

# Two unnoticed pieces of medieval polyphony

DAVID HILEY

The two pieces introduced and briefly discussed in this article have so far remained unnoticed because of the manner of their notation. In each case pieces of two-voice polyphony were notated with the two voices separate, instead of in the score notation which has been usual since, roughly, the second half of the twelfth century. In the one case, the sequence *Magnus deus in universa terra* in a manuscript from Marchiennes of the fourteenth century, a second voice was added at the back of the book in which the usual melody had already been recorded. In the other case, the song *Ad honorem regis summi* in the so-called Codex Calixtinus, the two voices are notated successively, verse 1 of the text being given with the first voice, verse 2 with the second voice.

Both these two methods of notation are by now well known.<sup>1</sup> The musical style of the pieces is likewise unremarkable. I have therefore felt justified in presenting simply a transcription, an account of the manuscript source, and a short comment on the music.

Neither of these discoveries is particularly spectacular; but they create the expectation that other such discoveries may not be uncommon in the future, adding welcome detail to our knowledge of the humbler types of polyphony practised in the Middle Ages.

## I – Douai, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 114, f. 113v: sequence for St Stephen *Magnus deus in universa terra*

The manuscript Douai 114 is a large and handsome gradual of the fourteenth century from Marchiennes, the convent of Benedictine nuns between Douai and Valenciennes in northern France. It is but one of several Marchiennes graduals

<sup>1</sup> The best known source with a collection of organal voices notated without the corresponding *vox principalis* is manuscript 473 of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, from Winchester; see Andreas Holschneider, *Die Organa von Winchester* (Hildesheim, 1967). Other sources, with far fewer *voces organales*, survive from Chartres, Fleury and St Maur-des-Fossés; see Marion S. Gushee, 'Romanesque Polyphony: A Study of the Fragmentary Sources', Ph. D dissertation, Yale University (1965), UMI 65–9676, and an article by Wulf Arlt in the forthcoming collection of centennial essays for the Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society.

now in the Douai library, manuscript 113 being of the fifteenth century, manuscripts 108 to 112 of the sixteenth.<sup>2</sup> The manuscript is notated in large Messine neumes (or Lorraine, or Laon neumes, as some writers prefer).<sup>3</sup> The gradual proper extends from fols. 1–55 and 64–88. In the middle come melodies for the Ordinary of Mass. On f. 56r the Kyrie ‘de angelis’ was added in the fifteenth century. On fols. 56v–8r melodies for the Gloria and *Ite missa est* were entered in square notation, while the main kyriale, with Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus and Agnus Dei melodies, occupies fols. 58v–63r. The last principal part of the manuscript contains the sequentiary, on fols. 89–96, 72bis–96bis, 97–113. It contains a mixture, typical for its time, of old compositions with prose texts and the newer, rhymed pieces. From f. 113v to the end of the manuscript, f. 120, various additional pieces were entered in a variety of hands of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The first of these additions is a second voice for the sequence *Magnus deus in universa terra*. The sequence is entered with its usual melody in its proper liturgical position on f. 91v, and is indeed the standard choice in this area of Europe for the feast of St Stephen. The new voice is given only as far as the verse ‘Atque . . . dextera’. Example 1 gives the two voices, with the traditional melody on the lower staff. (In verse 3b the two are slightly out of alignment at ‘verissima’.)

Why should this particular sequence have a second voice? The reason may lie in the particular veneration for St Stephen detectable in a couple of liturgical books from Marchiennes from the late thirteenth century onward.<sup>4</sup> It concerns not so much the main feast of 26 December but that of the Finding (Invention) of St Stephen’s mortal remains, commemorated on 3 August. Perhaps the convent acquired a relic of the saint. Among the additions to Douai 114 is not only the second voice for *Magnus deus* but also, on f. 115v, the sequence *Unus deus amor et una concordia*, rubricated for the feast of the Invention. This sequence, one of the older type with prose text, was moderately well known in northern France, but at this relatively late date it is odd to find its being preferred here to a more modern composition.

On first encountering a piece notated in this fashion, with added voice so far removed from the principal melody, one is naturally curious to learn whether its

The principal sources of polyphony in successive notation (a term aptly coined by Sarah Fuller) are from Aquitaine in the twelfth century; see Sarah Fuller, ‘Hidden Polyphony: A Reappraisal’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 24 (1971), pp. 169–92.

<sup>2</sup> *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France (Ancienne série)*, VI. Douai (Paris, 1878), pp. 108–15. Douai 114 was included in the survey of graduals and noted missals conducted by the monks of Solesmes, *Le Graduel Romain*, under the siglum RIC 2. (The siglum is derived from the name of the founder and abbess of Marchiennes, St Rictrudis, whose *Vita* was written by Hucbald of St Amand.) See the brief description in *Les Sources (Le Graduel Romain II, Solesmes, 1957)*, p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> Facsimile in *Paléographie Musicale*, vol. 3, p1. 177A.

<sup>4</sup> See the information on the breviaries Douai 136 and 143 (both later thirteenth century) in Victor Leroquais, *Les Bréviaires manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1934), 2, pp. 47 and 53.

musical style betrays affinities with that of the Winchester polyphony and other examples from the period when this type of notation was current, the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. But *Magnus deus in universa terra* is clearly not in the older style. It corresponds rather to the examples of *contrapunctus* found in treatises by such writers as Ugolino of Orvieto (c. 1430), or the pieces of non-mensural liturgical polyphony found all over Europe in the later Middle Ages.<sup>5</sup>

There can therefore be no question of the scribe's having referred to an old source with a collection of *voces organales*. He could have added the second voice on the same staff as the main melody, on f. 91v, but instead he has simply used free space at the end of his manuscript.

## II – Santiago de Compostela, Jacobus, f. 190v: song *Ad honorem regis summi* by Aymericus Picardi presbyter de Partiniaco

As is well known, at the end of the famous Codex Calixtinus, as it is usually called, or 'Jacobus', as one can read in the manuscript itself, is a supplement of polyphonic music to complement the liturgical monophonic music earlier in the manuscript.<sup>6</sup> After the last two-voice composition in score notation, a *Benedicamus domino* attributed to Droardus Trecensis, comes what looks like a monophonic song by Aimeric Picard, *Ad honorem regis summi*. The text consists of two strophes of four lines each, and music is apparently provided for the first strophe. In fact the music for the first two lines combines with the music for the other two lines to make two-part polyphony. The clue to this discovery is the fact that the second part lies well above the first. At the end of the first two lines there is a cadence on F, while line 3 begins on high g. The obvious difference in tessitura is somewhat anomalous in a monophonic song of this length, whereas the two halves are immediately convincing as separate polyphonic voices.

The piece is almost exclusively syllabic, plainer than any other polyphonic item in 'Jacobus'. It is most closely comparable with some of the simpler songs in the contemporary Aquitanian sources, for example *Congaudet hodie* (in London, British Library, Add. 36881), or the syllabic parts of *Annus novus in gaudio* (Paris,

<sup>5</sup> The chromaticisms suggest comparison with the examples cited by Klaus-Jürgen Sachs, *Der Contrapunctus im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert*, Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft 12 (Wiesbaden, 1974), pp. 107–8: from Ugolino (edited in *Corpus Scriptorum de Musica*, 7/ii, Exx. 128–9) and from another Italian source of the fifteenth century (edited in Sachs, *ibid.*, p. 108).

<sup>6</sup> Facsimiles in Walter Muir Whitehill, J. Carró Garcia and Germán Prado, *Liber Sancti Jacobi. Codex Calixtinus*, 3 vols. (Santiago de Compostela, 1944); and José López-Calo, S.J., *La Musica Medieval en Galicia* (La Coruña, 1982).

Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds lat. 1139), *Mira lege miro modo* (*ibid.*), and several others.<sup>7</sup>

The way in which the text of the second (unnotated) strophe is set out is puzzling. Each of the four lines ends with the syllable '-it'. In each case the scribe has separated the final 't' from the rest of the word by a long gap, as if the musical setting of the final syllable were melismatic. (In fact for the first of the four lines, the 't' is given twice: 'posuit.....t'.)

*University of Regensburg*

<sup>7</sup> Facsimiles of the Aquitanian and related sources have been published by Bryan Gillingham, *Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds latin 1139* (Publications of Medieval Manuscripts, 14; Ottawa, 1987); *Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds latin 3719* (Publications of Medieval Manuscripts, 15; Ottawa, 1987); *Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds latin 3549 and London, B. L., Add. 36,881* (Publications of Medieval Manuscripts, 16; Ottawa, 1987); and transcriptions by Sarah A. Fuller, 'Aquitanian Polyphony of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', Ph.D dissertation, University of California at Berkeley (1969), UMI 70-13051.

Ex. 1 Sequence *Magnus deus in universa terra* (Douai, Bibliothèque Municipale, fols. 91v, 113v)

A  
Mag - nus de - us in u - ni - ver - sa ter - ra

1a  
Mag-na sunt e - ius u - bi-que om-ni - a in ce - lo at - que in ter-ra o-pe-ra  
b

1b  
Qui est rex re-gum do - mi-nus om-ni - um a pa-tre ge - ni-tus an - te se-cu-la  
b

2a  
Cu-ius ca - ri - tas ve - ra ce - lo sub-le - vat Ste-phanum de ter-ra

2b  
At-que per - henni vi - ta or - nat can-di - da dig-ni-ter co-ro - na  
b b

The image shows a musical score for a medieval sequence. It consists of five systems of music, each with a vocal line and a lute line. The vocal lines are labeled A, 1a, 1b, 2a, and 2b. The lute lines are indicated by a 'b' (basso continuo) below the vocal line. The lyrics are written below the vocal lines. The music is in a medieval style, with square notes and a simple rhythmic structure. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

3a Plenus et - e - nim Ste-pha-nus de - i - ta - te at - que gra - ci - a

3b Magna da - bat pro-di - gi - a do - cens ve - ris - si - ma dog - ma - ta

4a Cum au-tem pre-di - ca - ret iam pre-sen-ti - a

4b Nos-tre re - dempti - o - nis no - va gau - di - a

5a In - ten-tus in su - per - na ce - li pa - tet ia - nu - a  
5b Di - xit-que cir - cum - stan - ti ple - be vo - ce pub - li - ca

6a Sa - cra ple - nus gra - ti - a

6b

Ec - ce de - i vi - de - o am - mi - ra - bi - lem glo - ri - am

6c

Cla - ri - ta - te ful - gi - dam

6d

At - que Ihe - sum stan - tem in vir - tu - tis de - i dex - te - ra

Ex. 2 Aymericus Picardi, *Ad honorem regis summi* (Santiago de Compostela, Jacobus, f. 190v)

Ad ho - no - rem re - gis sum - mi qui con - di - dit om - ni - a  
De quo gau - dent ce - li ci - ves in su - per - na cu - ri - a

Ve - ne - ran - tes iu - bi - le - mus Ia - co - bi mag - na - li - a.  
Cu - ius fac - ta glo - ri - o - sa me - mi - nit ec - cle - si - a.

Supra mare Galilee	omnia proposuit	t
Viso rege ad mundana	redire non volui	t
Set post illum se vocantem	pergere disposui	t
Et precepta eius sacra	predicare studui	t