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A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF PSALM SETTINGS FROM THE  
TIME OF THE REFORMATION THROUGH STRAVINSKY'S  
"SYMPHONIE DES PSAUMES"

THESIS

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Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for  
praise is comely for the upright. Praise the  
Lord with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery  
and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto him  
a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

-- Psalm 33:1-3.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

"Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." "I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being." There are many such expressions to be found in the Book of Psalms. Though perhaps we shall never know the music to which these religious lyrics were written, the poems have never ceased to be the source of inspiration for the spirits of men since they were first sung.<sup>1</sup> Each psalm seems to have an underlying purpose with a personal message for each reader. In the Book one can find a reply to every sort of question, for the Psalms are filled with expressions of emotion brought about by all human experience. Perhaps this is the reason it has become the "prayer book of all humanity," and as Luther termed it, "a Bible in miniature."<sup>2</sup>

The collection of these 150 songs or psalms makes up what is known as the Hebrew hymn-book or the Book of Psalms. The book is in five distinct divisions or sections, each beginning with its own prologue or introduction

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<sup>1</sup>Waldo Selden Pratt, The Music of the French Psalter, p. vii.

<sup>2</sup>Lulu Rumsey Wiley, Bible Music, pp. 177-188.

and ending with a doxology.<sup>3</sup> The entire 150th Psalm is the doxology for the whole collection as it ends with the words, "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord."<sup>4</sup>

Even though they are referred to as the Psalms of David, there are only seventy-four that can be attributed to his authorship. The composition of these lyrics extended over the years of the Hebrew nation's history from the time of Moses onward. The oldest Psalm of the collection is perhaps the 90th, supposedly written by Moses in the year of his death, 1451 B. C. Some authorities believe that the last poems written were Psalms 44, 79, 74, and 83 from the years of the Maccabees, about 156 B. C.<sup>5</sup> In their entirety they supply many "lost bits" of history of the nation not found in other sacred writings.

One must know that these poems were surely to have been set to some sort of music from their very beginnings. The story of the influence of David's playing and singing upon King Saul has been told many times.<sup>6</sup> Doubtless

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<sup>3</sup>Baker's Dictionary of Musical Terms, "Doxology," a psalm or hymn of praise to God.

<sup>4</sup>Wiley, op. cit., pp. 177-188.

<sup>5</sup>Samuel Fallows, The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia and Scripture Dictionary, III, 1405-1408.

<sup>6</sup>Wiley, op. cit., pp. 177-188.

these early melodies were carried over in part into the Temple worship, but no trace of them can be found. The melodies used for the purpose of rendering the Temple-psalmody were perhaps merely short and simple "motifs" with a range of pitch not very extensive. The singing must have been sort of a recitative with a few inflections, with many syllables and even many words being sung upon a single note.<sup>7</sup> There seemed to have been a certain melodic formula for each type of poem or prayer and not a fixed melody.<sup>8</sup>

Since the Christian religion came directly from the Hebrew religion and out of the nation itself, it was perfectly natural that the Psalms were taken by the new religion as the medium of praise.<sup>9</sup> The early leaders saw the value of these songs of praise and exhorted to new believers to use them. Paul (probably 3 to 6 B. C. -65 A. D.)<sup>10</sup> wrote the church at Ephesus, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord."<sup>11</sup> James (probably 6 B. C.

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<sup>7</sup>C. C. Keet, A Liturgical Study of the Psalter, pp. 52-53.

<sup>8</sup>Gustave Reese, Music in the Middle Ages, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup>Ruth Ellis Messenger, Christian Hymns of the First Three Centuries, p. 26.

<sup>10</sup>Fallows, op. cit., pp. 1294-1298.

<sup>11</sup>Ephesians 5:19.



-60 A. D.)<sup>12</sup> reminded the faithful, "Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms."<sup>13</sup> Eusebios (260-340) wrote in his Ecclesiastical History of the singing of psalms by the early Christians. St. Ambrose (333-397) advocated the use of psalms singing even by the women who were exhorted to remain silent in all public worship as he wrote of them that "they too sing their psalms well, as they are becoming to each sex . . . they create a bond of unity when the whole people raise their voice in one choir."<sup>14</sup>

With the liberty that came to Christendom by the Constantinian Edict (313 A. D.), the Christian Church entered into its public life. A liturgy for public worship was greatly needed and so the leaders turned to the Psalms for a source of help. Pope Sixtus (432-440) established a school or monastery for the study of psalmody.<sup>15</sup> And on up to the present time the psalms have constituted a large part of the text for the liturgical chant of the church.<sup>16</sup>

Thus we see something of the origin of the Psalms

<sup>12</sup>Fallows, op. cit., II, 901-903.

<sup>13</sup>James 3:13.

<sup>14</sup>Reese, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>15</sup>Paul Henry Lang, Music in Western Civilization, p. 42.

<sup>16</sup>Marie Pierik, The Spirit of the Gregorian Chant, p. 141.

and how they were brought over into our civilization. In this investigation the scope will be limited to the study of the use of psalms from the time of the Reformation up to the present time. Only a brief chapter will be devoted to Latin settings and the use of the Psalms within the Catholic liturgy. Most of the study will have to do with the music of the Protestant faiths.

## CHAPTER II

### LATIN PSALM SETTINGS

Latin settings of Psalms are found almost entirely within the music of the Roman Catholic Church, the Latin language having been retained by the church as an unchanging, almost universal language. The Latin still used by the church is that from the Vulgate, a translation from the Hebrew and the Greek made by St. Jerome in the fourth century.<sup>1</sup>

The Psalms have passed as a heritage from the synagogue of the Jewish Church to Catholicism, becoming and continuing to be the principal text of the liturgical service of the Catholic Church.<sup>2</sup> Antiphonal psalm-singing was probably officially introduced into the church liturgy by act of the Roman Council of 382 A. D. presided over by Pope Damasus. In spite of the many fundamental changes that have taken place since that time, the Psalms have retained their dominant position in the Catholic liturgy.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Psalm," Oxford Companion to Music, pp. 759-760.

<sup>2</sup>Pierik, op. cit., p. 125.

<sup>3</sup>Lang, op. cit., p. 46.

The Gregorian Chant, or the liturgical chant of the Roman Catholic Church, developed from the three forms of ancient Hebrew psalmody. These Hebrew forms were, namely: direct psalmody, antiphonal psalmody, and responsorial psalmody.<sup>4</sup> All three forms have survived within the two main divisions of the liturgy, the Mass of the "most solemn service of the church rites representing the commemoration and the repetition of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross," and the Office or services held each day at specified hours.<sup>5</sup>

Direct psalmody, as carried over from the Jewish custom, consisted in the singing of a song or psalm straight through without any repetitions or responses. This was done by a solo voice or by the people in unison. The Tract<sup>6</sup> (L. tractim, straightway) of the Mass exemplifies this type of chant.<sup>7</sup> It is represented in the Office by The Office for the Dead in the use of the

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<sup>4</sup>"Psalmody, Gregorian," Harvard Dictionary of Music, p. 609.

<sup>5</sup>"Psalmody, Gregorian," "Gregorian Chant," "Mass," Harvard Dictionary of Music, pp. 609, 304, 427.

<sup>6</sup>"Tract," Harvard Dictionary of Music, p. 755: "In Gregorian Chant an item of the Proper of the Mass, used in the place of the alleluia mainly for feasts of a somber character. . . . It consists of a number, usually three or four, of psalm verses, without the addition of an antiphon or response, and thus represents one of the few remaining examples of 'direct psalmody.'"

<sup>7</sup>Pierik, op. cit., p. 143.

"Lauda, anima mea" (Ps. 145) and the "de profundis" (Ps. 129).<sup>8</sup>

Antiphonal psalmody, as identified with the antiphonal manner of singing in the synagogue, was where a sort of refrain was sung within the course of a psalm or canticle. Originally, the refrain was sung after each two verses but later it came only at the beginning and the end of the psalm.<sup>9</sup> In the Mass this form is found in the Introit, the Communion, and the Offertorium.<sup>10</sup> The invitatorium<sup>11</sup> sung at the Matins in the Office for the Dead, "Venite exultemus Domine" (Ps. 94), is the most outstanding example of antiphonal psalmody of the Office.

The third form of Hebrew psalmody incorporated into the Catholic liturgy was the responsorial form. This was taken directly from the Jewish service as represented

<sup>8</sup>The Liber Usualis, edited by the Benedictines of Solesmes, pp. 1776, 1774.

<sup>9</sup>Pierik, op. cit., p. 141.

<sup>10</sup>Harvard Dictionary of Music, pp. 363, 167, 504: "Introit" -- the initial chant of the Mass. "Communion" -- the last of the five items of the Proper of the Mass, sung after (originally during) the distribution of the Host. "Offertorium" -- the fourth item of the Proper of the Mass, accompanying the placing upon the Altar of the Elements (bread and wine).

<sup>11</sup>Harvard Dictionary of Music, p. 366: "Invitatorium" -- in the Roman Catholic rites, the first psalm of Matins, "Venite exultemus Domino" (Ps. 94, Ps. 95 of the King James Version). It is remarkable as one of the few remaining examples of the original method of antiphonal psalmody, the antiphon being sung not only at the beginning and the end, as usual, but also between each pair of verses.

in the Gradual of the Mass.<sup>12</sup> In this form a soloist sang an entire Psalm with the choir or people responding with a short affirmative sentence or amen after each verse.<sup>13</sup>

Not only did the Psalms offer the foundation for the form of much of the liturgy, but the Psalms are by far the most important texts used in the Gregorian Chant.<sup>14</sup>

Seeing the importance of the Psalms in the make-up of the Catholic liturgical music and then realizing that the church fostered practically all of the music from the fourth and fifth centuries until the time of the Reformation, one must conclude that to study Psalm settings of this period is to study the music of the Roman Catholic Church. This is not the purpose of the investigation, but a few examples of Latin Psalms apart from the Catholic liturgy should be cited.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina  
(1525-1594)

With the exception of a few unimportant books of madrigals, Palestrina's works were all written in the

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 301: "Gradual." "The second item of the Proper of the Mass. It belongs to the class of responsorial chants. . . . The graduals are highly florid melodies, in their choral as well as their soloist sections (verse)."

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., "Psalmody, Gregorian," p. 610.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., "Gregorian Chant," p. 306.

forms of religious music of his time: the Mass, motet, and hymn. Not only within his five hundred motets are to be found texts from the Psalms, but he wrote four complete settings of Psalms. Written for four voices, these are Ad te levavi Oculos meos (Ps. 122); Beati Omnes, qui timent Domonum (Ps. 127); Domine Quis habitat (Ps. 14); and Jubilate Deo Omnis (Ps. 99).<sup>15</sup>

Contemporary with Palestrina was the great Netherlands composer, Orlando di Lasso (1530-1595).. These two men represent the summit of the pure choral and vocal music of the sixteenth century. Like Palestrina, Lasso began writing in the medium of the madrigal and later turned to the forms of church music. However, Lasso did not limit himself to these forms as did Palestrina, but wrote many works in the secular field. Besides the many passages based on Psalms found within the motets of Lasso are several complete settings of Psalms.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps the most unusual of these Psalm settings are those known as the "Penitential Psalms" (E. V. Ps. 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143). These seven Psalms, written during the years 1563-1570, were set mainly for five voices. To these Psalms is appended the two Laudate

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<sup>15</sup>Edward F. Dent, "Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina," Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians, edited by Oscar Thompson, pp. 1349-1356.

<sup>16</sup>Orlando di Lasso, Sämmtliche Werke, Vols, I, III, V, and VI.

Psalms (148-150) treated as one Psalm in four divisions.

Van Borren, Lasso's great biographer, wrote of these

Psalms:

The celebrity of this work is justified by its exceptional merit. It is marvelous that, having to treat a subject relatively monotonous, Orlando has remained throughout equal to his task. Without any failure of inspiration he makes to pass before us all the states of the soul which the Psalmist describes, ranging from the profoundest grief to the brightest hope.<sup>17</sup>

#### William Byrd (1543-1623)

The music of Byrd, as affected by the Reformation in England, will be discussed in Chapter V. But it will be remembered that Byrd remained an avowed Catholic throughout the period of reform. Not only did he write music for the Catholic service, but he chose the Latin for many of his other works. Among these are Psalm settings, Laudote Pueri (Ps. 113) and Quomodo Cantabimus. The first one was written for six voices without instrumental accompaniment. Even though written in the style characteristic of the Reformed music, a syllable to each note, it is a contrapuntal setting.<sup>18</sup> His motet, "Similes Illis Fiant," is a composite setting of alternate verses of Psalms 113, 114 (E. V. 114, 115). Only twenty-seven

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<sup>17</sup>Charles van den Borren, Orlande De Lassus, pp. 111-112.

<sup>18</sup>Tudor Church Music, IX, 105.



measures long, it is written in fugal style for four voices unaccompanied.<sup>19</sup>

Other composers who used the Latin for Psalm settings -- Tallis, Purcell, Gluck, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Liszt and Stravinsky -- will be listed in Chapters IV and V.

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 298.

## CHAPTER III

### THE REFORMATION AND CHURCH MUSIC

Perhaps the most important single cultural movement of the sixteenth century was the Reformation. Even though Luther is usually thought of as the instigator of the spirit of reform, the real causes reached far back into the centuries. And as Macaulay said, "If Luther had never been born at all, the 16th century could not have elapsed without a great schism in the Church."<sup>1</sup> Nearly all of the leaders of the movement were ecclesiastics in the Roman Church. Their original intentions were to make some reforms within the Church and not to form an entirely new one.<sup>2</sup>

These leaders saw within the church practices that were foreign to the spirit of Christianity. The clergy had become corrupt and greedy for money and power. The people were bound down by the iron-clad authority of the Church. They had no real part in the organization that held almost complete sway over their lives. To question this authority was to be excommunicated and lose all hope of life hereafter. Because these men of the reform

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<sup>1</sup>"Essay on John Dryden," 1828.

<sup>2</sup>Pratt, op. cit., p. 1.

movement did question and challenge specific practices they were excommunicated, and in many cases forced to flee for protection. As they fled, however, they left an influence for reform within the Roman Church, for the Council of Trent (1562), which was convened by Pius IV to check the criticism of Luther, began a movement of reform.<sup>3</sup>

This great moral decline of the Church reached its zenith just at the time of the movement of re-learning. Scholars were searching the Scriptures for themselves instead of taking the word of the clergy as the final authority. The ground was being prepared for an examination of the right of the clergy to claim such authority. Such men as Wycliff (1325-1384) in England, Hus (1369-1415) in Bohemia, and Savonarola (1452-1498) in Florence were making earnest protests against the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church and its clergy.<sup>4</sup>

The effective and lasting protests perhaps began in Germany with the thesis of Luther (1517) against the sale of indulgences. But the movement spread over the other parts of Europe rapidly. The new widespread spirit of nationalism, and awakening helped the movement along.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Wallace Brockway and Herbert Weinstock, Men of Music, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup>Percy A. Scholes, The Puritans and Music in England and New England, p. xv.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. xvi.

To music, however, the Protestant Reformation owed much for its popularizing power.<sup>6</sup>

For two hundred years the church music had been becoming more complicated and elaborate. The practice of congregational singing, as introduced by St. Ambrose in the fourth and fifth centuries, had long since been dropped. Trained choirs sang the long and florid church music, not in the language of the people, but in Latin.<sup>7</sup> Only the educated could understand the Latin, and only the professional musician could understand or sing the music.<sup>8</sup>

It is easy to see how welcome would be the presentation of a psalm or poem in the vernacular, especially if it were set to a simple singable tune for the people. This is exactly what the leaders of the movement did. Following the spirit of the time when the new discovery of printing was making learning more universal and when the Bible was being translated into the language of the people, the leaders of the Reformation turned to song as one medium of spreading the new doctrines. The metrical versions of the Psalms in the language of the people made

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<sup>6</sup>Hamilton C. MacDougall, Early New England Psalmody, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>Sir R. R. Terry, "Calvin's First Psalter," Proceedings of the Musical Association, Session 57 (1930-31), 1.

<sup>8</sup>O. Douen, Clément Marot et Le Psautier Huguenot, p. 365.

by Clément Marot did more for the advancement of Protestantism in France than did anything else.<sup>9</sup> The original hymns, translations of Latin hymns, and Psalm versions of Luther stirred the heart of all Germany.<sup>10</sup>

Because of the change in religious beliefs, the outward forms of public worship changed, thus necessitating a new type of church music. The great body of musical literature was intimately bound up with the doctrines of the Roman Church and thus had to be sacrificed in whole or at least in part. The language of the people was to take the place of the Latin so that the congregation might take an active part in the worship.<sup>11</sup>

It was to have been expected that the new movement should pursue different paths according to the political, racial, social, and musical backgrounds of the different countries influenced. The part of Germany most affected by the Reformation had no school of music either before or during the sixteenth century, but the musical aspect of the German Reformation was to be felt for many years after, for its leader, Martin Luther, was a man with a great

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<sup>9</sup>Lang, op. cit., p. 257.

<sup>10</sup>John Julian, Dictionary of Hymnology, "Psalter, English, p. 916.

<sup>11</sup>Theodore M. Finney, A History of Music, p. 166.

deal of musical insight. To meet the needs of the congregation he began the compilation of a manual of songs. Luther borrowed from the Psalms, from old vernacular hymns that had been attached to parts of the Roman services, from Latin hymns and sacred poetry of the people, for the texts of his congregational hymns.<sup>12</sup>

At first these hymns of Luther and his collaborators were unharmonized, but later a counterpoint was sung by the choir as the congregation sang the melody in unison. By 1600, the organ was even being used as an accompanying instrument.<sup>13</sup>

The Reformation in France found its leader in John Calvin. Whereas Lutheranism spread widely in Germany and in Scandinavia, Calvinism reached into France, Switzerland, the Low Countries, Great Britain, and eventually America. The German music chose to express personal experiences, but the French bound itself to the use of the Psalms. Thus we find "hymnody" being born in the spirit of the Lutheran doctrine and "psalmody" developing with Calvinism.<sup>14</sup> In many places Lutheranism kept a partial use of the Latin language and bits of the ritual of the Roman church. It soon took up the practice of an organ

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<sup>12</sup>Robert Sabin, "Religious Music," Oxford Companion to Music, edited by Percy A. Scholes.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Pratt, op. cit., pp. 3-6.

accompaniment to the chorals. Both of these practices were strongly forbidden by the doctrines of Calvinism. It insisted on the use of the language of the people at all times and avoided any musical setting that tended toward elaboration that might obscure the words.<sup>15</sup>

Considering how deeply entrenched the Roman Church was in France, and the amount of persecution given the Calvinists, it is surprising that Calvinism spread as fast and as far as it did. Because of the persecution, however, many of the followers were forced eventually to emigrate to Holland, England, and America. This only increased the extent of the sect's influence.<sup>16</sup> Then while Calvin was in exile in Geneva, English Protestants were having to flee from the Marian persecution. When the time came that they could return to England they took with them the ideals of Calvinism, thus giving Calvinism a foothold in England.

The Anglican Reformation was unlike its counterpart on the Continent in that it followed in the wake of a political break with the Church and was not wholly a religious expression of the people. England was being ruled by the long and absolute line of Tudors (1485-1603).

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<sup>15</sup>Percy A. Scholes, The Puritans and Music in England and New England, p. xviii.

<sup>16</sup>Pratt, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

Henry VIII had insisted that the Pope grant him a divorce from Catherine of Aragon in order that he might marry Anne Boleyn, and being refused, proceeded to break with the church at Rome and declare himself as head of the Church of England. He did not desire to do away with the doctrines and ceremonies of the church to which the people were accustomed, but merely to free England from the authority of the Pope. However, the Protestant movement was gaining such a following that he found it too great for him to restrain even with persecution. Then with the accession of his son, Edward VI (reigned 1547-1553) Protestantism enjoyed royal support, since the boy was being tutored by strong Protestants. When his sister Mary came to the throne, every effort was made to restore the Catholic religion, and by the time Elizabeth became England's ruler (1558), the country was well divided religiously. Helped by the sentiment against Catholic Spain, however, a moderate form of Protestantism was made the state religion by the Virgin Queen.<sup>17</sup>

One can imagine the confusion of the English composers during this time of indecision. Unlike Germany at the time of the Reformation, England was enjoying the works of some of its greatest composers, Tye (1510-1572)

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<sup>17</sup>Scholes, op. cit., pp. xvi-xvii.



and Tallis (1510-1583) being the outstanding ones at the time of the break with Rome. Having done most of their work composing in the forms of the Catholic service, they were faced with the task of making a revolutionary change.<sup>18</sup> One of the most important changes was that of having to simplify the setting of words. They had been exercising their contrapuntal ingenuity in writing long florid passages to single syllables. Musically speaking, the effect was oftentimes magnificent, but incomprehensible as far as the text was concerned. Those who were interested in making the service intelligible to the people condemned such music, and advocated that the songs for the service "not be full of notes," but that each syllable be sung to a single note. This practice, which had been adopted officially by the time Edward VI (1547) came to the throne, practically brought to a close the English school of florid counterpoint.<sup>19</sup>

Of those composers who passed through this period of transition, Tye is one who seems to have given up composition. Some authorities say that he could not adjust himself to the new style of writing,<sup>20</sup> others say that

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<sup>18</sup>Finney, op. cit., p. 168.

<sup>19</sup>Tudor Church Music, I, preface.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

he became a believer in the new reformed church and abandoned composition.<sup>21</sup> He did write ecclesiastical music for both the old and new forms.

Thomas Tallis, also living through the changes of state religion, managed to use the new style to his own advantage. He has been called the first great composer of the English rite or service of the new order.<sup>22</sup> His music for the new service was simple with a "note-against-note harmony" not at all suggestive of the contrapuntal methods of the old style.<sup>23</sup> It is likely that he composed the tunes (nine in all) to a Psalter compiled by Archbishop Parker.<sup>24</sup> As was the custom of the time, the tenor part has the tune. The eighth tune is much like the composition known today as "Tallis's Canon."

Even though most of Tallis's music was written for the Anglican service in the simplified new style, he did turn to the Latin text and florid contrapuntal style for his Cantiones Sacrae (Latin motets, 1575). These Latin works doubtless had the approval of Queen Elizabeth during her reign.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Ernest Walker, A History of Music in England, p. 34.

<sup>22</sup>Tudor Church Music, preface.

<sup>23</sup>Walker, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>24</sup>The short scores to the first eight of the tunes are found in Morrison Comegys Boyd's book, Elizabethan Music and Musical Criticism, pp. 45-52.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., pp. 62-64.

William Byrd (1542-1623) had just begun his composing when Elizabeth came to the throne. Though an avowed Catholic, he became an organist at the Chapel Royal at the age of twenty and remained there throughout his life in spite of his religious beliefs.<sup>26</sup> Even though writing under the Protestant Court, Byrd wrote a great deal of Catholic music<sup>27</sup> as well as Anglican music. Evidently Queen Elizabeth had no objections to motets in Latin, for both Tallis and Byrd dedicated their Cantions Sacrae (1575) to her.<sup>28</sup>

Byrd's English motets and psalm settings were published in three volumes (1588, 1589, 1611). Perhaps the most outstanding Psalm settings found in these volumes were "Save Me O God" (Ps. 54), "Hear My Prayer" (ps. 55), "Teach Me, O Lord" (Ps. 119), and "Lift Up Your Heads" (Ps. 24:7-10).<sup>29</sup>

Two of the greatest composers of the period of English music, John Merbecke ( ? -1585) and John Taverner (1495-1545), gave up composition entirely upon accepting

<sup>26</sup>Walker, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>27</sup>Boyd, op. cit., p. 64 -- at least three Masses, a Gradualia, and many Latin motets.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>These scores are found in Tudor Church Music, William Byrd, Vol. II.

the doctrine of the Reform movement in England.<sup>30</sup>

Other composers of this period of transition from Catholic to Protestant music were Robert White (1530-1574), William Mundy ( ? -1591), Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625), and Thomas Morley (1557-1602). Morley was one of the few Reformation composers who made Psalm settings to any extent. He published a book entitled The Whole Booke Of Psalmes. With their woonted tunes -- compiled by sundrie authors. etc. Printed at London in Little S. Hellens by W. Bailey, the assigne of T. Morley. The book, containing no dates, had four settings of tunes by Morley. Two of these tunes appeared later in Ravencroft's Psalter (1621).<sup>31</sup>

However, the revolutionary change made by the composers at the time of the Reformation from the florid music of the Catholic Church in Latin to the more simple Anglican music in English does not present the entire picture of the English church music during that period. Psalmody, as practiced by the Calvinists on the Continent, had been introduced into England by those who had been forced to flee to Geneva during the persecution of Mary's reign (1553-1558). The use of Psalms became widespread

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<sup>30</sup>Boyd, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>31</sup>G. E. P. Arkwright, "Thomas Morley," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, III, third edition.

and many publications of metrical Psalms, known as Psalters, appeared. The study of these English Psalters will be given in Chapter V.

## CHAPTER IV

### EARLY PSALTERS

#### The Genevan Psalter

About the year 1517 when Luther was beginning his reaction against the existing ecclesiastical system, Ulrich Zwingli in Switzerland was doing about the same thing. His purpose, however, seemed only to divide the church in Switzerland. In 1531 he was killed, but his views had already spread even into France. These French dissenters were forced to flee, and since Geneva was on neutral ground, it soon became the headquarters of "The Reform." After the death of Zwingli, little progress was made until Calvin became the recognized leader of the movement, about 1535-1542.<sup>1</sup>

The striking vogue of the Protestant church song, as it was started by Luther in Germany, was already becoming widespread in more than one of the leading European countries.<sup>2</sup> The use of congregational singing in the order of public worship was doing much to add unity and force to the new movement. There was need for some such music to help propagate the new Calvinistic doctrines.

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<sup>1</sup>Pratt, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

Calvin's first intentions to incorporate Psalm singing into the public worship were perhaps formulated during his first sojourn in Geneva. As early as January, 1537, he and one of his helpers were attempting such a project, but being banished from Geneva April 23, 1538, had to flee to Strassburg, thus retarding the realization of the plan.<sup>3</sup>

While in Strassburg Calvin served as a pastor for four years. Here he found himself surrounded by Lutheran churches in which congregational singing had been practiced for ten years. No doubt he was impressed with such singing, and the first song-book in French was drafted here (1539).<sup>4</sup> If he was not directly responsible for its compilation, at least it had his approval. This was the beginning of the long years of writing and experimenting that finally ended with the completed Genevan Psalter in 1562.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Douen, op. cit., I, 280.

<sup>4</sup>Terry, op. cit., p. 4. With the publication in 1878 of Douen's work on the Huguenot Psalter came the surprising and almost sensational announcement that he had discovered a copy of the "lost" work in the Royal Library of Munich -- a small volume of four sheets of sixteen pages each, bearing the title Alcuns Pseaulmes et Cantiques mys en chant, a Strasburg 1539. But beyond a reference to his discovery, Douen did nothing. In the year 1919, Mons. D. Deletra published in Geneva a facsimile of the complete work -- only five hundred copies.

<sup>5</sup>Pratt, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

Unlike Luther, Calvin was not able to secure the aid and support of a court or prince, nor was he a popular leader as was Luther. He was apt to seem austere and aloof, but he had a great deal of determination and solid scholarship that went into his unusual ability for far-sighted organization. His instinct for precision and order usually enabled him to perfect carefully worked out details of public worship, and his profound knowledge and love of the Scriptures led to his determined interest in psalmody. He early advocated the cultivation of verse and song. Even though doubtlessly emphasizing the Scriptural words first, he recognized the power of poetry and melody to move the hearts of people. Thus he early gave himself to the promotion of psalmody as a part of the public and private worship.<sup>6</sup>

The first French metrical Psalms of any note were made by a poet at the court of Francis I.<sup>7</sup> This poet, Clément Marot (1497-1525), who had become a favorite at the French Court, began his translations of the Psalms with apparently no conscious intention of developing them to their final use.<sup>8</sup> They were translated into French as

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 8-10, 60.

<sup>7</sup>Terry, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>Pratt, op. cit., pp. 12-13.



were many Latin and Greek poems and used in the court circles as a means of entertainment. They aroused a great deal of interest, perhaps because so few people really knew the contents of the Bible. These French Psalms soon gained informal circulation, not only at the Court and in Paris, but throughout France.<sup>9</sup> At last, however, the church authorities began to hear of their popularity and, in as much as they were renderings of Scripture into the vernacular, these poems brought Marot into increasing suspicion.<sup>10</sup>

From about 1533 he began to translate and write more seriously, and always his translations, distributed to the royalty, were received with enthusiasm. The first edition of 30 psalmes, probably published in 1541, was dedicated to Francis I and was entitled in French Trente Pseaulmes de Daudid, mis en francoys par Clément Marot, Valet de chambere du Roy. Avec priuillège. Imprimé à Paris pour Estienne Roffet, demourant sur le pont Saint Michel, à l'enseigne de la Rose.<sup>11</sup>

Even though this publication bore the royal privilege

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<sup>9</sup>Douen in his Clément Marot, I, 269, tells of a translation of the Psalms of penitence into the vernacular at the end of the fifteenth century. And in December, 1531, a document appeared called Des Psaumes de Daudid en vers. The author was unknown (I, 273).

<sup>10</sup>Pratt, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>11</sup>Douen, op. cit., I, 289.

and was commended by the Emperor Charles V, it led the Sorbonne to indict the poet for heresy. Thus Marot fled to Geneva.<sup>12</sup>

Just at the time that Marot was fleeing to Geneva, Calvin was being recognized as the real leader of the new movement in the same city. It was there that Marot met Calvin and under his influence began the translation of nineteen other Psalms to add to the thirty of his first collection.<sup>13</sup>

It is a curious fact that Calvin should have chosen this poet from the French Court, who had begun his Psalm translations as quite a secular practice, as the one to assume the task of compiling a psalter for worship in the "Reformed" church.<sup>14</sup> And yet it was fortunate that the versifications for the Psalter fell into the hands of the greatest poet of the time, according to the critics of that day.<sup>15</sup> For perhaps the cause of the Reformation in France was advanced more by the musical settings of Marot's Psalms than by anything else.<sup>16</sup>

Douen suggests that it was the Protestantism of Marot and not that of Calvin that really conquered

<sup>12</sup>Pratt, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Terry, op. cit., pp. 1-2.

<sup>15</sup>Douen, op. cit., I, 462.

<sup>16</sup>Lang, op. cit., pp. 256-257.

France.<sup>17</sup> Whether this is entirely true or not we do know that Marot gave much to the spirit of reform through his versions of the Psalms which Calvin adopted as the permanent nucleus for the Genevan Psalter.<sup>18</sup>

Marot left Geneva for Savoy and Piedmont late in 1543, and in 1544 died suddenly at Turin, not yet fifty years old.

For a period of about five years Calvin was at a loss to find a poet to carry on the work started by Marot. In 1548 a young man, Theodore de Bèze, cast his lot with the new movement and Calvin soon gave to him the task of completing the versified Psalms for the Psalter. By 1551 Bèze had thirty-four of the Psalms ready, seven more by 1554, and the entire collection by 1562.

Douen speaks of these versions by Bèze as inferior to those of Marot,<sup>21</sup> but credit must be given to him for having faithfully completed the work.<sup>22</sup>

With the work of these two poets the Psalter was completed in 1562 and has remained as they left it.<sup>23</sup>

The evolution of the completed Psalter's (1562) music follows the lyrical pattern as used by its two

<sup>17</sup>Douen, op. cit., pp. 373-387.

<sup>18</sup>Waldo Selden Pratt, "The Importance of the Early French Psalter," Musical Quarterly, XXI (1935), 26.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.    <sup>20</sup>Ibid.    <sup>21</sup>Douen, op. cit., I, 573.

<sup>22</sup>Pratt, Music of the French Psalter of 1562, p. 14.

<sup>23</sup>The first edition of Marot contained the following Psalms: 1-15, 19, 22, 24, 32, 37, 38, 51, 103, 104, 113,

poets, and offers an interesting history.

Like the Reformation songs of the other European countries, many of the melodies were taken directly from secular folk-songs. Douen devotes an entire chapter to the study of the origin of the melodies of the Psalter. He states that they have a triple origin, namely: from the Protestant songs of the Rhineland, from the imagination of the leaders of the movement, and from the popular songs of the day.<sup>24</sup> One such example of a secular tune used for Psalm 130 was known as "L'Amour de moy." It was first found in the Psalter d'Anvers of 1541.<sup>25</sup>

Sometimes the melodies were taken literally from the secular airs, but often the composer would change a few notes or change the rhythm to add more dignity to the setting,<sup>26</sup> as did Bourgeois for the melody used for Psalm 25<sup>27</sup> (see Figure 2).

Another example showing how melodies were changed slightly is the tune used for Psalms 65 and 72 in the Psalter. This melody was later taken over for Lutheran

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114, 115, 130, 137, and 143 (1542). The nineteen others added by Marot were 18, 23, 25, 33, 36, 43, 45, 46, 50, 72, 70, 86, 91, 101, 107, 110, 118, 128, and 133. With these were written The Song of Solomon. Beze's first group contained Psalms 16, 17, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 39, 30, 31, 34, 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 47, 52, 62, 63, 64, 65, 73, 90, 111, 119, 127, 129, 131, and 134. His later editions contained all those not previously translated.

<sup>24</sup>Douen, op. cit., I, 679.      <sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 684.

<sup>26</sup>Pratt, The Music of the French Psalter.

<sup>27</sup>Douen, op. cit., I, 720.



Fig. 1. -- "L'Amour de moy" (Ps. 130), from the Psalter d'Anvers of 1541.

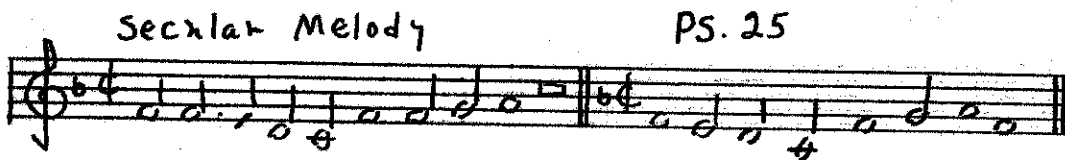


Fig. 2. -- Secular melody used by Bourgeois for Psalm 25.

use<sup>28</sup> (see Fig. 3).

In the edition of 1551 there appeared a tune that was destined to be used by people of most Western Christendom. It was first used by the Lutherans in 1562 and was

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 722.

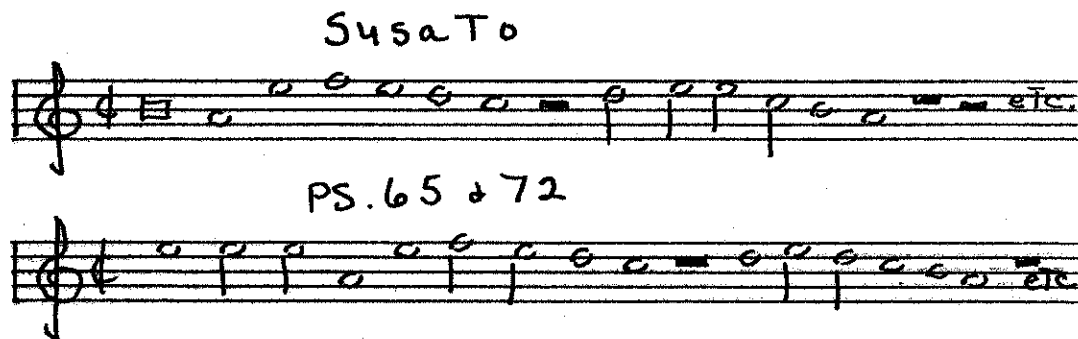


Fig. 3. -- "Susato," used for Psalms 65 and 72 in Genevan Psalter.

taken into the English Psalters later. The tune is known today as "Old Hundredth," traditionally named because of its long use with the 100th Psalm. However, as it first appeared in 1551 it was used with the 134th Psalm.<sup>29</sup> This tune is shown in Figure 4.<sup>30</sup>

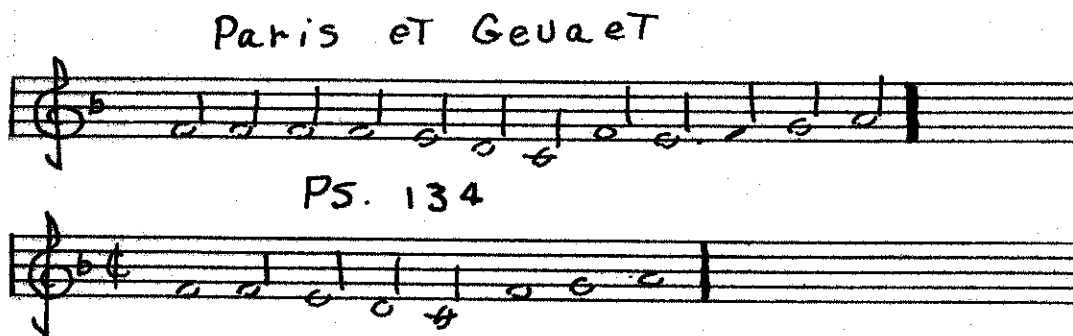


Fig. 4. -- "Paris et Gevaet," used for Psalm 134 in the Genevan Psalter of 1551.

<sup>29</sup>Pratt, The Music of the French Psalter, p. 192.

<sup>30</sup>Douen, op. cit., I, 727.

The melodies that went into the completed Psalter of 1562 were gradually completed and shaped from the time of the first Psalter (1539) onward. Thirty-nine of the final 125 came before 1551, forty-six were added in 1551, and forty in 1562.<sup>31</sup>

The authorship of these melodies, as they appeared in the different editions of the Psalter, has long been a controversy. It has been attributed, at least in part, to Louis Borgeois (1510-probably 1561), Goidimel (1510-1572), Claudis Le Jeune, and others.<sup>32</sup> It is known that Borgeois worked in collaboration with Calvin as the musical editor of the editions from 1545 until 1557. At least he was the musical editor of the 1551 Psalter, perhaps the most important edition before the completed one. Even though he had no part in the editing of the completed Psalter, all of his tunes in the 1551 edition were incorporated into it, and in making a study of the music of both, Pratt suggests that the editor of the final edition sought to follow the general style as set down by Borgeois.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Pratt, The Importance of the Early French Psalter, p. 28.

<sup>32</sup>"Louis Bourgeois," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, I, third edition.

<sup>33</sup>Pratt, The Music of the French Psalter, pp. 61-62.

Even though the music within the Psalters was of single-line melodies, harmonized and contrapuntal versions followed closely upon the first melodic settings. As early as 1547, Bourgeois had published a volume of harmonizations of Marot's settings for four voices entitled Pseaulmes Cinquante de Daudid -- traudictz par Clement Marot, et mis en musique par Loys Bourgeoys, a quatre parties a' Voix de Contrpoint equal consonnante. Then in 1561 he issued settings of eighty-five Psalms of Marot and Beze. These settings were for four, five, and six voices.<sup>34</sup>

Douen lists at least twenty-one composers from 1547 to 1873 who made harmonized settings of the melodies of the Psalter, commenting that the most admirable were those of Claude Goudimel. Before turning to the music of the Reformation, Goidimel had written many secular songs as well as music for the Catholic service. By 1551, however, he began making arrangements of the Huguenot tunes in motet style. In 1565 he set the whole Psalter in simple note-for-note harmony as exemplified in the opening measures of the 42nd Psalm shown in Figure 5.<sup>35</sup>

Even Sweelinck (1562-1621), the great Dutch organist,

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>35</sup>Score found in Arnold Schering's Geschichte Der Musik in Beispielen, p. 186.





Fig. 5. -- Note-for-note harmony in a setting of Psalm 42 by Goudimel (1565).

turned to the tunes of the Genevan Psalter for the basis of several of his works. One of his volumes of sacred music contained eighty-one Psalm-settings in which he made use of these Genevan tunes. These settings are written for four to eight voices to be sung a cappella. Following the spirit of Reformation music, Sweelinck avoided the florid and ornate styles using a different note for each syllable with straightforward rhythms. Unlike the Lutheran composers, he chose to follow a contrapuntal style in most of the settings. It is interesting to note that he used the French language for the

text of the versions.<sup>36</sup>

The Genevan Psalter reached its peak during the lifetime of those who completed it, enjoying many reprintings and editions. During the formative period (1539-1562) there were over thirty publications either with words alone or words with music. When it was completed in 1562, there had been at least twenty-five editions published. Between 1562 and 1685 there were over 160 editions, making a total of at least 225 separate publications during the formal existence of Huguenotism in France. This number does not take into account the number of translations and publications in other languages. So within its time it was used widely as a "people's music." But no Bach arose in France to do for it what Bach did for the Lutheran Chorales.<sup>37</sup>

#### English Psalters

While the important composers of the Reformation period were having to change their style of writing from the florid contrapuntal Catholic music to the simplified music of the new Church of England, there was developing a widespread use of English metrical Psalms set to music. It is possible that there were Psalms sung in metrical

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<sup>36</sup>Scores as composed for these Psalms are found in Jan Pieterszn Sweelinck, Werken, edited by Max Seiffert, Vols. II-VII.

<sup>37</sup>Pratt, Importance of the Early French Psalter, p. 14.

English before the time of the Reformation, at least outside the church. Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder and the Earl of Surrey supposedly translated several.<sup>38</sup> These were perhaps used for personal or recreational use much as was done by Marot's French Psalms at the Court of Francis I.

In 1539 Miles Coverdale (1488-1568) brought out a collection of metrical English Psalms, but it was suppressed by an order of Henry VIII.<sup>39</sup> This collection was the first important edition of the Psalms and was probably the first to be printed with tunes. One of the most interesting settings is Coverdale's rendering of the 46th Psalm, set to Luther's "Ein feste Burg." In fact, the entire publication entitled Goostly Psalms and Spiritual Songs, is founded on the Lutheran collection. It came as a movement to introduce the Lutheran Chorales into English use during the reign of Henry VIII.<sup>40</sup>

Crowley Psalter. -- The first known metrical translation of the whole Psalter into English appeared in 1549 by Robert Crowley. It was unusual in that the music was set in four parts.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup>Boyd, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Henry Davey, History of English Music, p. 107.

<sup>41</sup>Boyd, op. cit., p. 40.

Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter. -- While Thomas Sternhold was serving as an attendant at the Court of Henry VIII and his son Edward VI (King from 1547), he undertook making metrical versions of the Psalms, supposedly to "provide something more edifying than the rough ditties in vogue among the Court attendants." These versions are said to have attracted the attention of the boy king and influenced him to embrace the new faith. Forty Psalms had been completed and most of them printed at the time of Sternhold's death (1549) two years after Edward VI came to the throne.<sup>42</sup>

Edward's reign of toleration and sympathy for the Protestant movement was short, however (1547-1553). Mary, Edward's successor, was a devout Catholic and did all in her power to suppress the new religion and to restore Catholicism. During this time, known as the Marian persecution, British Protestants began to flee for safety to Geneva.<sup>43</sup> As they fled they took with them some additions by John Hopkins and William Whittingham. John Knox later was connected with further publications. At least three editions were made in Geneva, and became known as the Anglo-Genevan Psalter.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Pratt, The Music of the French Psalter, p. 71.

<sup>43</sup>Davey, op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>44</sup>Pratt, The Music of the French Psalter, p. 71.

With Elizabeth's accession to the throne in 1558 the exiles were permitted to return home. With their return Psalm singing re-appeared in England, enjoying greater use than ever before. Not only did the returning refugees bring back the Psalms of Sternhold, but also many of the Psalms of the Geneva Psalter. Thus we find the Calvinistic psalmody entering England along with the doctrine of Calvinism. These English followers of Calvin, known as Puritans, consistently held to the views that the only proper worship song was that provided by God, once and for all, in the Book of Psalms or other Biblical canticles.<sup>45</sup> This fact perhaps accounts for the intensely personal applications which the Puritans made of the Psalms.

With this re-birth of Psalmody the collection, as started by Sternhold, was finally completed in 1562 -- the same year in which the Genevan Psalter was finished. As many as twelve different people contributed to the total number of the 150 Psalms. John Hopkins was responsible for fifty-six of the versions, and since he and Sternhold had made the largest contribution to the book, it has continued to be called by their names, Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Scholes, op. cit., p. 253.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

Unlike the Genevan Psalter, however, the music was printed in four parts in several editions. The first edition that gave the four parts was printed in 1560.<sup>47</sup> The melodies used were, as a rule, fairly short with a small range. Many of them were taken from the Genevan tunes and possibly some were adaptations of secular folk melodies. Some of these melodies are still familiar, such as "Old Hundredth," "Windsor," "Winchester," and "Dundee."<sup>48</sup>

This completed Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter was used by all English-speaking people and is usually referred to as the "Old Version." It was later bound up with the Book of Common Prayer and had an enormous vogue.<sup>49</sup>

Day Psalter (1563). -- A year after the completed publication of Sternhold and Hopkins, John Day put forth the whole Book of Psalms. The melodies were all harmonized in four parts, with the tune in the tenor.<sup>50</sup> In 1567, Day printed a complete Psalter for Archbishop Parker. The paraphrases were presumably written by the Archbishop himself and nine of the tunes were written by

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<sup>47</sup>Boyd, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>48</sup>Walker, op. cit., p. 349.

<sup>49</sup>MacDougall, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>50</sup>Frederic Louis Ritter, Music in England, p. 129.

Tallis expressly for this work.<sup>51</sup>

Este Psalter (1592). -- This publication, issued by Thomas Este in 1592, contained fifty-seven tunes harmonized for four parts. It was published as The Whole Booke of Psalms: with their wonted Tunes, as they are song in Churches, composed into foure parts. All which are so placed that foure may sing, each one, a several parte in this booke. Wherein the Church tunes are carefully corrected, and thereunto added other short tunes usually song in London, and other places of the Realme. As was the custom of the time, the melody is the tenor part with the harmonization in simple counterpoint.<sup>52</sup>

In this Psalter are found for the first time psalm-tunes named for places, a custom that has prevailed in English hymnody until the present time.<sup>53</sup> Since these tunes were harmonized by some of the leading composers of that time, it has become a source-book for the study of the harmony of the period.<sup>54</sup> The excellence of the

<sup>51</sup>Boyd, op. cit., p. 41.      <sup>52</sup>Ritter, op. cit., p. 128.

<sup>53</sup>MacDougall, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>54</sup>Boyd, op. cit., p. 54: "To harmonize the traditional psalm tunes East Este employed some of the best composers of the age -- J. Douland B. of Musik, G. Farnaby B. of Musik, R. Allison, M. Cavendish, John Farmer, G. Kirby, E. Johnson, W. Cobbold, E. Blancks and E. Hooper -- The last four names mean little to us today yet Johnson's music delighted the queen Elizabeth, Cobbold was organist of Norwich Cathedral, and Hooper organist at Westminster Abbey."

harmonizations probably accounts for the volume's popularity. It was reprinted in 1594 and in 1604.<sup>55</sup>

Allison's Psalter (1599). -- This Psalter is of interest in that it contains some of the first examples of music with the melody in the soprano part. Daman (1591) had issued a collection of Psalms and Psalm tunes with the melody in the soprano a few years before. Allison's harmonizations begin to have a feeling for definite key sense even though key signature had not yet appeared.<sup>56</sup>

Ainsworth Psalter (1612). -- This Psalter was prepared by Henry Ainsworth (1571-1622) for the congregation of the Separatists who fled from England to Holland during the reign of James VI, successor of Elizabeth. While Elizabeth was on the throne (1558-1603) the dissenters, or Puritans, had enjoyed Royal sympathy and support. But James, son of the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, soon began a persecution of these Puritans. Charles I (1625-1649) gave them worse treatment, and so during these two reigns hundreds of Puritans fled to Holland and eventually to America.<sup>57</sup> It was for these Puritans in Holland that Ainsworth prepared this Psalter.

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>57</sup>Scholes, op. cit., p. xix.



The book included thirty-nine tunes which were taken partly from the English Psalm books and partly from the French and Dutch Psalms tunes. Thus the Psalter became a unique blend of styles of English, French, and Dutch psalmody.<sup>58</sup> Howard, in the discussion of the Psalter in his book, Our American Music,<sup>59</sup> speaks of the tunes of this collection as being superior musically to any of the English books then available. The Puritans who brought the Psalter to America later complained of the difficulty of these tunes.

Ravencroft's Psalter (1621). -- Ravencroft, himself a good musician, made use of the music by twenty-one different composers including Tallis, Dowland, Morley, Farnaby, and Tomkins. There are 105 four-part settings in all, one of the most skillful being that of John Dowland's harmonization of "Old Hundredth."<sup>60</sup> The total number of tunes was ninety-eight, but several of these were repeated and harmonized in various ways by the different composers.<sup>61</sup> Another interesting feature of the book is the fact that John Milton, the elder (father of Milton, the poet) contributed to the settings.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>MacDougall, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>59</sup>John Tasker Howard, Our American Music, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup>Ernest Brennecke, Jr., John Milton the Elder and His Music, pp. 103-106.

<sup>61</sup>Ritter, op. cit., p. 129.

<sup>62</sup>Brennecke, op. cit., p. 103.

Other Psalters have appeared at frequent intervals since these first most important ones. A partial list might include:

1623 -- George Withers', containing sixteen original compositions by Orlando Gibbons.<sup>63</sup>

1625-1639 -- Giles Farnaby's Ms. The Psalms of David.<sup>64</sup>

1696 -- Tate and Brady Psalter. This Psalter is usually referred to as the "New Version" in contrast to the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter known as the "Old Version."<sup>65</sup>

1719 -- The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament, by Isaac Watts. In the development of the English hymnody, Watts had earlier become interested in the versification of the Psalms and had published two or three versions before this complete Psalter. The volume contained some paraphrases that are still in use today, such as "Lord of the World's Above" (Ps. 84), the noble "Oh God Our Help in Ages Past" (Ps. 90), and "Give to Our God Immortal Praise" (Ps. 136).<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Boyd, op. cit., p. 339.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>MacDougall, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>66</sup>"Psalms, English," Dictionary of Hymnology, edited by John Julian, second edition, 1892, p. 920.

John Keble Psalter. -- This work, published in 1839, is entitled The Psalter of David in English verse, by a Member of the University of Oxford. Julian speaks of it as being one of the best.<sup>67</sup>

Cleveland Psalter (1854). -- Compiled by Archdeacon Chilton, this Psalter was also one of the best, according to Julian.<sup>68</sup>

English psalmody had very little influence on the musical art of the nation. After the Restoration (1660) even the church composers were not attracted by the Psalms and Psalm tunes.<sup>69</sup> However, the direct influence of the Psalter upon the development of English hymns "must not be lost sight of. It gave to our English earlier hymns a severity, a breadth, an objective tone, and a wide and deep base in natural religion."<sup>70</sup>

#### The Bay Psalm Book

When the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620 they had with them Ainsworth's Psalter which had been prepared in Holland for the use of the English Puritans there in exile. It remained in use by them until replaced

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 921.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Ritter, op. cit., pp. 143-144.

<sup>70</sup>Julian, op. cit., p. 922.

in 1692 by the Bay Psalm Book.<sup>71</sup>

The Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony had brought with them copies of the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter, but having become closely associated with Calvin's belief that only words from the Bible, in accurate translation, should be sung, some of the early religious leaders of the colony became dissatisfied with this Psalter. They decided that some of the versions were quite inaccurate.<sup>72</sup> Cotton Mather put in his Magnalia:

. . . about the year 1639, the New English Reformers, considering that their church enjoyed the ordinances of Heaven in their spiritual purity, were willing that the ordinance of singing Psalms should be restored among them unto a share of that purity. Though they blessed God for the religious endeavors of them who translated the Psalms into the metre usually annexed at the end of the Bible, yet they beheld in the translation, variations of, not only the text, but the very sense of the Psalmist, that it was an offence unto them.<sup>73</sup>

Therefore a committee of thirty ministers was appointed to make a careful and literal translation. The result was The Bay Psalm Book.<sup>74</sup> Richard Mather wrote the preface in which he stated the case for Psalm singing:

<sup>71</sup>Howard, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Lloyd Frederick Sunderman, "The Beginning of Singing in America," Journal of Musicology, III (1941-1942), 103.

If . . . the verses are not always so smooth and elegant as some may desire or expect, let them consider that God's Alter needs not our pol-lishings . . . for we have respected rather a plaine translation, and so have attended con-science rather than elegance, fidelity rather than poetry, in translating the Hebrew words into English language, and David's poetry into English mettre: that soe we may sing in Sion the Lord's songs of praise according to his own tears, and bid us entre our masters joye to sing eternall Halleluiahs.<sup>75</sup>

The press that produced the work was a gift from English Puritans who had remained in Holland.<sup>76</sup> Along with the Freeman's Oath and Peirce's Almanac, the col-lection was the first book to be printed in America. This first printing entitled Psalms Newly Turned into Metre, was not altogether approved and so a revised version came out in 1650 under the supervision of Rev. Henry Dunster, then President of Harvard College. This revised version was the Bay Psalm Book.<sup>77</sup>

These early editions contained no music. This was probably due to the lack of having anyone capable of en-graving the plates. However, each edition included in-structions about the tunes to be used and advising the singers to use the best collections of tunes of the time. In 1647 Rev. John Cotton wrote concerning the singing

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<sup>75</sup>Howard, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 259.

<sup>77</sup>MacDougall, op. cit., p. 31.

of Psalms:

Singing Psalmes a Gospel Ordinance

1.) Touching the duty itself -- singing of Psalmes with a lively voyce is an holy duty of God's worship now in the dayes of the New Testament.

2.) Touching the matter to be sung -- we hold and believe that not only the Psalmes of David, but any other spirituall songs recorded in Scripture may lawfully be sung in Christian Churches.

3.) Touching the manner of singing -- it will be a necessarye helpe, that the words of the Psalme, be openly read before hand, line after line, or two together, so that they who want either books or skill to reade, may joyne with the rest in the duties of singing.<sup>78</sup>

This lack of books, music, and ability to read led to the practice known as "lining-out." The deacon or appointed leader would sing a line; then the congregation would repeat what had been sung. If the leader had a good voice and an accurate sense of pitch, well and good, but if he did not, the results were usually deplorable. This practice eventually led to the bad conditions of congregational singing of the eighteenth century.<sup>79</sup> After the generation that had brought the tunes from Holland and England had died, many of the congregations were capable of singing but three or four tunes.<sup>80</sup> It is easy to see the monotony that would result from

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<sup>78</sup>Howard, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., pp. 10-15.

<sup>80</sup>Sunderman, op. cit., p. 106.

singing these same tunes repeatedly. Such monotony would naturally bring about poor, sluggish singing.

The Bay Psalm Book speedily came into use in most of the New England churches and obtained wide circulation in England and Scotland. There were seventy editions issued in America, the last appearing in 1773. In England there were eighteen editions, with the last in 1754. Twenty-two editions came out in Scotland, the last appearing in 1757.<sup>81</sup>

Psalmody reigned supreme in the churches of the Calvinistic faiths for many generations despite the widespread acceptance of hymnody both in England and in the United States. Even today there are churches that still use the Psalms in public worship to the exclusion of hymns.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup>Scholes, op. cit., p. 260.

<sup>82</sup>The Associate Reformed Presbyterian.

## CHAPTER V

### SCHUTZ TO STRAVINSKY

The foundation for the early German school of music had been laid by the Lutheran Chorales and hymns. Unlike the psalmody of England and France, the German Protestant music was to be taken up and developed into some of the greatest musical forms of music history such as the chorales and preludes of Schutz and Bach. Even these, however, were often built upon Psalms and Psalm tunes, for Luther and his collaborators used the Psalms extensively for inspiration.<sup>1</sup> Luther's greatest hymn, "Ein feste Burg," was a paraphrase of the 46th Psalm. Others were "Ach Gott von Himmel sich darein" (Ps. 12), "Es spricht der Unweisen Mund Wohl" (Ps. 14), "Es Wollt uns Gott genadig sein" (Ps. 67), and "Ans tiefer Net schrei ich Zu dir" (Ps. 130).<sup>2</sup>

Heinrich Schutz (1585-1672)

Heinrich Schutz, sometimes called the father of German music, might be considered the link between Luther and

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<sup>1</sup>"Chorale," Harvard Dictionary of Music.

<sup>2</sup>Martin Luther, Neue dendsche geistliche gesenge, Vol. XXIX (DDT), 1908.



Bach. Not only did some of his works forecast the great St. Matthew Passion,<sup>3</sup> but as Bach, Schutz turned to the German Reformation Chorales for the basis of many of his works. The rugged versions of the Scripture made by Luther suited Schutz's massive style. Like Bach, he too devoted himself chiefly to Biblical texts.<sup>4</sup>

One such work, in the style of the Reformation chorale and based on Biblical texts, is a volume of 103 Psalm settings. The texts used were taken from a little volume of Psalms in German verse published in 1602 under the authorship of Cornelius Becker, a professor of theology in Leipzig. These German Psalms had been adapted to the chorale tunes then in use in the Lutheran Church, and were used in the home of Schutz in private worship. In 1628 Schutz published a volume of his own settings of these Psalms. The publication was so well received that Johann Georg II, Elector of Saxony, ordered its adoption by the churches and schools. A revised edition appeared in 1661.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Finney, op. cit., p. 271; "Three such works are his Die Sieben Worte Jesus Christ (the seven words of Jesus Christ), Histoire der Anferstehung (Story of the Resurrection), and the Matthaus Passion (Passion of St. Matthew)."

<sup>4</sup>W. G. Whittaker, Fugitive Notes on Certain Cantatas and the Motets of J. S. Bach, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup>Paul Boepple, editor of a recent English edition of four Psalms from the collection, Psalms 20, 84, 97, and 121. Published by the Music Press, Inc., Steinway Hall, New York.

All of the settings are for four voices in a homophonic style.<sup>6</sup> There is one exception found in the version of the 6th Psalm where the melody is used contrapuntally.<sup>7</sup> This exception is shown in the following example:

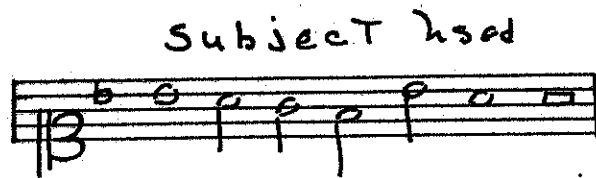


Fig. 6. -- Subject of the contrapuntal setting of Psalm 6 (Becker Psalms).

As a rule, the movement is even and slow, mostly in breves, whole and half notes. However, in Psalm 144, there is a passage with the rhythm  $\downarrow \uparrow \uparrow$ . The form follows closely that of the early chorales with from ten to twelve measures the average length. Many, however, are only four and five measures long. The setting of Psalm 138 presented in Figure 7 shows the style and form most characteristic of the collection.<sup>8</sup>

Later in his life Schutz again turned to the Psalms for his writings. These settings, known as the "Mehrchoriage Psalmen,"<sup>9</sup> are written for two or more choirs.

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<sup>6</sup>Here "homophonic" is used as meaning part-music in which all voices move in the same rhythm -- a strict chordal style or "familiar" style. -- Harvard Dictionary of Music, p. 340.

<sup>7</sup>Heinrich Schutz, Werke, edited by Phillip Spetta, Vol. XVI, p. ix.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., II and III.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a setting of Psalm 138. Each system consists of four staves. The top staff of each system is in soprano clef (C1), the second in alto clef (C3), the third in tenor clef (C4), and the bottom in bass clef (F1). The music is written in a 3/4 time signature and features a complex contrapuntal texture with various rhythmic values and melodic lines across the voices.

Fig. 7. -- "Psalm 138" (Heinrich Schutz).

Musically, these settings are much more interesting than the Book of Psalms, for they are longer, they are more elaborately developed, and have instrumental accompaniment. The style is contrapuntal as contrasted with the homophonic style of the Becker Psalms. These settings

are also more florid and imitative.

The setting of the 2nd Psalm,<sup>10</sup> written for two choirs of four voices each, is divided into two sections. The first section is slow and only six measures long. At the beginning of the second section all voices enter together, then move into a passage of antiphonal singing, found in many of the versions. The form of this Psalm is the only deviation from a one-movement ideal in the whole collection.

Psalm 111 differs from the other settings in that an instrumental interlude is used within the composition. The melody that is used was taken from a work of Giovanni Gabrieli.<sup>11</sup> This composition ends with an unusual amen for the two vocal choirs and two instrumental choirs. Psalm 115 uses three choirs.<sup>12</sup> A basso continue is given for each setting.

With these Psalms the foundation was laid for the cantatas of Bach that followed.

#### Henry Purcell (1658 or 1659-1695)

Even though Purcell died at the age of twenty-seven, he had in those few years written such music as to make

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., Vol. II. The texts in Vol. II are Psalms 110, 2, 6, 130, 122, 8, 1, 84, 128, 121, 136, 23, and 111.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., II, 200.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., Vol. III. Texts used in Vol. III are Psalms 98, 100, 137, 150, 115, 128, and 136.

him perhaps the greatest genius of English-born composers. In his few years of composing he left great works in every form of music, of his age. His religious music, though considered by some authorities as not equal to his other works, was the greatest religious music of his time.<sup>13</sup>

Many of his finest anthems were based on Psalm texts. These were often written with instrumental accompaniment, or at least an instrumental introduction. The anthem "The Lord Is My Light" (Ps. 27) has an introduction by a "symphony" of strings (first and second violin, viola, and bass). With the entrance of the voices only a ground bass is given. The general style is contrapuntal, but ends with a full "Alleluia" in a solid homophonic chorus.<sup>14</sup>

The anthem, "I Was Glad When They Said unto Me" (Ps. 122:1), was one of the anthems performed at the coronation of James II. It too has an instrumental introduction with organ accompaniment for the voices. However, there is a lengthy instrumental interlude within the work.<sup>15</sup> Its first printing in the third edition of

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<sup>13</sup>Walker, op. cit., p. 152.

<sup>14</sup>Henry Purcell, Works, XIV, 78.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

Playford's Harmonia Sacra (1714) was without the instrumental parts.

"Bow Down Thine Ear" (Ps. 86) is written for alternating verse for solo voice and a chorus of four voices. It opens with a chorus for four voices, with the voices entering fugally. The first solo voice that enters is a tenor. Then voice by voice enters until the full choir has entered for the chorus. The next solo passage is for a bass voice. Each time the chorus enters the voices come in fugally. Again a basso continue is given for an organ accompaniment.<sup>16</sup>

Besides the use of the Psalms in English for his religious works, Purcell turned to the Latin Psalms. One is his four-part "Beati Omnes qui timent Domenum" (Ps. 127)<sup>17</sup> which ends with a very florid Hallelujah on an instrumental ground-bass. Another, "Jehova, quam multi sunt," is perhaps one of Purcell's greatest masterpieces. It is written for tenor and bass solos and a five-part chorus. Walker writes of this Psalm:

In this lengthy and most nobly imagined work -- the section "Ego Cubui et dormini" is one of the most solemnly beautiful inspirations in all English music -- we see nothing of the conventionalities of many of the Anthems. . . .

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., XIII, 103.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

If we were regrettably forced to pin our faith in Purcell as a religious composer on one work alone, it is to the psalm perhaps that most of those who are familiar with it would turn.<sup>19</sup>

### George Frederic Handel (1685-1759)

To the English-speaking world the name of Handel is almost synonymous with The Messiah and Israel in Egypt. Even now his other large works seldom are performed, to say nothing of the anthems, cantatas and German service music that perhaps prepared the way for these oratorios.<sup>20</sup>

Among the early works of Handel are to be found twelve anthems or Psalms known as the "Chandos Anthems." These were written while working in the chapel for the Earl of Carnarvon (1716-1718), where he had at his disposal good singers, a chorus, and an orchestra. Some of them later were rearranged for use in the Chapel of George I (England).<sup>21</sup>

Written for solos and choruses of four, five, or six voices on the model of the Lutheran Cantatas of the time, these anthems perhaps prepared Handel for the writing of the oratorios of his later writings. Most of the

<sup>19</sup>Walker, op. cit., pp. 159-160.

<sup>20</sup>Romain Rolland, Handel, p. 71.

<sup>21</sup>C. P. Abdy Williams, Handel, p. 62.

anthems were written to be preceded by a type of overture sometimes called a "sonata" and at other times a "sinfonia." The orchestra is usually made up of an oboe, first violin, second violin, contra bass violin, and piano.

As given in the edition of Handel's complete works sponsored by D. D. T., the anthems are as follows:<sup>22</sup>

Anthem I -- "O be joyful in the Lord" (Ps. 100).

This anthem sets the general plan of all of the others with its elaborate instrumental introduction or overture, and alternating parts for solo and chorus of three voices, cantus, tenors, and bass. In its make-up one sees the beginning of the plan of Handel's oratorios:

- No. 1 Cantus -- solo and chorus.
- No. 2 Duet -- cantus and bass.
- No. 3 Chorus.
- No. 4 Duet -- cantus and tenor.
- No. 5 Chorus.
- No. 6 Solo and chorus.
- No. 7 Chorus.
- No. 8 Duet -- soprano and bass.
- No. 9 Chorus.
- No. 10 Duet -- soprano and tenor.
- No. 11 Chorus.

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<sup>22</sup>Georg Freidrich Handel, Werke, Vols. XXXIV, XXV, and XXXVI.



The anthem is characterized by long passages of sixteenth notes on one syllable as found in many of his other works. Contrast is achieved, however, between the first duet, which is full of sixteenth-note passages, and the third chorus in half and quarter notes.<sup>23</sup>

Anthem II -- "In the Lord put I my trust" (Ps. 9, 11, 12, 13). This anthem is written for a tenor solo and chorus, with a three-part chorus and instrumentation of Anthem I.<sup>24</sup>

Anthem III -- "Have mercy upon me" (Ps. 51). An organ part is added to the instrumentation in this anthem. It otherwise follows the plan of Anthem I.<sup>25</sup>

Anthem IV -- "O sing unto the Lord a new song" (Ps. 96).<sup>26</sup>

Anthem v<sup>A</sup> -- "I will magnify thee" (Ps. 145). Written for tenor solo and chorus of three voices.<sup>27</sup>

Anthem v<sup>B</sup> -- "I will magnify thee" (Ps. 145, 89, and 96).<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., XXXIV, 1-36.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., pp. 37-73.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., pp. 72-104.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 109-129. Handel made another setting of this Psalm later. It can be found in the Appendix of Vol. XXXVI of the complete Works.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., pp. 133-162.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 169-200. With more than one setting for Ps. 145, 42, and 68 there are actually sixteen of the anthems instead of twelve, as usually given.

Anthem VI<sup>A</sup> -- "As pants the heart for cooling streams" (Ps. 42). This anthem has a very florid and elaborate instrumental introduction, with a cello and organ added to the usual instrumentation.<sup>29</sup>

Anthem VI<sup>B</sup> -- "As pants the heart for cooling streams" (Ps. 42). In contrast to Anthem VI<sup>A</sup>, this one is set for seven voices in one continuous movement, with, however, the usual instrumentation.<sup>30</sup>

Anthem VI<sup>C</sup> -- "As pants the heart for cooling streams" (Ps. 42). This anthem is the shortest one of the entire group, but offers some of the most interesting music. Written for six voices, cantus, first alto, second alto, tenor, first bass and second bass, there is no orchestral accompaniment, only parts for both organ and piano. The second part of the anthem is for an alto solo with a violin obligato.<sup>31</sup>

Anthem VII -- "My song shall be always" (Ps. 89).<sup>32</sup>

Anthem VIII -- "O come let us sing unto the Lord" (Ps. 95).<sup>33</sup>

Anthem IX -- "O praise the Lord with one consent" (Ps. 135).<sup>34</sup>

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 200-232.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., pp. 239-269.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 277-287.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., XXXV, 1-38.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., pp. 41-90.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 98-144.

Anthem X -- "The Lord is my Light" (Ps. 27). The instrumental introduction is called a sinfonia in this Psalm only. The oboe is replaced by the flute and cello added. The chorus is for five voices.<sup>35</sup>

Anthem XI<sup>A</sup> -- "Let God arise" (Ps. 68).<sup>36</sup>

Anthem XI<sup>B</sup> -- "Let God arise" (Ps. 68). There is no overture to this anthem. The instrumentation is oboe, first violin, second violin, viola, bass, and cello. It concludes with an elaborately written Alleluia for full chorus, soloists, and orchestra.<sup>37</sup>

Anthem XII -- "O praise the Lord, ye Angels" (Ps. 103, 115, and 145).<sup>38</sup>

Though called anthems because of their place in the chapel service, they are really Cantatas differing from oratorios only in the absence of the narrative element. One critic wrote of them:

The movements (which follow the overtures) are arranged in so natural a sequence and contrasted together with such clear appreciation of the meaning of the sacred text, that each anthem may be accepted as a reverent commentary upon the Psalm it illustrates.<sup>39</sup>

Handel wrote two Wedding Anthems using Psalm texts. One, written in 1734 for Princess Anne, was based on

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., pp. 151-204.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., pp. 211-255.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., pp. 263-288.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., XXXVI, 1-18.

<sup>39</sup>W. S. Rockstro, The Life of George Frederick Handel, p. 105.

Psalms 45 and 118, entitled "This day which the Lord has made." It is scored for eight voices, organ piano, two trumpets, two cornets, two oboes, bassoons, first and second violin, viola, and cello.<sup>40</sup> The other wedding anthem was written for the Prince of Wales in 1736.<sup>41</sup> It is not so lengthy or elaborate as the one for Princess Anne.

The Dittengen Anthem written in 1743 was based on Psalms 20 and 21.<sup>42</sup> Another anthem written for the Foundling Hospital (1749) used Psalms 41, 72, and 112 as the texts.<sup>43</sup>

Besides these anthems, or complete Psalm-settings, Handel used verses from the Psalms quite frequently in the oratorios. In The Messiah the following parts are based on Psalms:

Chorus 26 -- "He trusted in God that he would deliver him" (Ps. 22:8).

No. 27 -- Soprano recitative -- "Thy rebuke hath broken his heart, he is full of heaviness . . . but there was no man; He looked for no man; neither found he any to comfort him" (Ps. 69:20).

<sup>40</sup>Handel, Werke, XXXVI, 27-76.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 80-99.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., pp. 111-143.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., pp. 154-160.

No. 30 -- Soprano aria -- "But thou didst not leave his soul in hell" (Ps. 16:10).

No. 31 -- Chorus -- "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors" (Ps. 24: 9, 10, 12).

No. 34 -- Bass aria -- "Thou art gone upon high" (Ps. 68:18).

No. 35 -- Chorus -- "Great was the company of the preachers" (Ps. 58:11).

No. 37 -- Chorus -- "Their sound is gone out into all lands" (Ps. 19 and Romans 10:18).

No. 38 -- Bass aria -- "Why do the nations so furiously rage" (Ps. 2:1-2).

No. 39 -- Chorus -- "Let us break their bonds asunder" (Ps. 2:3).

No. 40 -- Tenor recitative -- "He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn" (Ps. 2:4).

No. 41 -- Tenor aria -- "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron" (Ps. 2:9).<sup>44</sup>

In the Israel in Egypt special use is made of the 105th Psalm. These passages come within Part I as:

No. 3 -- Tenor recitative -- Ps. 105:26, 27, 29.

No. 5 -- Alto air -- Ps. 105:30.

No. 6 -- Chorus -- Ps. 105:31, 34, 35 (double chorus).

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<sup>44</sup>George Frederick Handel, The Messiah, Kalmus edition.

No. 7 -- Chorus -- Ps. 105:32, Ex. 9:23 (double chorus).

No. 9 -- Chorus -- Ps. 105:36-37.<sup>45</sup>

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

In tracing the melodies of the Lutheran Chorales, on which Bach built so many of his works, one discovers the use of many Psalms and Psalm-tunes. This can be accounted for by the fact that the early German Protestant leaders borrowed extensively from the Genevan Psalm tunes. Luther in particular turned to the Psalms for many of his hymns.

As far as the Psalm texts are concerned, Bach's knowledge of all Scripture and all religious verse was so profound that his faculty for suggestion was almost unlimited. He seemed to have experienced all the human emotions as deeply as had the psalmists.

Many of the passages in his Cantatas are based on Psalm texts. Some of these are:

The church Cantata No. 38 makes use of a free version of the De Profundis (Ps. 130) written by Luther in 1523. This hymn was sung at the burial of Luther and was the last hymn to be sung in the Cathedral of Strassburg before it was captured by the French in 1681.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>George Frederick Handel, Israel in Egypt, G. Schirmer edition.

<sup>46</sup>Whittaker, op. cit., p. 18.

The church Cantata No. 104, "Du Hirte Israel, hore," written for the second Sunday after Easter, opens with a chorus based on the first verse of the 80th Psalm. The words "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel" set the atmosphere for the pastoral music found in the cantata. It is fitting, too, that the closing choral uses the 23rd Psalm -- the great shepherd Psalm. The same tune is used for both settings.<sup>47</sup>

The Cantata No. 80, written for the Reformation Festival, uses the text of the 50th Psalm and Luther's "Ein feste Burg." Bach used this hymn in several different works.<sup>48</sup> Another interesting repeated use of tunes is one found in Cantata No. 29. Written for the Inauguration of the Council (church), in 1731, the melody used in the second division of the cantata for Ps. 75:1 was later taken for the "Gratias" of the B Minor Mass.<sup>49</sup>

Many other passages using texts from the Psalms are to be found within the many cantatas of Bach. Then his greatest motet, "Sing Ye to the Lord" (for double chorus), opens with a setting of Ps. 149:1-3 -- a prelude and fugue. The chorale used in the second section is the

<sup>47</sup>Score, "Du Hirte Israel, Hore," Broude Brothers, New York.

<sup>48</sup>Score, "Ein Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott," based on the Bach Gesellschaft edition, published by Broude Brothers, New York.

<sup>49</sup>Henry S. Drinker, Texts of the Choral Works of Johann Sebastian Bach, Vol. I.

third stanza of the hymn, "Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren," a metrical paraphrase of Psalm 103 by Johann Graumann (1487-1541).<sup>50</sup> This melody of the hymn probably appeared about 1540 and is recognized by English audiences because of its striking resemblance to that of "Old Hundredth." Between the two choirs there are many passages of imitation as well as antiphonal singing. This is particularly true in the middle section where the style is not quite so florid. Unlike most of Bach's choral music, the motet is written without instrumental accompaniment. However, the question is still debated whether the motet was meant to be sung a cappella or be supported by the organ.<sup>51</sup>

Schweitzer wrote of this motet:

. . . and truly when this music rings out we lose sight of the world with all its unrest, its care and sorrow. We are alone with Bach, who soothes our soul with the wonderful peace of his own heart, and lifts us above all that is, was, or shall be.<sup>52</sup>

Then, turning to the four-part chorals, we find at least forty-four of the 405 based on Psalm-tunes or Psalm-texts. As numbered by Terry<sup>53</sup> these are:

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<sup>50</sup>S. T. M. Newman, "Bach's Motet: 'Singet Dem Herren,'" Proceedings of the Musical Association, 64th Session (1937-1938), pp. 98-99.

<sup>51</sup>Score, Singet dem Herrn ein nenses Lied.

<sup>52</sup>Albert Schweitzer, J. S. Bach, II, 297.

<sup>53</sup>Charles Sanford Terry, J. S. Bach's Four-Part Chorals.



No. 17 "Allen Gott in Der Hoh Sei Ehr" Ps. 23, Melody, an adaptation (1539) of the Easter plain-song, 'Gloria in excelsis.'

No. 24 "An Wassweflussen Babylon" Ps. 137, melody, attributed to Dachstein (1525).

No. 32 "Aus Tieffer Noth Schrei Ich Zu Du" Ps. 130, melody by (?) Luther (1524).

No. 33 "Befiehl Du Deine Wage" an acrostic on Luther's Ps. 37. Melody by (?) Bartholomaeus Gesius (1603), originally set to 'Labet Gott, unsern Heirn.'

Nos. 77, 78, 79 "Ein Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott" Ps. 46, melody by Luther (1529).

No. 81 "Erharm Dich Mein, O Herre Gott" melody by (?) Johann Walther (1524) Ps. 51.

No. 95 "Es Spricht Der Unweisen Mund Wohl" Ps. 14, melody by (?) Luther (1524).

Nos. 98, 99, 100, 101 "Es Wollt Uns Gott chorals Genadig Sein" Ps. 67, melody, anonymous (1525).

Nos. 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109 "Fren Dich Sehr, O Meine Seele" hymn anonymous, melody Louis Bourgeois, originally (1551) to Ps. 42.

Nos. 133, 134, 135, 136 "Herr Gott, Dich Loben alle Wir" melody, Louis Bourgeois 'Or sus, serviteurs du Seigneur' (1551): Old Hundredth Ps. 100.

No. 149 "Herr Jesu Christ, Wahr Mensch Und Gott" melody Louis Bourgeois, originally (1551) to Ps. 127.

No. 151 "Herr, Straf Mich Nicht In Deinem Zorn" Ps. 38 melody Johann Gruger (1640).

No. 152 "Herr, Wie Du Wellt, So Schicks Mit" originally (1525) to 'Aust tiefer Noth schrei ich Zu dir.'

No. 185 "Ich Danke Dir, Herr Gott, in Deinem Throne" melody Louis Bourgeois (1547), originally to Ps. 23.

Nos. 193, 195 "In Dich Hab Ich Gehoffet, Herr"  
Ps. 31 melody (?) Sethus Calvinus a regular translation (1581) of Ps. 31 in seven six-line stanzas  
Hymn by Adam Reissner.

No. 232 "Lass, O Herr, Dein Ohr Sich Neigen"  
Translation of Ps. 86, in 8 line stanzas (1632)  
Melody by Louis Bourgeois (1547) to Ps. 86.

No. 236 "Lobet Den Herren, Denn Er Ist Sehr  
Freundlich" based on Ps. 147 Melody by Antonio  
Scandelli (1568).

Nos. 276, 277, 278, 279 "Nun Lab, Mein Seel,  
Den Herren" Ps. 103 Johann Graumann (1540) melody  
Johann Kugelman (1540).

No. 297 "O mensch, Bewein Dein Sunde Gross"  
Melody by (?) Matthaues Greitter (1525), to 'Es  
Sind doch seligalle' Ps. 119.

No. 320 "Singt Dem Herrn Ein Neues Lied"  
Ps. 149 Melody by Matthaues Appelles Oan Lowenstein  
(1644).

No. 343 "War Gott Nicht Mit Uns Diese Zeit"  
(Luther translation) Ps. 124 Melody (?) Johann  
Walther (1524).

No. 367 "Wenn Ich In Augst Und Noth" Trans-  
lation M. A. von Lowenstern of Ps. 121 melody by  
same 1644.

Nos. 401, 402, 403 "Wo Gott Der Herr Nicht  
Bei Uns Halt" Ps. 124 Luther Melody anonymous,  
Hymn Justus Jons Ps. 124.

No. 405 "Wo Gott Zum Hans Nicht Giebt Sein  
Gunst" Ps. 127 Johann Kolross Melody anonymous  
(1535).

Among the organ chorales of Bach, Schweitzer lists  
those that are based on Psalm paraphrases as the follow-  
ing:

1. Psalm 130 -- De Profundis VI, Nos. 13 and 14,

Cantata No. 38 (Luther's paraphrase).

2. Psalm 46 -- Ein feste Burge VI, No. 22, Cantata No. 80 (Luther).

3. Psalm 137 -- An Wasserflussen Babylon VI, Nos. 12-a and 12-b (Wolfgang Doehstein).

4. Psalm 31 -- In dich hab' ich gehoffet Herr VI, No. 34 (Adam Reissner).<sup>54</sup>

After the peak reached in the religious music of Bach and his predecessors, composers, no longer looking to the church and to Royal Chapels for support, turned to the development of music outside the church. The courts, no longer bowing to the authority of the Pope, were free to seek composers to write music other than chapel music. Then with the coming of the philosophies of Rousseau, of the right of the common man, the breaking down of the Divine Right of Kings, and the age of Revolution, composers began to break with Court support and to write as men in a rightful profession.

After Bach, we find no other composers writing entirely in the field of religious music, but many did write sacred compositions. The Psalms continued to be the source of inspiration of many.

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<sup>54</sup>Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 10.

## Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787)

To the latter years of Gluck's life belongs a piece of sacred music, a four-part setting of the De profundis (Ps. 130).<sup>55</sup> It has an accompaniment of lower strings (violas, cellos, and basses), bassoon, horn and trio of trombones. It begins and ends in a very dark, somber atmosphere with only the oboe to add a little bit of lighter coloring. It is very short, only twelve measures long, and seems to be of little consequence in the light of his other works.<sup>56</sup>

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Mozart also made a setting of this same Psalm (130) for four voices with organ accompaniment. (basso continuo). Mozart had originally intended to use two violins with the organ, but for some reason the idea was discarded. Only fifty measures long, it is written in a strict homophonic style with a note for each syllable of the text. The rhythm is characterized by the sixteenth note almost throughout the composition. Its loveliness comes from its sincere simplicity.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Alfred Einstein, Gluck, p. 185. The score is given by Einstein in its entirety.

<sup>56</sup> Alfred Einstein, Mozart, pp. 329-330, translated by Authar Mendel and Nathan Broder. Entire score given by Einstein.

<sup>57</sup> Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Werke, Series III, No. 19, K. 72.

## Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828)

It seems a little unusual that Schubert, perhaps the greatest melodist in musical history, would write only one composition from this famous collection of lyrical poetry. The one setting which he wrote was the 23rd Psalm for a four-part women's chorus. The piano accompaniment is written in a flowing motion to suggest the pastoral atmosphere until the words, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death." Here a chromatic harmony with repeated notes in the bass gives the dark color suggested by the words. The last words of assurance are set to an open harmony and even rhythm. It is not suggestive of jubilation but of peace and contentment.<sup>58</sup>

## Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809-1847)

Of all the Romantic composers, Mendelssohn more than any other chose to use the Psalms as texts for his sacred composition. Most of these Psalm-settings were written as cantatas. One or two almost reach the lofty attainments of his oratorios.<sup>59</sup> Perhaps the most well known is:

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<sup>58</sup>Franz Schubert, The Lord Is My Shepherd, S. S. A. A. Laurel Octavo, C. C. Birchard and Company, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>59</sup>Stephen S. Stratton, Mendelssohn, p. 162.

1. Psalm 95 -- "Come Let Us Sing." Written for choir, solo voices, and orchestra, this cantata follows the outline of his oratorios. The orchestra is made up of a flute, oboe, two clarinets, two bassoons, a horn in E<sup>b</sup>, and the string choir. The third number of the cantata is a canon for three voices, tenor, first bass, and second bass. The canon itself is very short, but moves, without a break, into a duet for two sopranos.<sup>60</sup> The concluding chorus for tenor and chorus was not added until after the cantata's first performance. An explanation is given in the G. Schirmer edition of 1876:

The chorus which here concludes the Psalm, and which is now published for the first time, was discovered amongst Mendelssohn's autograph MSS. before they left this country for the Imperial Library at Berlin, where they are now deposited. It is dated by the author "11th April, 1839" i. e. -- some weeks after the first performance of the work at Leipzig on the 21st of the preceding February. It appeared likely that the newly discovered chorus had been written to give a more complete finish to the Psalm than is given by the present Andante in G minor: and with this view and the permission of his family, was performed at the close of the Psalm at the Crystal Palace under Mr. Mann's direction on 26th of February, 1876.<sup>61</sup>

2. Psalm 42 -- "As the Hart Pants." The orchestra for this cantata includes four horns in F to give an unusual tone color. As a whole, the work is characterized

<sup>60</sup>Mendelssohn, Werke, Series 14, No. 90.

<sup>61</sup>Felix Mendelssohn, "Come Let Us Sing," a cantata for solo, chorus, and orchestra; published by G. Schirmer, Inc., New York.

by a slow, meditative atmosphere except for the fourth number, which is an "Allegro" movement. A choir of trombones is added to the orchestra for this movement also. One of the most interesting parts, though, is the sixth movement. It is written for a vocal quintet, soprano, first tenor, second tenor, first bass, and second bass. The last movement is for full orchestra and chorus.<sup>62</sup>

3. Psalm 115 -- "Non nobis, Domine." Written for chorus and orchestra, the first movement opens with a thirteen-measure instrumental introduction. The last chorus (No. 4) marked "Grave" is for eight voices.<sup>63</sup>

4. Psalm 144 -- "When Israel Out of Egypt Came." This work, written for an eight-part chorus and orchestra, cannot be classified as a cantata. It is more in the form of a motet, written without definite breaks or sections.<sup>64</sup>

5. Psalm 98 -- "Sing to the Lord a New-made Song." This is one of the three settings of the group written for a double chorus. The first section, to be sung a cappella, has a bass solo along with the full chorus. Like Psalm 144, this setting is more in the form of a motet.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>62</sup>Mendelssohn, Werke, Series 14, No. 89.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., Series 14, No. 88. <sup>64</sup>Ibid., Series 14, No. 91.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., Series 14, No. 92.

6. Psalm 2 -- "Why Rage Fiercely the Heathen," for double chorus.<sup>66</sup>

7. Psalm 22 -- "My God, My God," for double chorus.<sup>67</sup>

8. Psalm 43 -- "Judge Me, O God," for eight-part chorus.<sup>68</sup>

#### Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Liszt used the Psalms almost as many times as did Mendelssohn. His most well-known setting is that of the 13th Psalm. It is written for a tenor solo, chorus, and orchestra. Liszt spoke of this Psalm as being "written with tears and blood."<sup>69</sup>

His setting of the 121st Psalm, In Domum Domini Idimus, is a little unusual from the choral standpoint. Except for a short middle passage, the four voices sing in unison within a very small scale-range. This middle passage is written for the soprano and alto in thirds and the tenor and bass in thirds. The movement is very slow, using tied whole notes in several instances. The chromatic melody line also lends to the unusual effect. The voices are accompanied by an organ, two

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<sup>66</sup>Stratton, op. cit., p. 200.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Sacheverell Stilwell, Liszt, p. 253.



trumpets, two trombones, and tympani moving also in unison with the voices."<sup>70</sup>

Other Psalms set by Liszt were Psalms 23, 129, 137, 19, and 116. These are not considered by critics as equal with the average works of Liszt.

#### Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Brahms' Motet No. 2, Op. 29, is based on the 51st Psalm. In three movements, the texts show the musical division of the work: (a) the first movement -- "Create in Me, O God" in five parts; (b) second movement -- "O Cast Me Not Away from Thy Presence"; and (c) third movement -- "Grant unto Me the Joy of Thy Salvation," in six parts.<sup>71</sup>

(a) The first movement is in G: Alla breve, "Andante moderato." This movement, only twenty-five measures long, is written contrapuntally with the melody in the bass part. It is characteristically devotional.

(b) The second movement is in g minor, "Andante, expressive." With a subject of a three-bar length, the voices enter fugally, but this style is not followed through the rest of the composition. A great deal of chromatic harmony is used in this 55-measure movement

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<sup>70</sup>Franz Liszt, Werke, V, 139.

<sup>71</sup>Edwin Evans, Historical, Descriptive, and Analytical Account of the Entire Works of Johannes Brahms, I, 97-98.

to characterize the plea of the Psalmist, "O cast me not away from thy countenance."

(c) The third movement is in G major, "Andante." This movement opens with a nine-bar canon between tenor and second bass with the first bass adding a harmony for the tenor. This is then repeated in the women's voices with the canon between the soprano and second alto, followed by further nine-bar canon between tenor and second bass, ending with two bars of a transition to the second section of the movement. This last half is a tonal fugue with the subject introduced by the soprano voices followed by alto, tenor, and bass. The movement is concluded by a stretto in "Animate," twelve measures in length, making a total of fifty-six measures in the entire movement.<sup>72</sup>

In the famous German Requiem are found passages based on Psalm texts. These are:

No. 1 -- Chorus -- After the opening section the words of Ps. 126:5 are used: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." This is followed by a passage using Ps. 126:7a: "He goeth forth and weepeth and beareth good fruit shall doubtless return again with joy."

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., pp. 97-98. Score from the Westminster Choir Series, Edited by John Finley Williamson, published by G. Schirmer, Inc., New York.

No. 3 -- Baritone solo -- "Lord, make me to know," based on Ps. 39:5, 6, and 8. A chorus is used to reiterate the plea.

No. 4 -- "How lovely is Thy dwelling place" (Ps. 84: 1, 2, and 4). The music of this chorus seems to soar to the heights of the dwelling place of the Lord, making one of the outstanding musical experiences of the entire Requiem.<sup>73</sup>

Brahms made a setting of Psalm 13 in three movements for organ and choir, but it has never been well known.

#### Cesar Franck (1822-1890)

At least one Psalm setting was made by the organist, Franck, but it does not rank with his other works. This one setting is of the 150th Psalm written for chorus and orchestra. It begins with an "halleluia" sung antiphonally between voices, followed by an alto solo. The accompaniment as well as the general make-up resembles the more famous "Panis Angelicus."<sup>74</sup>

#### Charles Camille Saint-Saens (1835-1921)

Calvocoressi speaks of Saint-Saens as having an imagination that asserted itself far more in the treatment

<sup>73</sup>Johannes Brahms, German Requiem, G. Schirmer edition.

<sup>74</sup>Cesar Franck, Psalm 150, arranged for S. S. A. by Gladys Pitcher, Laurel Octavo, C. C. Burchard and Company, Boston, Massachusetts.

of his material than in actual invention.<sup>75</sup> Other critics accused him of having nothing to say.<sup>76</sup> Whether what he has to say in his setting of the 150th Psalm is important or not, he did choose an interesting arrangement for the setting.

The text, as given below, gives the general division of the setting.

Psalm CL

Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power.

Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness.

Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and harp.

Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs.

Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

The work, divided into six movements, is for a double chorus with an organ accompaniment.

The first movement opens with both choruses in antiphonal singing. This movement is based on the first two sentences of the text, and uses an accompaniment that follows the voices closely.

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<sup>75</sup>M. D. Calvonocoressi, "Saint-Saens," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, IV, 505 (third edition).

<sup>76</sup>Finney, op. cit., p. 520.

The second movement opens with a twenty-one-measure organ introduction. The choirs then come in with solid harmony and strict rhythm singing the words, "Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet." This short eight-measure vocal part is followed by a forty-two-measure organ interlude using the trumpet and trombone stops. The music is suggestive of a trumpet call, with well-defined accents.

The third movement opens on the words, "Praise Him with the psaltery and harps" with the voices entering fugally. The vocal passage of fourteen measures leads into another organ interlude. The first part is pompous, and characterized by full chords suggesting the psaltery. The second part of the interlude is in arpeggios suggestive of the harp. This interlude is fifty-six measures long.

The fourth movement opens with full choirs for an eight-measure phrase on the words, "Praise Him with the timbrel and dance." Then follows an organ passage with a rhythm accented by triplets to give the atmosphere of a dance accompanied with timbrels. The organ passage is forty-nine measures long.

The fifth movement is characterized by a two-measure choral introduction with the words, "Praise Him with stringed instruments and organ." The organ passage that

follows makes use of the violin and 'cello stops.

The last movement is a fully developed choral composition using the peak words of the entire Psalm as a review and climaxing with full voices and organ on the words, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord, praise ye the Lord."<sup>77</sup>

Mikhail M. Ippolitov-Ivanov  
(1859- ----)

The only Russian represented in the composers who chose the Psalms for sacred works is Ippolitov-Ivanov. He made a setting for a four-part chorus, with orchestral accompaniment of Psalm 103:1-4. An English edition has recently been made by E. Harold Greer.<sup>78</sup>

Charles Martin Loeffler  
(1861- ----)

Born in France, Loeffler came to the United States and became a naturalized American citizen in 1887. He played with the Boston Symphony Orchestra until 1903. Since that time he has lived a quiet, retiring life, turning to composition.<sup>79</sup> One of his works from the year 1907 is the setting of Psalm 137 for a chorus of women's

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<sup>77</sup>Camille Saint-Saens, Psalm CL, G. Schirmer, Boston Music Company.

<sup>78</sup>Ippolitov-Ivanov, Psalm 103, E. C. Schirmer Music Company, copyright 1938.

<sup>79</sup>Carl Engel, "Charles Martin Loeffler," Musical Quarterly, XI (July, 1925), 413.

voices, with an accompaniment of organ, harp, two flutes, and violoncello obligato. Instead of clear-cut lines the entire work tends to give the atmosphere of the despair of the Israelites in captivity. The use of the harp lends meaning to the words, "We hanged our harps upon the willow in the midst thereof." The lack of a definite key sense seems to make one feel the "lostness" as expressed by the text.<sup>80</sup>

Albert Roussel (1869- ----)

According to Pruniers, Roussel is one of the most eminent representatives of the modern French school.<sup>81</sup> After teaching harmony and counterpoint at Schola Cantorum, he traveled in the Far East.

For his sixtieth anniversary, Roussel wrote his masterpiece, The Eightieth Psalm. It was performed for the first time at the Paris Opera on April 25, 1929, conducted by Albert Wolff. Pruniers writes of the work:<sup>82</sup>

It is a great human work without external brilliance. It speaks for those who suffer, and who implore the Heavens to save them with cries of revolt which in the end subside in a transport

<sup>80</sup>Charles M. Loeffler, By the Rivers of Babylon, Op. 3, G. Schirmer, Inc.

<sup>81</sup>Henry Pruniers, "Albert Roussel and the Eightieth Psalm," Musical Quarterly, XVI (1930), 52.

<sup>82</sup>The investigator has not seen this score. The comments are those of Pruniers entirely.

of confidence and hope. Roussel chose the English text of the Psalm and set it to music; then made a French adaptation of the words.<sup>83</sup>

Igor Stravinsky (1882- ----)

Perhaps the most unusual Psalm setting of the century is that made by Stravinsky using Psalms 38, 39, and 40, called "Symphonie des psaumes."

On the title page Stravinsky wrote: "This symphony composed to the glory of God is dedicated to the 'Boston Symphony Orchestra' on the occasion of the fiftieth year of its existence."<sup>84</sup> Naturally, Dr. Koussevitzky, the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, was to have had the privilege of conducting the symphony's first performance, but his illness prevented and in 1930 the Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra gave the world premiere.<sup>85</sup>

In the score the composer appended the following instructions:

The three parts of this symphony are to be played without pause. The text of the Psalms, which is that of the Vulgate, is to be sung in Latin. The Psalms are verses 13 and 14 of 38 for the first part of the symphony; verses 2, 3, and 4 of 39 for the second part; Psalm 40 in its entirety for the third part. The chorus should

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<sup>83</sup>Pruniers, op. cit., p. 55.

<sup>84</sup>Igor Fedorovich Stravinskii, "Symphonie des psaumes," edition Russe de Musique, 1931.

<sup>85</sup>Wallace Brockway, Men of Music, p. 568.



be children's voices. Failing these, women's voices (soprano and alto) may be substituted.<sup>86</sup>

In his autobiography Stravinsky explained the form and content of this work:

I wished to create an organic unity without conforming to the different schemes long adopted; rather to give my piece a periodic order such as that which distinguishes the symphony from the suite as merely a succession of pieces in varied order. At the same time, I considered the resource of sound from which I was to build my edifice. As I saw it, my symphony must rely mainly upon contrapuntal development, and for that I had to enlarge the means at my disposition. I decided upon a choral and instrumental combination in which the two elements should be given an equal prominence. In this, my point of view coincided with that of the old masters of counterpoint, who neither reduced the function of the chorus to a mere homophonic voice, nor reduced the instrumental portion to an accompaniment.<sup>87</sup>

Just whether Stravinsky's symphony achieves the full effect expected by him is a question of controversy. There are some authorities who say that a fundamental confusion exists between the spiritual and the sensual in the symphony.<sup>88</sup> Other critics say that it must be chalked up as just another experiment, that the third movement must be dismissed as sentimental trifling.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>86</sup>From the score, "Symphonie des psaumes."

<sup>87</sup>David Ewen, Music for the Millions, p. 56.

<sup>88</sup>Marc Blitzstein, "The Phenomenon of Stravinsky," Musical Quarterly, XXI (1935), 330.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid.

However, it has a definite part in the development of a close unity between vocal and orchestral parts within such compositions.

The chief characteristic of the orchestration is the thin and wide spacing of the instrumental parts. At times the vocal parts seem to get a little uninteresting, but this happens when one considers them as separate from the orchestra. The use of the phrygian mode in the beginning seems to set the atmosphere for the entire composition.

"The symphonie des psaumes" is a work of scale. It is Stravinsky's "avowal of faith, his tribute to Christian humility, love and awe in the sight of God . . ." <sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 344.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

"The songs of a people keep alive their spiritual aspirations." And thus have the Psalms been used since their origin. Christianity, a religion of song, inherited this magnificent Hebrew psalmody and used it to help spread the spirit of the new religion. Every new period of reform has been marked by a fresh outburst of lyric fervor -- the Psalms often being the means of expression.

The history of these 150 Psalms is a story of all human experiences. The history has its beginning with the 90th Psalm, a prayer of Moses the man of God as he prays, ". . . and let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands; yea the work of our hands establish thou it" (ps. 90:17). Then comes David as represented by the great "Shepherd" Psalm (23). Later when the Israelites were led into captivity, a Hebrew poet wrote, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps on the willow in the midst thereof. . . . How shall we sing the Lord's song in a

strange land?" (Ps. 137:1, 2, 4).

As a result of such experiences these lyrics were born. Used by the early Christians as hymns of praise, they were taken as the beginning of the liturgy of the early organized churches which became known as the Roman Catholic Church. As the liturgy developed and became highly organized, these Psalms gradually became lost to the people. They became obscured by the Latin and the difficult music of the church. Within the church great music was being written by the leading composers, but such music was written for the clergy and their assistants and not for the people.

After being excluded from participation in the church music for so many years, the people received gladly the Protestant songs and Psalms written in their own language and set to simple melody. The spread of the Reformation owed much to the power of this congregational music to teach and to inspire.

In France, England, and Holland the Psalms became the chief medium of song for the "reformes." Many metrical versions of these Hebrew lyrics were made in the vernacular. The English composers of the transition period often chose the Psalms in finding texts suitable to the new style demanded in the music of the new Church of England. In Germany, Luther turned to varied sources for

his hymn texts, but often chose from the Psalms. His greatest hymn, "Ein feste Burg," which became known as the "Reformation hymn," is a paraphrase of the 46th Psalm.

It remained for Bach to take Protestant music to its peak. The Lutheran Chorales were the basis for many of Bach's works, but it is to be remembered that a goodly number of these Chorales were based on Psalms or Psalm-tunes.

After Bach no man arose to equal him in the realm of religious music, though many have turned to Biblical texts for their greatest works. The Psalms have continued to be a source of inspiration and praise, for their words are the words of men of feeling.

"Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord; praise ye the Lord" (Ps. 150:6).

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