Lecture 1: The Eton Choirbook

‘We will and ordain…that, each day at Vespers, at a time deemed appropriate by the Provost or, in his absence, the Vice-Provost, the 16 choristers of our college shall enter the church two-by-two, wearing surplices [and] accompanied by the instructor of the choristers…having knelt before the rood, they shall say Pater noster and, on rising, shall sing before the image of the B[lessed] V[irgin] M[ary] the antiphon Salve regina with its versicles during Lent (at which time, at least on the eves of feast days, all the scholars of our college should attend, wearing surplices): outside Lent, they should likewise sing another antiphon of the BVM in the best manner which they know, with the versicle Ave Maria and prayer.’ (Statutes of Eton College)

‘Illi etenim in dies novos cantus novissime inveniunt, ac isti, quod miserrimi signum est ingenii, una semper et eadem compositione utuntur.’

‘For indeed [the French] invent new songs in new manners every day, whereas [the English] go on using one and the same kind of composition, which is a sign of an impoverished mind.’ Tinctoris, Proportionale musices (c. 1473–4)

Reading

Hugh Benham, Latin Church Music in England, 1460–1575 (London, 1977), ch. 5–6 (and, for context, ch. 1–4 and 7–8)

Frank Ll. Harrison, Music in Medieval Britain (London, 1958), ch. 6 (and, for context, ch. 1 & 4)


Magnus Williamson’s introductory study to the facsimile edition of The Eton Choirbook (Oxford, 2010), ch. 1, 2, 9

Magnus Williamson, ‘Royal Imagery and Textual Interplay in Gilbert Banaster’s O Maria et Elizabeth’, Early Music History 19 (2001), 237–75


Richard Sherr (ed.), The Josquin Companion, ch. 9, 10, 15

Theodor Dumitrescu, The Early Tudor Court and International Musical Relations (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007)

Grove Music Online ‘Obrecht’, ‘Ockeghem’

Editions

For the facsimile edition of the Eton Choirbook, ed. Williamson: see above


Paul Doe (ed.), Early Tudor Magnificats, Early English Church Music 4 (1962)


Johannes Ockeghem Collected Works 3, ed. Richard Wexler (for the Marian motets)

New Obrecht Edition 16, ed. Chris Maas (for e.g. the Salve regina settings)

New Josquin Edition 23 & 24, ed. Willem Elders (vol. 23 includes Alma redemptoris, Ave Maria virgo serena, and Benedicta es cælorum regina; vol. 24 includes Illibata, Inviolata, and Præter rerum)

Recordings

The Eton Choirbook, 4 CDs, The Sixteen, dir. Harry Christophers (Collins Classics) (in MFL)

William Cornysh: Stabat Mater, The Tallis Scholars/Peter Phillips (Gimell CDGIM 014)

John Browne: Music from the Eton Choirbook, The Tallis Scholars/Peter Phillips (Gimell CDGIM 036)

Ockeghem: Missa Mi-mi, Salve regina, Alma redemptoris mater, The Clerks’ Group, dir. Edward Wickham

Obrecht: Missa Caput, Salve regina, Oxford Camerata, dir. Jeremy Summerly

There are many recordings of Josquin’s Marian motets