Wiser's contrafacta and chansonniers, as they are most highly valued as sources of chansons. Dij and Wolf originate from the Loire valley, which is famous for its fifteenth-century chansonniers. There are five chansonniers that are thought to be related to one another due to their provenance and repertory[103]. The high quality of craftsmanship and luxury status of these books might make the Trent codices seem very modest in comparison, but are there notable differences in the text treatment considering the status of these manuscripts? Furthermore, does the close relationship between Dij and Wolf regarding manuscript type and provenance show in the text treatment?

Le Serviteur is a rondeau by Dufay, composed around 1450. Like *O Rosa Bella,* it was also widely distributed in the mid-fifteenth century, surviving in numerous manuscripts as a chanson, but also reworked for the Mass and borrowed in compositions by other composers[104].

6.1 Dij, ff.89v-90

Dating from c.1470[105], the first observations about the page concern the precise and evenly spaced notation. The text is written in a stylised hand, but due to the relatively large text-hand in relation to

---

[103] Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale 517; Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, Thott 291, 8; Washington, DC, Library of Congress, M2.1 L25 Case ('Laborde Chansonnier'); Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Guelf.287; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, département de la musique, Rès. Vmc. MS 57
Charles Hamm & Jerry Call: 'Sources, MS, §IX, 8: Renaissance Polyphony, Chansonniers' *Grove Music Online*, http://www.grovemusic.com [accessed 10.6. 2010]
Jane Alden: 'Excavating Chansonniers: Musical Archaeology and the Search for Popular Song', *Journal of Musicology*, vol.25, no.1 (2008), p.47
[104] David Fallows: 'Le serviteur of several masters', *Musik als Text. Bericht über den Internationalen Kongress der Gesellschaft für Musikforschung, Freiburg im Breslau 1993* (Kassel: Bärenreiter 1998)
[105] Fallows: *Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs*, pp.13-14

the notation, the text underlay might seem imprecise. The cadential places however are shown with gaps, as in most manuscript sources observed. In places the text placement does not seem entirely arbitrary; at the end of the second and third lines there would be ample space for more text, but the scribe has set the text otherwise, perhaps to point out the tail melismas in the end of the musical phrases. Thus, the text never goes ahead of the music. Overall, both the music and text are carefully executed on the page, and perhaps the scribe's main concern has been to present both elements in a stylised way for easy reading. He sets the text when suitable for the overall space on the page, but it is not a priority in the musical setting as a whole.

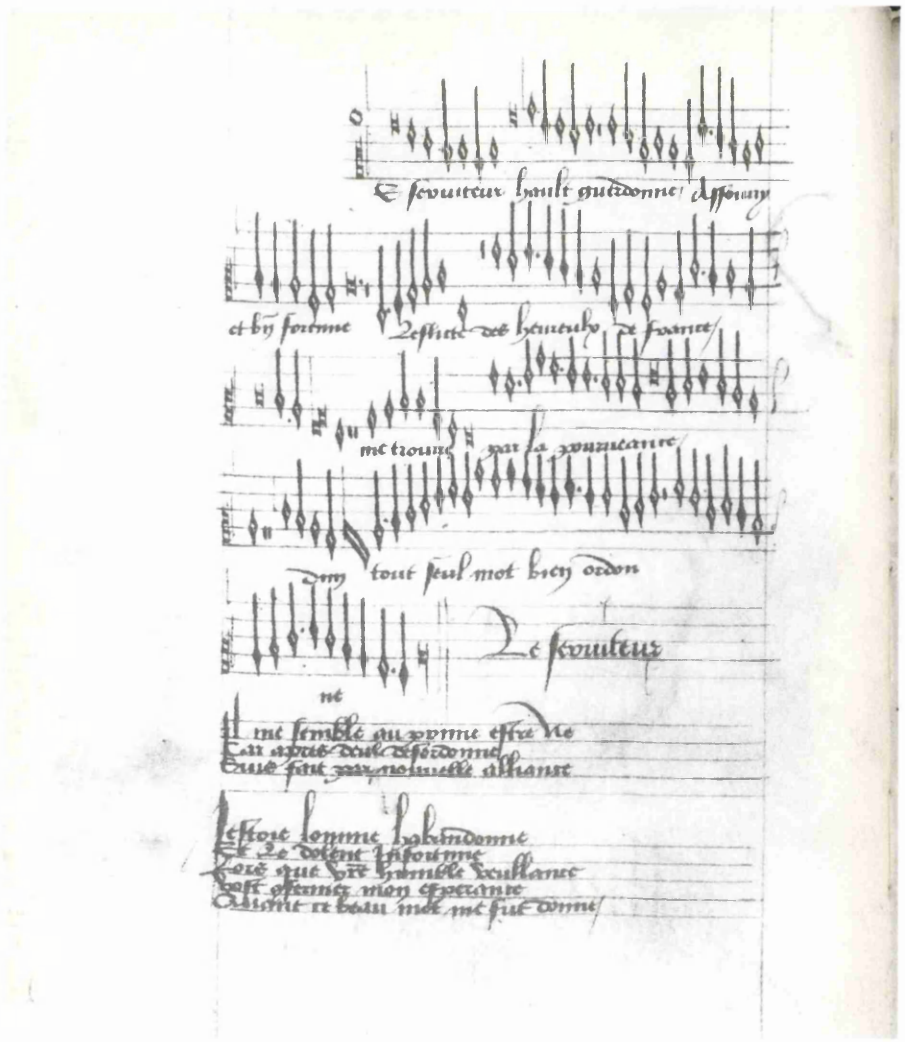


Figure 8: Dij, f.92v

6.2 Wolf, ff.24v-25

As seen in the case of *O rosa bella*, the text hand of the scribe in Wolf is a distinct trait in his page setting. When comparing to Dij, sharing the same feature, it causes the alignment of the text to stretch even further. For example, for the beginning of the third phrase ("L'eslite"), the scribe in Wolf has not been able to set the text to concord with the beginning of the musical phrase, but later he deploys a similar style of delaying the text during melismas. When looking strictly at the text-music layout in Dij and Wolf, they might both seem very different, and equally misplaced. Closer observation however reveals similarities in the scribal working style. In both cases the text is also notably clear to the reader, especially given the size of the text on the page. The scribal style in both chansonniers creates an image of the scribe wanting to present both elements in a clear manner (evenly spaced notation, careful text hand), thus caring for what he writes, but he does not consider it necessary to spell out the exact syllabic deployment for the reader. This however does not render the scribe insensitive towards the music; the chansonniers as musical manuscripts might have not benefited from such treatment of the page.

Figure 9: Wolf, f.24v

6.3 Tr90,ff.358v-359: *Superno Nunc Emittitur*

The contrafactum in Tr90 dates from late 1450s, considerably earlier than the chansonniers. The text for Christmas time is notably shorter than the original poem, which is also used in another composition of the same name, *Le serviteur* ascribed to Bedyngham (f.461v)[106]. When comparing the two, unlike in the case of *Refove unice*, the text itself has not been altered. The deployment of the words however shows similar traits as in *Refove unice*; the words are not broken identically in the sources, but treated according to the melodic material to which they are attached.

Due to the relative shortness of the text, the division of the text under the music is very pronounced, with a word set after every notable pause in the melodic line (breve or rest). This however does not differentiate melismas from the ends of the musical phrases; for example, the word "virgo" is set under the cadential melisma. However, the text corresponds with the structure of the music as a whole; although it is unsatisfactory from a poetic point of view, it gives strong visual cues on the overall structure of the music.

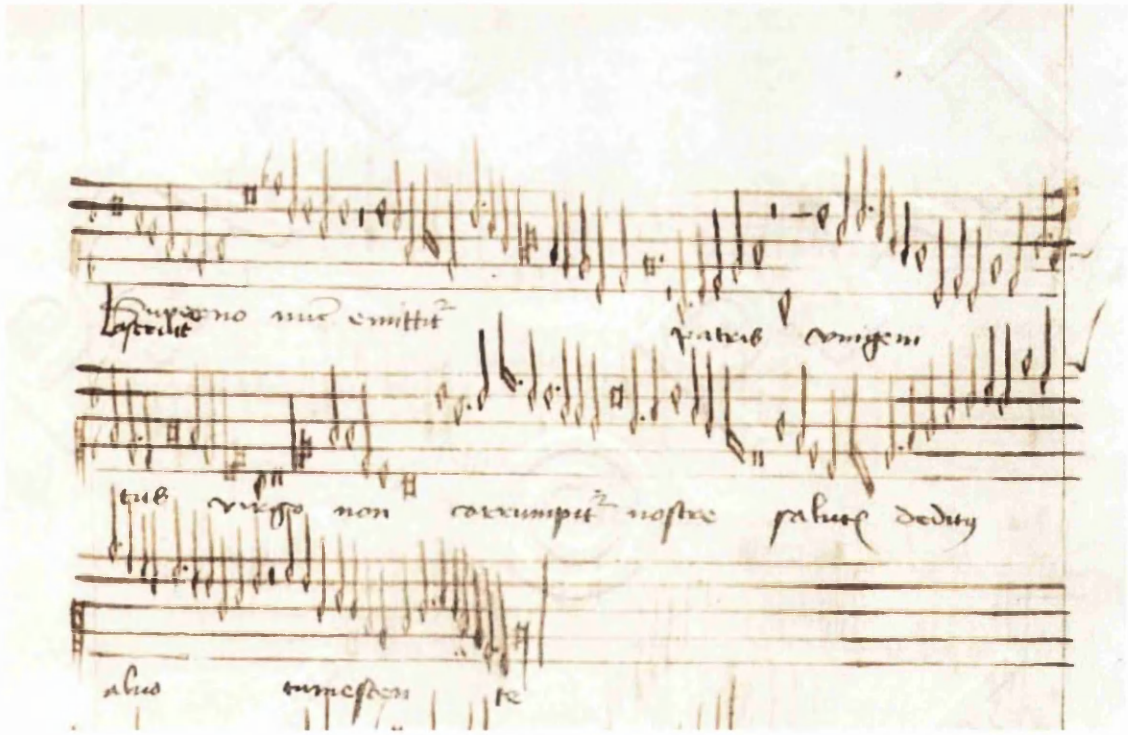
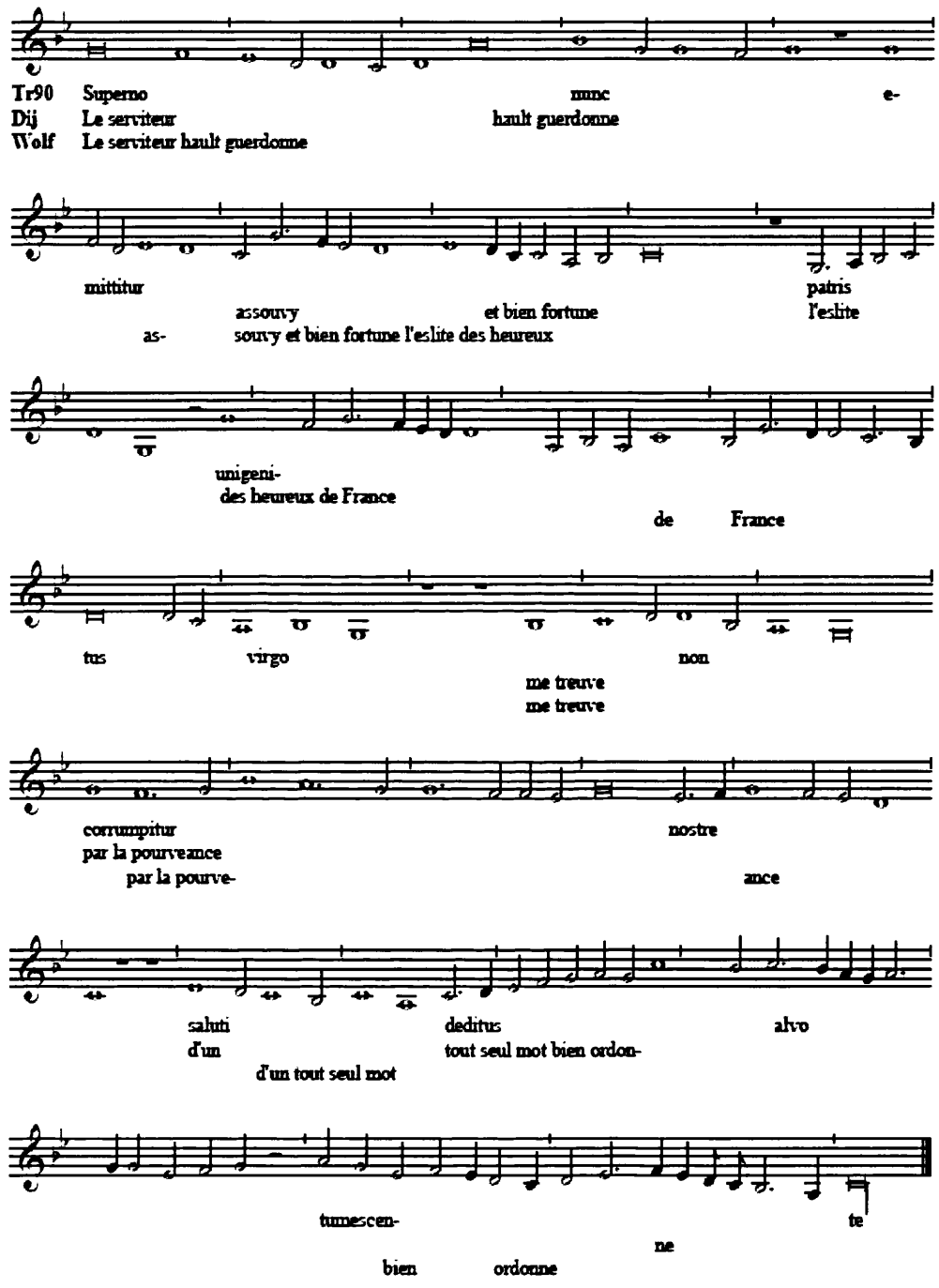


Figure 10: Tr90, f.358v

[106] Gozzi, p.60

Le serviteur / Superno nunc emittitur



7. English Song in Contrafactum

As discussed in the previous cases, chansonniers are often highly valued manuscripts from the second half of the fifteenth century. In the next two case studies, I will take the comparison between text treatment in Trent 90 and chansonniers further. The most exceptional feature of *So ys emprentid* and *Myn hertis lust* is the use of English text in a continental manuscript. The flexibility of the linguistic properties was already evident in the case of *O Ṛosa Bella*, with its "frenchified" and "latinized" elements in the text. How does the continental source manuscript reflect the scribe's understanding of the English poetry in relation to the music? Furthermore, does the treatment of contrafactum text differ from the original?

The authorship of *So ys emprentid* has been under debate; as with many songs by English composers of the period, the same song is attributed to more than one composer. The song is a middle English ballade stanza *abab cdcd*, surviving in nine known sources; along with the English text and Trent 90's Latin contrafactum, three sources include an incipit "Pour une suis desconforte", but the French text has not survived as a whole. David Fallows has argued that the composer of *So ys emprentid* would most likely be Bedyngham[107]. The songs are similar in style with *Myn hertis lust,* which is attributed to Bedyngham only, while *So ys emprentid* has mixed attributions between Frye and Bedyngham. Most interesting is that Fallows considers Trent 90 as a reliable source of attributions; he has suggested that the Trent codices are one of the earliest sources of Bedyngham's songs and hints at a close connection between the composer and Wiser[108]. Wiser's location in Trent certainly made such a connection possible, as the town was a busy passageway between Italy and central Europe.

[107] David Fallows: 'Bedyngham, Johannes'. *Grove Music Online*, http://www.grovemusic.com [accessed 8.7. 2010]
[108] Fallows: Ways of judging importance and influence

7.1 Mel, ff.61v-63: *So Ys Emprentid*

The only source containing the original English text of the song is the Mellon chansonnier, a single-scribe source from Naples, compiled in 1475/6[109]. Mel is an exquisite manuscript with initials painted in rich colours and margins filled with detailed decorations. As noted by Robert J. Menner, the scribe of the Mel was not familiar with English texts, which reflects on his way of writing the text of the song[110]. Leeman Perkins noted in his facsimile edition of the chansonnier that the verse of the English songs is fitted "with some difficulty and in an arbitrary fashion"[111]. Menner contemplates the possibility of the miscopying of the text resulting from mishearing the English words dictated to the scribe, but considers the errors more likely to have come from a scribe miscopying from a template[112]. One possibility is the scribe treating the English text as he imagines it from his own linguistic point of view: instead of direct copying from a template or writing from dictation, he creates his own 'performance' of the text. The end product of the scribal work is instilled through the scribe's understanding of the song; the correctness of the spelling is not the main concern, but rather the display of the structures of the song as a whole.

The text setting of the first part of the song shows the text to fall a bit short of the assumed original form, which made the scribe leave the lowest stave of the discantus untexted. In the second part of the song the scribe shows more conscious effort in allocating text blocks to the musical phrases, which has resulted in breaking words, for example "towit nesse" instead of "to witnesse". It is likely that this has more to do with the scribe's unfamiliarity with the language than with the music. The word boundaries in the second part of the song do not follow the poetic structure, but what is notable is the scribe's effort in indicating the structure of the song where he can do so.

---

[109] New Haven, Yale University, Beineke Library for Rare Books and Manuscripts, MS 91
Fallows: *Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs*, p.28

[110] Robert J. Menner: 'Three Fragmentary English Ballades in the Mellon Chansonnier', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 6/4 (1945), p.381

[111] Leeman L.Perkins & Howard Garey: *The Mellon Chansonnier, vol.2: Commentary* (London: Yale University Press, 1979)

[112] Menner, pp.381-382

Figure 11: Mel, f.61v

7.2 Tr90, ff.283v-284: *Sancta Maria Succurre Miseris*

Tr90 is one of the earliest known sources of the song, dating from 1454[113]. Sylvia Kenney assumed the song to have travelled from the Mellon chansonnier, through three other manuscripts (Esc, Pix, F176) to Tr90[114]. Later studies on the dating of the manuscripts have shown that Tr90 precedes most of the other sources considerably[115]; while Esc was compiled around late 1450s, Mel, Pix and F176 date from mid-1470 to the late 1480s. While Kenney should not be discounted owing to the fact that the dates were not available to her at the time of her study, it is rather interesting how Trent 90 ended up at the furthest end of the chain of reception.

The text *Sancta Maria succurre miseris* is a well-known Marian antiphon[116], and the ink of the text is considerably fainter than the one used in the notation. The song appears also without text in ff. 308v-309, which belongs to a different gathering but has a similar type of paper to ff.283v-284[117]. The text appears also in a composition by Dunstable in ff.340v-341, and Kenney suggested that the

---

[113] Fallows: *Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs*, pp.62-63
[114] Sylvia W. Kenney: 'Contrafacta in the Works of Walter Frye', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol.8, no.3 (1955), p.191
[115] The datings of the manuscripts as in Fallows's *Catalogue of the Polyphonic Songs 1415-1480*
[116] Gozzi, p.59
[117] Wright, p.269

scribe (Wiser) might have drawn the text to *So ys emprentid* from that source. While it is not possible to know exactly the point when the contrafactum text was added to the song, Wiser certainly does not treat the text identically to the Dunstable setting. The breaking of the words into different syllabic groups is notably different, for example in "flebiles"; in Dunstable's composition the word is broken into three syllables, whereas in Bedyngham's song it is broken into two.
The text setting follows a very similar style to that seen in *Le serviteur*: each melodic phrase is indicated by word boundaries, so the text provides a visual cue to the melodic structure of the song. Also, as in *Le serviteur*, the melismatic tails on the cadences at the end of the sections are allocated text rather than left untexted. Still, the text placement shows understanding of the musical structure of the song. As Wiser's text is shorter and therefore the words are spread further, they nevertheless convey similar aural ideas about the song as seen in Mel.

Kenney's consideration of Mellon as the closest source to the assumed original and Tr90 as the furthest shows something of the assumption of something being "closest to the original, thus the best". In the light of the new evidence about the dating, it throws the chain of source evaluation almost on its head. While it is not possible to know exactly when the contrafactum text was added to the music, Wiser's scribal work is concordant with the ideas later written by the scribe in Mel. While both sources might be criticized over the shortcomings regarding the original text, they both display a contemporary understanding of the song, with notable flexibility in regard to the text. This should not be viewed as the text being completely insignificant element in the fifteenth-century song , but that the ideas of its "correctness" are more allowing towards variance.

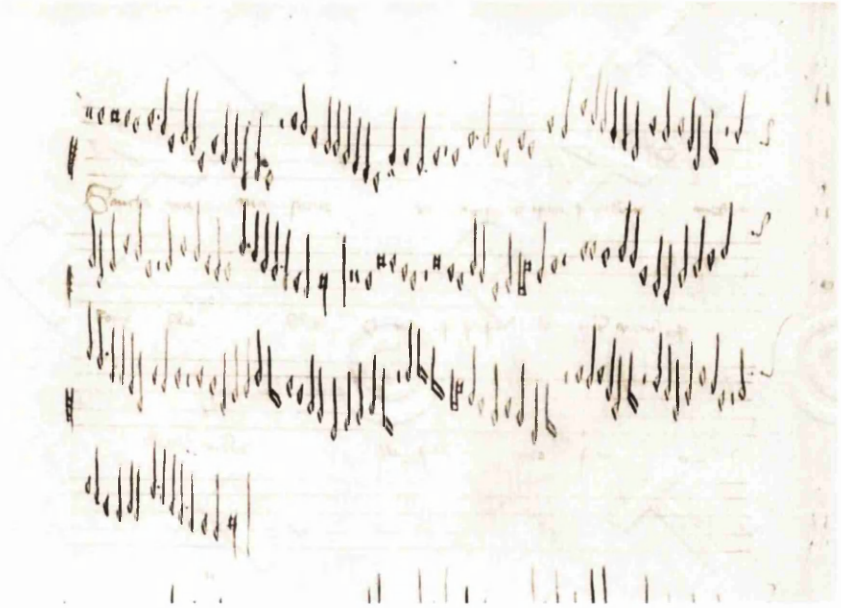
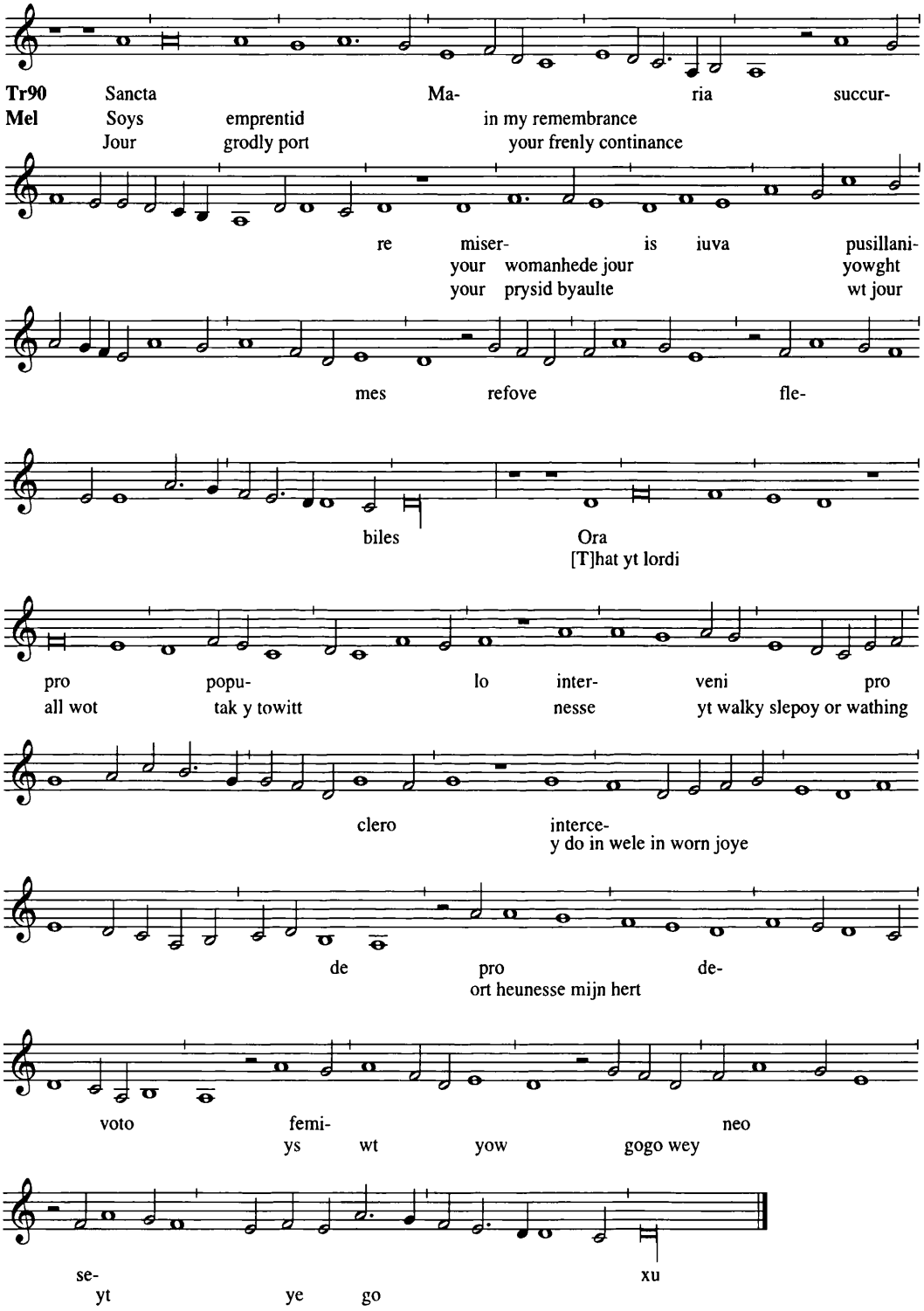


Figure 12: Tr90, f.283v

So ys emprentid / Sancta Maria succurre miseris



8. English Song Once More

Myn hertis lust, ascribed to Bedyngham, is a ballade with a seven-line stanza, and it follows the poetic form of rhyme royal; first four verses *abab* followed by three verses *bcc.* Rhyme royal was a popular poetic form in late medieval English poetry, but it was also known and used on the continent. The song appears in the manuscripts from mid- to late 1450s with two contrafacta, but most have a French incipit *Grant temps ay en desiree*[118]. As with *So ys emprentid,* Mel is the only source for the original text in English. Some of the linguistic difficulties faced by the Mellon scribe were already evident in the case of *So ys emprentid. Myn hertis lust*, however, has two contrafacta, which brings more scope to the variants in contrafactum treatment of the song, as seen in the case study of *Puis que fortune*.

8.1 Mel, ff.65v-67r: *Myn Hertis Lust*

The setting of the first page of the discantus has similar elements to that of *So ys emprentid*; most notably leaving the last musical phrase untexted. The text has seemingly little space for deliberate text setting; however the alignment of the verses on the second stave of the music is not without correspondence with the musical cadence. The second part of the song has more space for breaking the text into more distinct sections. The music has three strong cadential points for the three verses of the poem; however the verse division of the text does not follow the poetic division. Nevertheless, the text underlay shows the scribe's efforts to connect the text to the music, and the breaks of the text reflect the musical structure of the song very well. Perkins has pointed out that the scribe's confusion with the text could stem from his unfamiliarity with the English book hand that he might have used as an exemplar[119]. Certainly the many missing syllables in the last three verses

[118] Fallows: A *Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs 1415-1480*, p.59
[119] Perkins: *The Mellon Chansonnier, vol.2: Commentary,* p.389

of the poem might have added some level of difficulty for understanding the structure of the poem. In spite of the many textual shortcomings pointed out, the scribe still attempts to set the text to correspond with the musical structure.

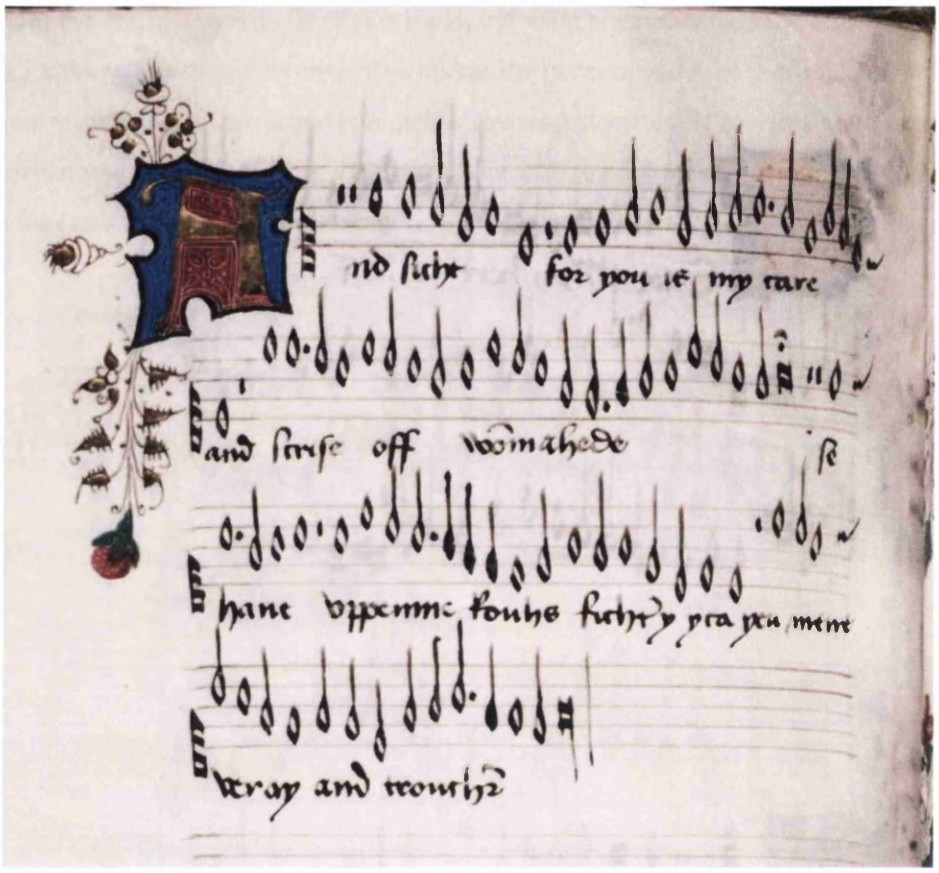


Figure 13: Mel, f.66v

8.2 M5023, ff.13v-15r: *Ave Verum Gaudium*

M5023[120] is a small commonplace book from Benediktbeuern dating from 1495, and it contains mainly chants[121]. The book was compiled by Johannes Greis, a schoolmaster of Benediktbeuern Abbey[122]. Its contrafacta are curious in how they are assimilated to the book's repertory by adding Latin chant texts to the chansons, something which is very different from the choice of contrafacta

[120] Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. lat. mon. 5023
[121] Fallows: *A Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs 1415-1480*, p.27
[122] Strohm, p.291

texts found in Tr90. The structure of the Latin chant is very clear *abab*, and the division of chant verses is evident in the musical spacing on the page, especially the second page of the discantus which is divided as one verse per line. The musical structures are recognised in the text placement; the verses are accommodated according to the cadential points in the song. Greis's use of the song is different from the original metrics of rhyme royal, but what are evident are the efforts to make use of the song's structure to fit in new text. This makes the pedagogical aspect of the song in this case very apparent with its clear layout and symmetric rhyming structure. It is also a good example of Wiser's professional colleague taking a different approach to contrafactum compared with Wiser's preference for texts without poetic patterns.

Figure 14: M5023.f.14v

8.3 Tr90, ff.462v-463r: *Beata Es Virgo Maria*

As with *So ys emprentid*, Tr90 is one of the oldest known sources of the song, dating from the mid-1450s. Once again Wiser's attribution to "Bedingham" is exceptionally accurate, compared to other sources with no attribution or various written forms such as "Bellingan", which would support Fallows's idea of the close connection between the English composer and Wiser.
The text is two antiphons for Vespers merged together[123]. Again, it is added with different ink, so there is no certainty whether it was added around the same time or perhaps considerably later. The text also has incipits in French: "Grant temps" in the beginning and "Dire persone" in the opening of the second section. Wiser's contrafactum text does not have the poetic structures of the contrafactum in M5023, but the familiar settings of word boundaries are evident. Perhaps a more exceptional feature is in the very beginning of the song; the words "Beata es" are stretched until the first cadence, as the French text incipit takes most of the space for the text. Also in the beginning of the second section, "Creatorem" is squeezed under the more prominent incipit "Dire persone". The incipits however do not seem to reflect the word boundaries the same way as the contrafactum text, as their spacing seems to depend more on the space available along the characteristic long stems of the minims.

Kenney has noted that the text process in the song has moved from English to French to Latin[124]. Certainly the incipits found in Tr90 support this, but what is notable is how quickly new texts were adapted to the songs. If Bedyngham composed the song in mid-1400s for the English text, by the end of the 1450s the song has already been circulated in French and adapted to Latin. Furthermore, if Fallows's thought of the connection between Bedyngham and Wiser is correct, it raises even further questions on how much the text replacement was seen as a form of corruption by contemporaries.

[123] Gozzi, p.62
[124] Kenney, p.186

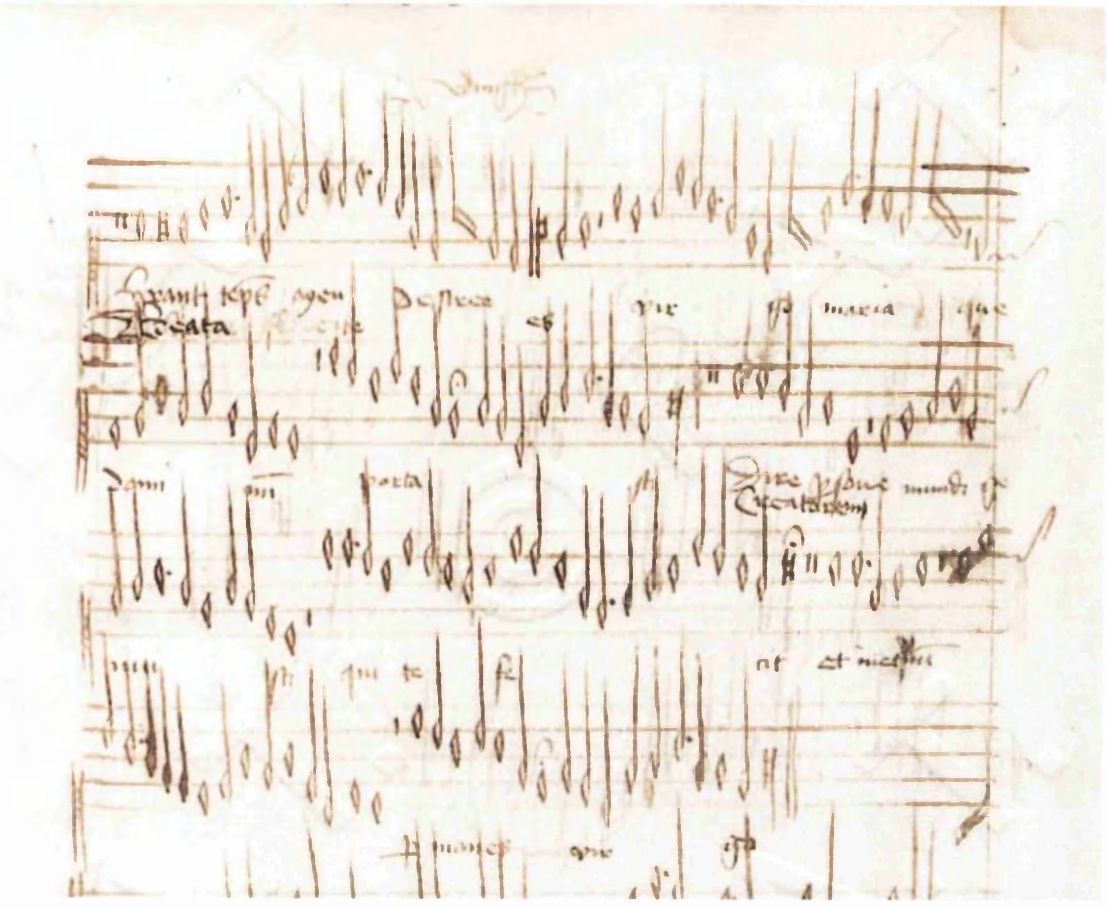
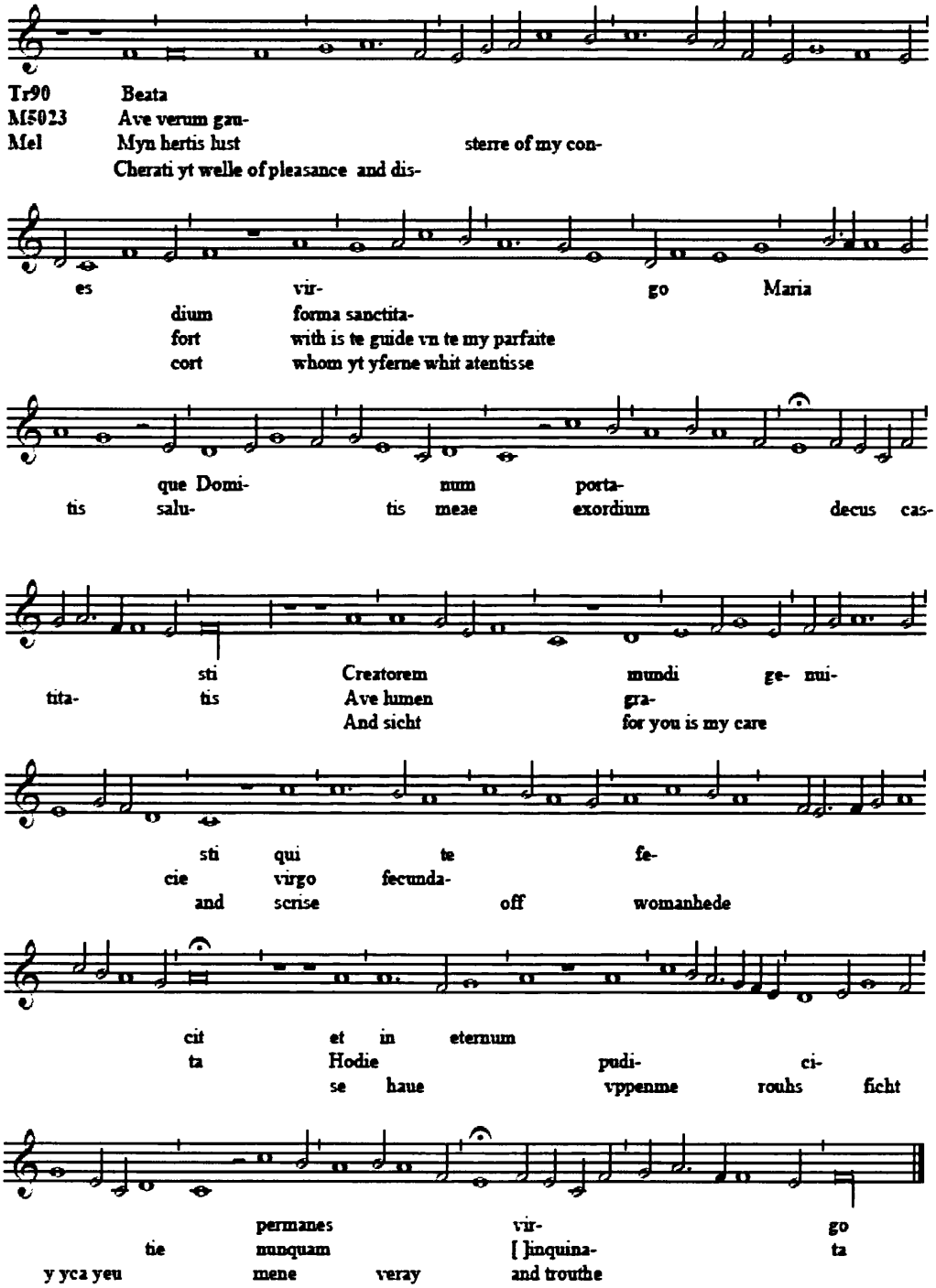


Figure 15: Tr90, 462v

Myn Hertis Lust / Beata Es Virgo Maria / Ave Verum Gaudium



9. Conclusion

Through these case studies I hope to have glimpsed a little of Wiser's approach to text setting and on text deployment in contrafacta as a whole. The contrafactum cases viewed share notable similarities in the treatment of the text underlay when compared with the sources that are held in higher esteem. They represent a second take of the repertory that was popular during the time, but there is little to suggest that the variant Latin texts would have been considered as something that is secondary in value. So far no contemporary source has been found that expresses any concern over the practice, and it could be that one of the reasons contrafacta have received so little attention is because they do not 'act' the way chansons are expected to, and thus have been labelled as secondary practice.

Although the texts used for contrafacta hardly ever relate to the poetic properties of the original text, they are still treated with similar scribal techniques as the original text. In the case of contrafactum, studies regarding the relations between text and music in the fifteenth-century music manuscripts might benefit from stretching out from the quest for poetic perfection. The scribe uses his understanding of the music to point out the structure of the song, but presents the text in the kind of way that is not directly dictating the performance. The text setting in contrafactum, and indeed in any scribal presentation of the songs, has required premeditation in the text placement and understanding of the melodic form. The musical page however does not strive to dictate the performance in the way we are used to: it is a presentation on its own right, not necessarily dependent on its 'usefulness' and authority in a sonic performance situation. Of course, the scribal performance approach is not claiming the scribal activities to be perfect in every way. Scribes were people working and consuming the music, and as with any activities with music, the outcome can vary in numerous ways. Instead of striving towards value judgements that are perhaps more to do with our modern taste, all levels of performance should be taken into account in order to get a wider view on the use of the music in the fifteenth century. The concentration only on whatever is

considered as paradigmatic examples of fifteenth-century music would provide only a partial view of the musical practices as a whole.

A closer examination of the phenomenon raises questions about how the contemporary users of music are perceived. Cathedral schools like Trent and schoolmasters like Wiser were active participants in the musical culture of the time, whose activities reflect on the prevailing attitudes towards the concepts of generally accepted musical practices. The chansons were particularly useful for cathedral schools from a pedagogical point of view, since the recognisable structures of *forme fixe* songs would be suitable in teaching musical structures even when the original text is removed. The pedagogical purpose explains the existence of the phenomenon, but this alone would be an unsatisfactory reason for not regarding the practice any further.

The fifteenth century musical life presented in Strohm's *Rise of European Music*, paints a picture of a very eclectic musical culture, which might have had a flexible attitude in varying and reworking the existing compositions. As we know, the interchangeability of musical material is an ever-present feature in fifteenth-century musical practice. In such a context, the text replacement in songs does not seem exceptional alongside other varying of musical material, such as re-use of voices in another compositions or composing liturgical Masses from chansons. As I hope to have demonstrated, the treatment of variable texts on the pages of the manuscripts gives an impression of it being an acceptable element in the context of the era, which is far removed from the modern demands of originality and fixity.

Bibliography:

Alden, Jane: 'Excavating Chansonniers: Musical Archaeology and the Search for Popular Song', *Journal of Musicology*, vol.25 (2008), pp.46-87

Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi, vol.53 ed. by Clemens Blume & Henry Bannister (Leipzig: O.R. Reisland 1911)

Bent, Margaret: 'Text Setting in sacred music of the early 15th century: Evidence and Implications', *Musik Und Text in der Mehrstimmigkeit des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts*. Göttinger Musikwissenschaftliche Arbeiten, band 10 (Bärenreiter Kassel, 1984), pp.291-326

——: 'Trent 93 and Trent 90: Johannes Wiser at work', *I Codici Musicali Trentini, A Cento Anni Dalla Loro Riscoperta. Atti del Convegno Laurence Feininger la Musicologica Come Missione, Trento, Castello del Buonconsiglio 6-7 Settembre 1985* (Trent: Servizio Beni Culturali, 1985)

Boone, Graeme: *Patterns in Play. A Model for Text Setting in the Early French Songs of Guillaume Dufay* (University of Nebraska Press, 1999)

Carruthers, Mary Jean: *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 1990)

Cerquiglini, Bernard: *In Praise of the Variant. A Critical History of Philology*, translated by Betsy Wing. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999)

Earp, Lawrence: 'Texting in 15th-century French chansons: a look ahead from the 14th century', *Early Music*, vol. 19, no.2 (1991), pp.194-210

Edwards, Warwick: The Great Word-Note Shift. Paper given at All Souls, Oxford, 29.1. 2009 (unpublished)

——: 'Text Treatment in Motets around 1500: The Humanistic Fallacy', *On the Relationship of Imitation and Text Treatment. The Motet Around 1500* (Tours: Centre d'Études Supérieures de la Renaissance, in press)

Fallows, David: 'Bedyngham, Johannes' *Grove Music Online*, http://www.grovemusic.com [accessed 8.7. 2010]

——: *A Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs 1415-1480* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999)

——: 'Le serviteur of several masters', *Musik als Text. Bericht über den Internationalen Kongress der Gesellschaft für Musikforschung, Freiburg im Breslau 1993* (Kassel: Bärenreiter 1998)

——: *Songs and Musicians in the Fifteenth Century* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996)

——: Ways of judging importance and influence. Paper given at the Med-Ren conference at Royal Holloway, 6.7.2010 (unpublished)

Ferreira, Manuel Pedro: *Oporto 714: Um Manoscrito Precioso* (Porto: Campo das Letras, 2001)

Gaffurius, Franchinus: *Practica Musicae*, Translation and transcription by Clement A. Miller, Musicological Studies and Documents, vol.20 (Dallas: American Institute of Musicology, 1968)

Gennrich, Friedrich: *Die Kontrafaktur im Liedschaffen des Mittelalters,* Summa Musicae Medii Aevi, vol.12 (Langen bei Frankfurt, 1965)

Gerber, Rebecca: 'An Assessment of Johannes Wiser's Scribal Activities in the Trent Codices', *Musica Disciplina*, vol.46 (1992), pp.51-77

——: 'Ligature and Notational Practices as Determining Factors in the Text Underlay of Fifteenth Century Sacred Music', *Studi Musicali*, vol.20 (1991), pp.45-68

Gozzi, Marco: 'I Codici più Recenti nel Loro Contesto Storico-Liturgico: i Contrafacta', *The Trent Codices: New Findings and New Directions,* ed. by Peter Wright (Trent: Castello del Buonconsiglio, 1996), pp.55-80

Hamm, Charles & Call, Jerry: 'Sources, MS, §IX, 8: Renaissance Polyphony, Chansonniers', *Grove Music Online*, http://www.grovemusic.com [accessed 10.6. 2010]

Harrán, Don: *Word-Tone Relations in Musical Thought From Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century*, Musicological Studies & Documents, 40 (American Institute of Musicology: Hänssler Verlag, 1986)

Kenney, Sylvia W.: 'Contrafacta in the Works of Walter Frye', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol.8, no.3 (1955), pp.182-202

King, Jonathan: 'Texting in Early Fifteenth-Century Sacred Polyphony (PhD, Oxford University, 1996)

Leech-Wilkinson, Daniel.: *Compositional Techniques in the Four-Part Motets of Philippe de Vitry and his Contemporaries,* Outstanding Dissertations in Music from British Universities (New York & London: Garland 1989)

Maxwell, Sheila Kate: 'Guillaume de Machaut and the Mise en page of Medieval French Sung Verse' (PhD, University of Glasgow, 2009)

Meconi, Honey: 'Is Underlay Necessary?', *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music,* ed. by Tess Knighton & David Fallows (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1992)

Menner, Robert J.: 'Three Fragmentary English Ballades in the Mellon Chansonnier', *Modern Language Quarterly*, vol.6 no.4 (1945), pp.381-387

Mráčková, Lenka: 'Behind the stage: Some Thoughts on the Codex Speciálník and the Reception of Polyphony in Late 15th-Century Prague', *Early Music,* vol.37 (2009), pp.37-48

Perkins, Leeman L.: 'Towards a Theory of Text-Music Relations in the Music of the Renaissance', *Binchois Studies,* ed. by Andrew Kirkman & Dennis Slavin (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2000)

Perkins, Leeman L. & Garey, Howard (ed.): *The Mellon Chansonnier, vol.2: Commentary* (London: Yale University Press ,1979)

Randell Upton, Elizabeth: 'Aligning Words and Music: Scribal Procedures for the Placement of Text and Notes in the Chantilly Codex', *A late Medieval Songbook and its Context, New Perspectives on the Chantilly Codex (Bibliothèque du Château de Chantilly, Ms.564)* ed. by Yolanda Plumley & Anne Stone. (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2009)

Saunders, Suparmi Elizabeth: 'The Dating of Trent 93 and Trent 90', *I Codici Musicali Trentini, A Cento Anni Dalla Loro Riscoperta. Atti del Convegno Laurence Feininger la Musicologica Come Missione, Trento, Castello del Buonconsiglio 6-7 Settembre 1985* (Trent: Servizio Beni Culturali, 1985)

Starr, Pamela F.: 'Johannes Pullois', *Grove Music Online*, http://www.grovemusic.com [accessed 9.8. 2010]

Strohm, Reinhard: *The Rise of European Music 1380-1500* (Cambridge University Press, 1993)

Wegman, Rob. C.: 'Miserere supplicanti Dufay: The Creation and Transmission of Guillaume Dufay's Missa Ave regina celorum', *Journal of Musicology*, vol.13, no.1 (1995), pp.18-54

Wright, Peter: 'Watermarks and Musicology: The Genesis of Johannes Wiser's Collection', *Early Music History*, vol.22 (2003), pp.247-332