Chapter 6

The musical universe: microcosm and macrocosm

So far, this thesis has examined what might broadly be described as the theological and political discussions of music, and the sources that funded those ideas, such as the Bible, the early church and the practice of sister reformed churches in continental Europe. However, early modern Englishmen were also heirs to a larger inheritance of broader concepts less easily described as theological, but which impacted on understandings of the nature of church music to an equally great extent. This chapter will examine some of these broader philosophical, scientific and physiological notions about the nature of the world and the individual, and the role of music in both reflecting and influencing those natures. This will elucidate a crucial background of allusive and unstated modes of thought in the period under examination, and place the almost universal consent on the power of music on the individual in its fullest context. By drawing out a number of central themes, it will become clear that these themes had achieved the status of commonplaces in discussion of music, and also that such patterns of thought cut across categories of 'Laudian' or 'Puritan'.

Music and the Cosmos

Of primary importance was the Greek concept, descended from Pythagoras, of the essential *harmonia* of extant things. This form of philosophical monism saw all existence as unitary, and existence as the resolution of apparent but illusory contradictions. Through the exercise of *theoria* (contemplation), the philosopher was able to discover the web of connections and relations between all existence, and this was expressed in mathematical and musical terminology.[1] A crucial concept was that of a "world soul, itself musically and mathematically constructed, which descended from God

[1] Routley, *The Church and Music* : p.18.

and infused the universe"[2]. The *Timaeus* had referred to a universe ordered around the mathematical ratios of the octave, fifth and fourth intervals, a central Pythagorean notion, and the *Republic* contained a theory of the "harmony of the spheres", where each of the planets emitted a 'sound' which combined into one vast concord, presided over by Apollo. Ideas loosely connected to and derived from these central Greek tenets were to prove themselves perennial in medieval thought.[3]

St Augustine in his *De Musica* also investigated the principle of the universe as possessing *numerositas*, an untranslatable term describing those things which were *bene modulatus* [well measured].[4] The universe for Augustine was *bene modulatus*, and music the *ars bene modulari* [the art of measuring well]. Hence music was a means of representing and mediating reality to the listener. Elsewhere, he argued that 'music and number' were the keys to effectively opening up exegesis of the Scriptures. As Henry Chadwick put it:

> So the Augustinian tradition of Christian Platonism domesticated within the Church a substantial part of the old Platonic language about numbers and harmony as roads to the truth of the God who is.[5]

Probably the most effective communicator of this complex of ideas to the early modern mind was Boethius, in the *De institutione musica*.[6] As well as transmitting much of the numerical theory of Greek thought as dicussed by Ptolemy, Pythagoras and then Plato and Augustine, he also made a very significant and long-lasting division of reality into three types of *musica*. *Musica mundana* was the 'music', the sytem of ratios in harmony by which the universe was ordered and held together. *Musica humana* was that

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[2] Peter J. French, *John Dee: The World of an Elizabethan Magus* (London , 1972); p. 49. See also S.K. Heninger, *Pythagorean Cosmology and Renaissance Poetics* (San Marino, Huntington, 1974); John Hollander, *The Untuning of the Sky* (New York, Norton, 1970). On the manner in which such concepts changed as the seventeenth century progressed, see P. Gouk, *Music, science and natural magic in seventeenth century England* (New Haven , Yale UP, 1999).

[3] Warren Anderson, "Plato", in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, (London, 1980, 20 vols.) xiv 853 - 857; citation p. 856 (hereafter cited as *NGD*) p. 856: also see Henry Chadwick, *Boethius* p.78.

[4] James McKinnon renders *numerositas* as 'numberliness': *Music in Early Christian Literature*, p.4.

[5] Routley, *Church and Music* p. 55-68: Henry Chadwick, *Boethius: the consolations of music, logic, theology and philosophy* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1981) p. 80.

music which performed the same role in man, and *musica instrumentalis* was the actual audible music which existed at present, a pale imitation of the two other categories.

John Stevens has demonstrated the all-pervasive nature of this system of thought in medieval discussion of music. Jacques de Liege, in the *Speculum Musice* [c. 1260-1330] asserted that

> Music in the most general sense encompasses practically everything - God and his creatures spiritual and corporeal, heavenly and human, and also knowledge in its theoretical and practical aspects.[7]

Hence we can see the wide but yet elusively complex sphere of allusion and conceptual linkages with regard to music available to thinkers in the period under discussion. It is to the thought of the two most explicit of these thinkers that we must turn to open up some of the world of allusion involved: John Dee and Robert Fludd.[8]

The thought of Dee the Magus and Fludd the Paracelsan on music can be seen as an eclectic mix of a number of the themes we have encountered. Along with the Platonic world soul and the essential monist unity of the physical world with the First Cause, went the Boethian idea of the threefold division of *musica mundana*, *musica humana*, and *musica instrumentalis*. Crucial also was the conception of the relation of man to universe in terms of microcosm and macrocosm. As Frances Yates put it:

> the Macrocosm - Microcosm relationship, which the Paracelsan form of the hermetic tradition developed with enthusiasm, was fundamental to the thought of both Dee and Fludd ... In Fludd's writing, the theme takes a musical form and is worked out in terms of musical proportion.[9]

Fludd conceived of the universe as a 'harmonic cosmos of spheres and correspondences' in which all things were interdependent and resonant with each other. Therefore

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[6] Chadwick, *Boethius* pp.81-94.

[7] John Stevens, *Words and Music in the Middle Ages; Song, Narrative, Dance and Drama, 1050 - 1350* (Cambridge, CUP 1986) p.375.

[8] Peter J. French, *John Dee: the world of an Elizabethan Magus* (London, 1972) pp.137-41. F.A. Yates, *Theatre of the World* (London; Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969); Peter J. Ammann, 'The Musical Theory and Philosophy of Robert Fludd' *J. Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 30 (1967) 198 – 227.

[9] *Theatre of the World* p. 43.

> as one string moves another tuned to the same or a consonant note, so the jewels which are replete with the nature of the Sun, may be moved by the sound or the voice of man, if he knows the true sound of Apollo, that is to say of the Sun.

Hence Man could, in a sense, be capable of controlling the universe in its entirety, if he only mastered how. However Fludd is equally clear that this is not yet a possibility. Present music, the *musica instrumentalis* is but a pale reflection of the truer fundamental music, *humana* and *mundana*. This music had been lost, and must be rediscovered, "for through it man may recognise himself and thus finally attain a mystical knowledge of God."[10] The root and epicentre of this scheme for Fludd is of course God, the "primordial unison" from which all the other musical intervals, octaves, fifths and fourths on which Fludd's scheme is based are derived. God

> the monad of monads, the unity above all units, intoned to the world that sacrosanct, mystical and ineffable primordial sound by whose unisonous and uniform pulsation, touch and afflatus the world and its creatures were endowed with all the various concordant forms by which they might exist and live.

God, the basic unison on which all the harmony was formed, is the "form and the soul of the entire harmony of macrocosm and microcosm."[11] Furthermore, the unity was in fact bound together in a Trinitarian scheme - the Ternary within the primordial Unity was reflected in Fludd's threefold division of the universe and the threefold consonances of octave, fifth and fourth.

Peter J. Ammann has argued that Fludd's conception of God as the arch musician and the world as his instrument, and his harmonies of the planets, were by no means new, owing a major debt to Marsilio Ficino, Francesco Giorgi and Cornelius Agrippa.[12] It is of course possible to see Boethian and older Greek ideas present as well, albeit set within an additional mystical context. It remains now to trace some of these ideas in other thinkers

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[10] Ammann, 'Fludd' pp. 198 - 99: the desire to recover a lost pristine form of music was an enduring one - the Camerata in Florence sought an ideal form of Greek monody, so that the "divine marriage of music and drama would be consummated to produce the Greek ideal of Platonic aesthetics", Julius Portnoy, *The Philosopher and Music* (New York, 1954); p. 128; see also the extracts in Oliver Strunk (ed.), *Source Readings in Music History*: on the Pleiade in France, see article on de Baif, *NGD*, ii, p. 34; also F.A. Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Centuries* (London, 1947): on Sir Philip Sidney and the Areopagitica, see French, *John Dee*, pp. 132 - 8; also J. Buxton, *Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance* (London, 1954).

[11] Ammann, *Fludd* p. 207.

of the period, and to explore how widespread such concepts were. John Case, the Oxford-based philosopher of music, seems to have maintained some similar ideas in his *Apologia musices,* a work which has been described as the 'definitive discussion of musical theory in Elizabethan England.'[13] In Chapter 1, *The Praise and Origin of Music (Musices Encomion et Origo),* Case argued that

> music is of divine origin, that it operates through harmony throughout the whole universe, and that its object is bodily repose, mental contemplation, the purgation of the passions, the establishment of morality, the conservation of virtue, the expiation of crime and the sweet union of all things in the First Cause.

Music was nothing less than the 'harmonious and concordant proportion of the whole universe.'[14] Charles Butler put forward a similar view, after Augustine, 'shewing that it [music] is the gift of God himself, and a Representation or Admonition of the Sweet Concent and Harmoni, which his wisdom has made in the Creation and Administration of the world.'[15]

It must be stressed that such ideas of the universe as harmonically composed were not confined to the more eccentric thinkers such as Fludd. Few writers made such an explicit theoretical and mathematical connection, but very many writers made statements on a similar level of generality to that by Humphrey Sydenham.

> And indeed the whole course of nature is but a Harmony; the order of superiour and inferior things, a melodious Consort; Heaven and Earth, the great Diapason; both Churches, a double Quire of Hosannahs and Halleluiahs: .... saith the loftie Nazianzene; the world is the great Trumpeter of Divine Glory .....All creatures, men especially, being certaine luculent Songs or Poems, in which divine praises are resounded. Nay some of the Fathers have call'd Christ himselfe a Song... the man of righteousness is a most beautifull Hymne or Song, and so is his Spouse a Song too, and the love betweene both, Canticum canticorum, a Song of Songs, there being such a Harmony betweene God and

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[12] Ibid., pp. 219-223.

[13] (Oxford, 1588): J.W. Binns, "John Case and the `Praise of Musicke`", *Music and Letters* 55 (1974) 444 - 453; p. 447.

[14] Binns, *John Case* p.447; see also John Caldwell "Music in the faculty of arts" in J.K.McConica (ed.), *A History of the University of Oxford; vol. 3; The Collegiate University* (Oxford, OUP, 1986); pp. 211- 12; for the attribution of *The Praise of Musicke* to Case, see Howard B. Barnett, "John Case - An Elizabethan Music Scholar", *M&L* 50 (1969) 252 - 66: see also *NGD* III p. 852.

[15] *Principles of Musick* , Preface (no pagination).

> the World, and the World and the rest of his creatures there, that the one is like a well set Antheme; the other as so many Singers and Choristers to voice and chant it:[16]

Here we have a raft of different concepts all falling breathlessly over themselves in Sydenham's prose. The whole history of creation and redemption is expressed in musical terms, which have both a Platonic overtone, but are also Christianised by the use of the allegorical references from the Old Testament. Godfrey Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester, also explored the notion of the 'praise' of the natural world and creatures to their creator:

> O excellent Artist, that could so sweetly tune nature to make such a melody, where is such a concent and agreement on every side; the parts to the whole, the whole to the parts, each to it selfe, all to the Maker! O excellent melody! here is neither sound, nor voice to the eare, yet a most sweet and delectable harmony, a musicke of nature.[17]

These and similar concepts can be found in the poetry of the period.[18] For John Milton, the coming of Christ restored a mystical lost harmony disrupted since the time of creation, the fulfilment of Nature's reign:

> Such Music (as ` tis said)
> Before was never made
> But when of old the sons of morning sang
> While the Creator great
> His Constellations set
> And the well ballanc`t world on hinges hung
> And cast the dark foundations deep
> And bid the weltering waves their oozy channels keep[19]

Now that the harmony of creation has been restored by Christ, it is right for all Creation, planets and all, to join with the consort of angels, those Cherubim and Seraphim to be found in "glittering ranks", "harping in loud and solemn quire" in praise of the Creator. The *Benedicite* canticle at Morning prayer (based on Psalm 148) exhorts all the works of

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[16] 'The Well Tuned Cymbal' *:* pp. 17-18.

[17] *The Creatures praysing God or the Religion of Dumb Creatures* (London, 1622) p.22.

[18] For the broader connections between poetry and music, and the harmonious nature of both, see: Diane Kelsey McColley, *Music and Poetry*: Bruce Pattison, *Music and Poetry of the English Renaisssance* (2nd edition, London, Methuen, 1970, first published 1948) pp. 20-38, 61-75: John Stevens, *Words and Music* and also his *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court* (Cambridge, CUP, 1979) pp.33-37.

[19] 'The Hymn', Stanza 12: B.A.Wright (ed.), *John Milton: Poems* (London, Everyman, 1976) p. 8.

the Lord, including the "sun and moon" and "stars of heaven" to "bless ye the Lord."[20] Now Milton has one great cosmic symphony of praise:

> Ring out ye Crystal sphears
> Once bless our human ears
> (If ye have power to touch our senses so)
> And let your silver chime
> Move in melodious chime
> And let the Base of Heav`ns deep Organ blow
> And with your ninefold harmonies
> Make up full consort to th`Angelic symphony[21]

In this stanza Milton has at once given almost a classic exposition of the Platonic doctrine of the harmony of the spheres, and yet one firmly articulated in a Christianised fashion. George Wither uses many of the same strands in his sonnet that precedes the *Preparation to the Psalter* of 1619. It is an exhortation to all of creation to:

> O come, o come with sacred layes
> Let us sound Th`Almightie`s praise

This is to be sounded with 'harpe and violl meete' and man is to'let not tongue nor string be mute.' The chorus is to include the inanimate as well as the animate works of the Lord - 'Sunne, Moone and Starres' are to 'augment the Quire' as well as the birds and creatures of the sea. Finally the following stanza shows us the whole symphony of praise, in the form of a choir of distinct voices, to the Almighty:

> From the Earth's vast hollow wombe
> Musick's deepest Base shall come
> Seas and Flouds, from Shore to Shore
> Shall the Counter Tenor roar
> To this consort (when we sing)
> Whistling Winds, your descant bring
> Which may beare the sound above
> Where the Orb of Fire doth move
> And so climbe, from Spheare to Spheare
> Till our song th`Almightie heare[22]

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[20] John E. Booty (ed.), *The Book of Common Prayer, 1559* (Virginia, 1976); p. 53.

[21] Stanza 13: Wright (ed.), *John Milton: Poems* p. 8.

[22] 'A Sonnet wherein all creatures are provoked to join together, in prayse of their almightie creator' affixed to the beginning of *A Preparation to the Psalter*.

The parallels with this tenth century sequence are striking:

> Let us all now sing the melody Alleluias
> 2a Let this people resound Alleluia in praise of the eternal king
> 2b At last the heavenly choirs sing this on high, Alleluia
> …..
> 4a Let the passage of the clouds, the flight of the winds, the flashing of lightning and the rumbling of thunder sweetly sound together Alleluia
> 4b Waters and waves, rain and storms, tempest and calm, heat, cold, snow and frosts, woodlands and groves, let them all record Alleluia.[23]

This passage bears a number of similarities to one of Goodman's:

> To instance only in their Quier, or in their Church-musick, here you have a full, perfect, and compleate Quier; sufficient variety of voices; the little chirping birds, the Wren and the Robin, they sing a treble; the Gold-finch, the Nightingale, they joyne in the meane; the Black-bird, the Thrush, they beare the tenour, while the four footed beasts, with their bleating and bellowing, they sing a base.[24]

We can therefore see the presence of a complex web of half-developed ideas from antiquity in the musical discourse of this period, many existing at the level of commonplace. It is worth noting the extent to which such conceits had reached the status of mere figures of speech. Sir Simonds d'Ewes, during the sitting of the Long Parliament, described the relationship of the two Houses of Parliament 'like two orbes doe move each within other in a setled course and harmonie'[25] Sir Edward Dering wrote to his wife in October 1641

> My happines is (for the greatest part of itt in this world) circuited in the same spheare with thine. Love and cheerefulnes are blessings invaluable; and if, perchance, some

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[23] Stevens, *Words and Music* p.394.

[24] *The Creatures praysing God* p.24. For Goodman, the creatures, like the church, have collects appropriate to the season, anthems and in many senses a complete liturgy: 'And what is more, beleeve it, they observe their canonicall houres, as if they were some religious order, they have their lauds, their Mattens, their Vespers, in effect, they have their Morning prayer, and their Evening song, for these are the speciall and the appointed times for their devotion; neither will I conceale that which I have often observed; sometimes one bird provokes another to sing, then me thinks I heare the Churches Antiphona's, one side of the Quier answering another, a custome which hath anciently beene brought into the Church, according to the patterne and president of the Seraphims [Isaiah 6]' p.25.

[25] Notestein (ed.), *Journal of Sir Simonds D'Ewes* p.373 (18th Feb 1641). Elsewhere, d'Ewes suggested that the two orbes of Parliament 'mooved … like the celestiall orbes with soe much harmonie as I should bee verie sorrie they should receive any checke heere' p.106 (3rd December 1640).

> excentricke motion interpose, all att last (as in the spheares) helpe to make up the harmony. So (I hope) with us, every motion shall mend the tune. [26]

It was also the case, as will be apparent from the use made of them by d'Ewes and Dering, that such concepts were equally familiar to Calvinist or Puritan thinkers as to the Paracelsan Fludd. Stephen Gosson, in one of the most renowned Puritan attacks on the theatre of Elizabeth's reign, and the excesses as he saw it of the music of his time, nonetheless believed that

> Pythagoras bequeathes them a Clookebagge, and condemnes them for fooles, that judge Musicke by sound and eare. If ye will bee good Scholars, and profite well in the Arte of Musicke, shutte your Fidels in their cases, and looke up to heaven; the order of the Spheres, the unfallible motion of the Planets, the juste course of the yeere, and varietie of seasons, the concorde of the Elementes and their qualyties, ... concurring togeather to the constitution of earthly bodies and sustenance of every creature.[27]

The work of John Hollander has suggested that the trajectory of this particular complex of ideas should not be seen as developing along theological lines, but rather in terms of a general degeneration of such terms into easy metaphor, emptied of their metaphysical meanings, as the seventeenth century progressed. However, Hollander dates the decline to the latter half of the century. For the purposes of this thesis, these ideas still possessed great explanatory power.[28]

A specific mode in which the discourse of the harmonic universe was deployed was in political discourse, and in particular in the 'Platonic politics' of the cult of Charles and Queen Henrietta Maria, as discussed by Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong.[29] In the court masques of the Personal Rule, the king was both the audience and the subject, in the same philosophical universe of order, balance and harmony inhabited by Ficino and

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[26] L.B. Larking (ed.), *Proceedings principally in the county of Kent in connection with the Parliaments called in 1640* (London, Camden Society, 1862 vol 80) pp.56-7 (21st October 1641).

[27] *The Schoole of Abuse, conteining a pleasant invective against Poets, Pipers Plaiers, Iesters and such like Caterpillers of a Commonwealth* (London, 1579) in Edward Arber (ed.), *English Reprints* (Birmingham, 1868) p.26.

[28] *The Untuning of the Sky* pp.379-83.

[29] *Inigo Jones. The Theatre of the Stuart Court* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1973) pp.49-63. See also Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion; Queen Henrietta Maria and court entertainments* (Cambridge, CUP, 1989) ch.5: Malcolm Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England* (Philadelphia, Un. of Pennsylvania Press, 1987) pp.217-28.

Fludd. The king and his court, as both the actors and the acted-to, in a sense both represented and executed the political vision embodied in the masque, in the very space usually used for the business of politics. In the phrase of Kevin Sharpe, 'The court masque then is a political event; it is kingship in action.'[30]

The well ordered music of the masques was part of this perfect, timeless existence. In *Tempe Restored*, acted by the Queen on Shrove Tuesday 1632, the highest of the spheres is made to say:

> When Divine Beauty will vouchsafe to stoop
> And move to earth, 'tis fit the heavenly spheres
> Should be her music, and the starry troupe
> Shine round about her like the crown she wears
>
> The music that ye hear is dull
> But that ye see is sweet indeed,
> In every part exact and full
> From which there doth an air proceed
> On which th' Intelligences feed
> Where fair and good, inseparably conjoined
> Create a Cupid that is never blind.[31]

For Jones 'corporeal beauty consisting in symmetry, colour, and certain unexpressable graces .. may draw us to the contemplation of the beauty of the soul, unto which it hath analogy.'[32]

Music certainly played a key part in the sculpture by Francois Dieussart built to accompany the opening of Henrietta Maria's Somerset House chapel in 1636. This extraordinary device, made to frame the sacrament, and standing some forty feet high, featured seraphim 'to the number of two hundred, some adoring the Holy Sacrament, others singing and playing on all sorts of musical instruments'. Its use of perspective deceived 'by an ingenious artifice, not only the eye, but also the ear, all conceiving that, instead of the music, they heard the melody of the angels, singing and playing upon

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[30] Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment. The politics of literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge 1987) p.179.

[31] The whole text is given by Orgel and Strong, *Inigo Jones* ii.480-3. On the use of music in the Stuart masque, see Peter Walls, *Music in the English Courtly Masque, 1604-1640* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1996) pp.10-12, 210-218.

[32] *Ibid*. p.62

musical instruments.'[33] Music then played a key role in the idealised representation of the political universe.

The Harmonic Soul

One of the most common notions to be absorbed into Renaissance philosophy and theology was that of the soul itself being in some sense harmonic, and hence 'musical'. This was an idea connected intimately with, and logically proceeding from, the concept of the harmonic cosmos and the Boethian idea of *musica humana*. Aristotle, as transmitted by Plutarch, argued that "the discernment of the divine harmony by the bodily senses of sight and hearing is possible because this harmony enters into the very constitution of the human body."[34] Boethius, following Plato, argued:

> So we may conclude that Plato was right when he said that the soul of the universe is informed by a harmony essentially musical. Compare the harmony and compactness of the human body with that harmony and compactness which delights us in music, and you will see that the harmonies of music and of humanity are one and the same in their characteristic similitude[35]

The harmonic nature of humanity was a counterpart of the essential nature of the universe. In a similar vein, Humphrey Sydenham argued (with Augustine) that there was:

> a naturall correspondence and relation between our diviner parts and harmony, for such in the nature of our soules; that Musicke hath a proportionable Sympathie with them, as our tastes have with such varieties of dainties...[and odours] And Saint Augustine this way, was inforc'd to acknowledge, that Ones affectus spiritus nostris; all the affections of our Spirit, by reason of the variousness and multiplicity of them, had proper manner and wayes in Voyce and Song , which he knew not well by what secret familiarity or mysterious custome they were excited and rouz'd up.[36]

As the essayist Owen Feltham put it, music was essentially transitory, but nonetheless had a powerful kinship with the spirit: music,

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[33] The account is by Fr Cyprien de Gamaches; T.Birch (ed.) *The Court and Times of Charles I* (2 vols, London 1848) ii.311-2.

[34] Pseud. Plutarch, *De musica*: Chadwick, *Boethius* p.83.

[35] Routley, *Church and Music* p. 235-6.

> being but a sound, it onely workes on the mind for the present; and leaves it not reclaimed, but rapt for a while; and then it returnes, forgetting the onely eare deepe warbles. It is but wanton'd Ayre, and the titillation of that spirited element .... The advantage it gaines upon the Mind is in respect of the neerenesse it hath to the Spirits composure, which being Aethereall and harmonious, must needs delight in that which is like them. [37]

The Harmonic Man

A logical progression from this concept of the harmonic soul was the linkage of a well-ordered consonance of the external with a similarly balanced and concordant inner state. The physician Thomas Browne in the *Religio Medici* argued that "Whatsoever is harmonically composed delights in harmony, which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all church musick". This was because, for Browne, the soul was "harmonical, and hath its nearest sympathy unto musicke"[38] George Wither testified that

> Yea, the inarticulate sounds have, in themselves, I know not what secret power, to move the very affections of mens soules, according to the Quality of their Straines. I can speak but for my selfe: yet I beleeve, most men feel the same working

From his own experience, Wither knew

> that there is a power in it, even to worke things beyond common beliefe, if the right Straines be lighted on: for some there be that deject the mind, and open in the heart, passages, and apprehensions of infinite sorrowes. Some raise the spirits to that excessive height, as the soule is almost ravished, and in an extasie.

After discussing a number of classical incidents of music curing sickness and calming fever, he concluded that 'this is by reason of an excellent Sympathie, or agreement, which is betweene Musicke, and the humane nature.'[39]

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[36] *The Well-Tuned Cymbal* p.20.

[37] *Resolves, Divine, Morall, Politicall* (the first centurie, 2nd edn.) (London, 1628) p. 254: *DNB* 'Felltham' xviii.303-4. For a discussion of theories of hearing, and the role of the neo-Platonic doctrine of sympathy in its operation, see Penelope Gouk, 'Some English theories of hearing in the seventeenth century: Before and after Descartes' in Gouk, C. Burnett and M. Fend (eds), *The Second Sense: Studies in Hearing and Musical Judgement from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century* (London, Warburg Institute, 1991) pp. 95-114.

[38] *Religio Medici* (1643) in Simon Wilkin (ed.) *Works* (London, 1852, 3 vols.) vol. 2, p. 439 – 440.

[39] *A Preparation to the Psalter* pp.81-2.

Plato had conceived of music as mimetic of the character of an individual - the differing modes of music were "imitations of the characters possessed by the better and the worse sort of man" as he put it in the *Laws.* Hence the wrong kind of mode could reflect the state of a man, and yet also affect it, making a brave man cowardly, and vice versa.[40] As he also argued in the *Laches,* the inward and outward man were intrinsically linked:

> When I hear a man discussing virtue, or any kind of wisdom, one who is truly a man and worthy of his argument, I am highly delighted. I take the speaker and his speech together, and observe how they consort and harmonise together. Such a man is exactly what I understand as 'musical' - he has tuned himself with the finest harmonies, not that of a lyre or other instrument of amusement, but has made a true concord of his own life between his words and his deeds, not in the Ionian nor in the Phrygian, nor in the Lydian, but simply in the Dorian mode, whch is the one and only Hellenic harmony."[41]

As one commentator has put it, for Plato: 'musical and personal *harmonia* are collateral species of the *harmonia* of reality.'[42]

A common metaphor was the person being well-tuned as the strings of an instrument. The writer of the *Praise of Musicke* argued that

> For both to praise God upon well sounding cymbals and upon the harp and psalterity of ten strings, is a note and signification that the partes of our body are so conjoined and linked together as be the stringes.[43]

Henry Peacham asserted, after an Italian proverb, that the man who did not love music, was in some sense 'ill-disposed' - we might rephrase this as 'badly-tuned':

> I know there are many ..... of such disproportioned spirits that they avoid her [music's] company ...as with a rose not long since, a great lady' s cheek in England, their ears are ready to blister at the tenderest touch thereof. I dare not pass so rash a censure of these as Pindar doth, or the Italian, having fitted a proverb to the same effect, "Whom God loves not, that man loves not music"; but I am verily persuaded they are by nature very ill disposed and of such a brutish stupidity that scarce anything else that is good and savoreth of virtue is to be found in them.[44]

A familiar example of such thought comes from Shakespeare:

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[40] see Anderson, "Plato": p. 856.

[41] *Laches* 188 c-d : Routley, *Church and Music* p. 20-21.

[42] Routley, *Church and Music* p.21.

[43] p. 122-3.

[44] Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman:* Strunk, *Source Readings* p.331.

> The man that hath no music in himself, nor is moved by concord of sweet sounds, Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils. The motions of his spirit are dull as night, And his affections dark as Erebus. Let no such man be trusted.[45]

The metaphor of 'personal tuning' was often given a more specifically Christian rendering, in which the man set aright with his Maker through the sacrifice of Christ would literally be well tuned. Nicholas Breton's *The Soules Harmony* proclaimed

> Oh tell the world, no world can tell
> How that Joy doth all joyes excell
> Where blessed soules set free from hell
> In Mercy do with Glory dwell
> And with the Saints and Angels sing
> In glory of their heavenly King.

In the light of the saving work of Christ, all nature should join in a chorus of perpetual praise

> Let Phoebus in his brightness stay
> And drive the darksome nights away
> And Virgins, Saints and Angels play
> While Martyres keepe high holy-day
> And all the host of heaven accord
> To sing in glory of the Lord.

Within that chorus, the individual could play his part, if he was able rightly to tune his heart:

> O that my heart could hit upon a strayne
> Would strike the musike of my soules desire
> O that my soule could finde that sacred vayne
> That sets the consort of the Angels Quiere.[46]

The writer of *The Holy Harmony*, subtitled *A Plea for the abolishing of Organs and other Musick out of the Protestant Churches of Great Britain*, could nonetheless use the conceit of a wrongly tuned soul. He draws a striking contrast between the state of the primitive church and the Church of England:

> I dare avouch the Primitive times sent up speaking devotions with a little noise or pomp, their holy melodie did not swell their cheeks, but their hearts with sighes, and eyes with

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[45] *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 5, Scene 1: ed. A. Quiller-Couch, J. Dover Wilson (Cambridge, University Press, 1969).

[46] London, 1602.

> teares, they fought not to give that a sound which was dumbe, for they knew they praies to him that was not deafe,

For this writer, the true state of being in tune was independent of the pomp and display. For men 'in publique to tie themselves to musicall ayres, is to publish himself a uselesse fiddle that can make no musick till he be put in tune.' [47]

The godly Edward Elton could also make use of the metaphor of tuning. In instructions to his congregation on the singing of psalms, published in 1615, he exhorted them to ensure that their minds should not wander while singing 'and looke that thine heart bee thus tuned and prepared, that thy singing may come from the inward affection of thine heart, as the chiefest instrument of that heavenly musicke.'[48]

It is at this point that we can see a certain conjuncture with the Laudian emphasis on the role of outward liturgical observance, and the positive effect the enforcement or encouragement of participation in the physical rites of the church had on the inner man. Participation in the physical actions of the liturgy was both significant of the inner state of the worshipper, and at the same time exerted a positive influence on that individual. Fulke Robarts asserted a

> correspondency and sympathy between the soul and the body ..... thinke not that I would reduce all God's worship, to bodily gestures; Neither imagine, that it belongeth to the soule alone: The Soule is the most excellent part, whose intentions recommend the expressions of the body unto God. But the body is a part, and an essential part of the man, and must beare his part with the soule in God's worship. If the body act alone, the doth God say, Man where is thy soule? If the soule alone take all upon it; then saith God, Man , where is , or what doth your body? Where are thine eyes, thy hands, thy knees, thy legges, to declare and accompany the lifting up, the humility and the confidence of thy soule? Thy whole man is to be imployed in my worship.[49]

Thomas Jackson, in a published work of 1625, stated explicitly the dual nature of worship:

> Worship or addoration, of what kind soever, hath (as both acknowledge) two degrees or parts: 1. The internal affection or serviceable submission, which is as the soul or life ; 2.

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[47] London, 1643, no pagination.

[48] Elton, *An exposition* p.52.

[49] *God's Holy House and Service* (London, 1639) : p.3.

> the external note or sign of such submission (as bowing, kneeling or supplication; these are the body or material part of worship or honour.[50]

As Peter Lake has put it:

> outward ceremony was a perfect vehicle for the expression of our inner reverence and awe before the divine presence... physical acts of reverence and piety...served *both to express and inculcate* various spiritual qualities or habits of mind.[51]

The power of music as a method of inculcating virtue is a theme to which we now turn.

The music of vice and virtue

Plato was very clear about the possible beneficial effects of music in education, and it was an extremely influential view:

> Education in music is the most sovereign because more than anything else rhythm and harmony find their way to the inmost soul, and take the strongest hold upon it, bringing with them and imparting a right mind if one is rightly trained, and otherwise the contrary.[52]

Henry Peacham lists a long succession of classical authorities to similar effect: music for Plato was "a divine and heavenly practice"; for Aristotle it was "the only disposer of the mind to virtue and goodness, wherefore he reckoneth it among those four principal exercises wherein he would have children instructed' ; for Tully, "a lasting treasure which rectifieth and ordereth our manners and allayeth the heat and fury of our anger &c.'[53]

However, it was crucial that only the correct modes were to be used in such music (for Plato, only the Phrygian and Dorian, depending on the context). If the wrong music

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[50] [no editor] *The Works of Thomas Jackson* (Oxford, University Press, 1844, 12 vols) iv. 227. The extract is from *A Treatise containing the Original of Unbelief, Misbelief or Mispersuasions concerning the verity, unity and attributes of the Deity* (London, 1625). On the Arminianism of Jackson, and Prynne's attack on him, see *DNB* xxix.107-8.

[51] Lake, 'Laudian style' pp.165-6: my italics.

[52] *Republic* III 410d: Routley, *Church and Music,* p. 29.

[53] Strunk, *Source Readings* p.333.

was used, the same power was employed but towards vice rather than virtue. If music was not regulated by the civic authorities very carefully, he predicted civil unrest and moral degradation:

> Whenever a magistrate holds a public sacrifice, the next thing is for a crowd of choirs - not merely one - to advance and take their stand, not at a decent distance from the altars, but often quite close to them: and then they let out a flood of blasphemy over the sacred offerings, exciting the souls of the audience with words, rhythms, and tunes most bewitching, and the man that succeeds at once in drawing most tears from the sacrificing city carries off the palm of victory. Must we not reject such a custom as this ?[54]

This fear of the power of music as an aid to vice can also be found among the Christian Fathers, St John Chrysostom in particular:

> Thus does the devil stealthily set fire to the city. It is not a matter of running up ladders and using petroleum or pitch or tow; he uses things far more pernicious. Lewd sights, base speech, degraded music, and songs full of all kinds of wickedness.[55]

These ideas retained great currency in medieval Europe. Boethius, perhaps the main conduit of Greek thought to the medieval west, agreed with Plato that

> The irresponsible mind delights in the irresponsible modes, and by frequent hearing of them is corrupted until it is finally destroyed. Conversely, the more spirited mind prefers the spirited modes, and by them is confirmed in its own character. That is why each musical mode is distinguished by the name of a nation, such as Lydian and Phrygian, Each mode is named after that nation to which it is especially appropriate. [. . .] He says, indeed, that nothing will be as certain to corrupt a community than the gradual weaning away of its members from sober and well-disciplined music.[56]

We see here a widespread acknowledgement of the power of music for both good and ill, and a particular fear of 'corrupt' music leading to license. Owen Feltham believed that the wrong type of music

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[54] *Laws* 800 c-d: Routley, *Church and Music* p. 27. Aristotle took a slightly different view to this: 'Plato in the Republic is wrong to allow only the Phrygian and Dorian modes, especially when he has disqualified the flute among instruments; for the Phrygian among the modes and the flute among the instruments have an identical moral force, being violently exciting and emotive ... We should lay down these three canons to guide our education - the moderate, the possible and the fitting.' *Politics* VIII vii. 9, 12 ff: Routley, *Church and Music* p. 33. However, the disagreement is not whether types of music had separate moral effects, but over the manner in which they did so.

[55] *De Poenitentia* VI (*PG* II.315): Routley, *Church and Music*, p.232.

[56] *De Musica* I.: Routley, *Church and Music,* p. 236.

> softens the mind; the curiosity of it, is fitter for Women than Men, and for Curtezans than Women [. . . .] But yet againe tis pity, that these should be so excellent, in that which hath such power to fascinate. It were well, Vice were barr'd of all her helpes of wooing . Many a minde hath beene angled unto ill, by the Eare [. . . .]For as the Notes are framed, it can draw, and incline the minde. Lively Tunes doe lighten the mind: Grave ones give it Melancholy. Lofty ones raise it, and advances it to above. [. . .] And I thinke he hath not a mind well temper'd whose zeale is not inflamed by a heavenly Anthem. So that indeed, Musicke is good, or bad, as the end to which it tendeth.[57]

The poet Sir Philip Sidney was quite explicit on the positive moral effects of music, along with the other sciences; poetry was able to

> lead and draw us to as high a perfection as our degenerate souls, made worse by their clayey lodgings, can be capable of [. . .] for some that thought this felicity was principally to be gotten by knowledge, and no knowledge to be so high and heavenly as acquaintance with the stars, gave themselves to Astronomy: others, persuading themselves to be demi - Gods, if they knew the cause of things, became natural and supernatural philosophers: some an admirable delight drew to Music: and some the certainty of demonstration to the Mathematics.[58]

Humphrey Sydenham neatly combined the Greek legend of the power of the music of Orpheus and Amphion, with the power of King David's psalms at a single stroke. David was

> ...let me adde the Divine Orpheus, and Amphion, one that made Woods and Beasts, and Mountaines; brutish, stony and blockish dispositions to dance after his Harpe; and sometimes to sing with it in a ... *Praise the Lord ye Mountaines and little Hills, Trees and all Cedars, Beasts and all Cattell, Psalm 148.*. Herein personating Christ himselfe , who was that Poeonius medicus (as Clemens Alexandrinus stiles him) the Spirituall Aesculapius; ... the Holy Inchanter of the sicke Soule, who first transform'd beasts into men, reduc'd Savagenes and Barbarisme into civilitie.[59]

Music and Medicine

Not only was music an inculcator of virtue, it could also have properties to soothe and heal body as well as soul. The connection between music and healing was one with a classical pedigree, and has attracted much scholarly attention in recent years. Penelope

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[57] *Resolves*: p.255.

[58] *An Apology for Poetry*; cited by French, *John Dee*., p.146.

Gouk has anatomised the concepts of the power of music therapy, flowing from the neo-Platonic cosmology of Ficino and Fludd that we have already encountered, and most influentially expressed in the work of Robert Burton and Thomas Wright.[60] Henry Peacham was clear that

> the exercise of music is a great lengthener of the life by stirring and reviving of the spirits, holding a secret sympathy with them; besides, the exercise of singing openeth the breast and pipes. It is an enemy to melancholy and dejection of the mind [. . .] Since it is a principal means of glorifying our merciful Creator, it heightens our devotion, it gives delight and ease to our travails, it expelleth sadness and heaviness of spirit, preserveth people in concord and amity, allayeth fierceness and anger, and lastly, is the best physic for many melancholy diseases.[61]

Sydenham described how music

> hath wrought both in expelling of evill spirits, and calling on of Good. *An evil Spirit troubles Saul, and with one touch of Davids Harpe hee is refresh'd , and the evill Spirit departed from him* I Sam 16 [62]

We can therefore see the commonplace status of concepts of the power of music to effect positive (or negative) moral and physical change.

Music as a vehicle of doctrine

A related component of this agency of music was its capability to disseminate the doctrine of the church. Augustine had explicitly likened the capability of music to

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[59] *The well tuned cymbal* p.4.

[60] Gouk, 'Music, melancholy and medical spirits in early modern thought' in Peregrine Horden (ed.), *Music as Medicine. The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2000) pp.173-194. The two key works are Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (London 1621) and Wright's *The Passions of the minde* (1604). On the power of music to cure melancholy, and in particular that melancholy known as 'lovesickness', see Linda Phyllis Austern, 'Musical Treatments for Lovesickness: the Early Modern Heritage' in Horden (ed.), *Music as Medicine* pp.213 – 245, and "No pill's gonna cure my ill': gender, erotic melancholy and traditions of musical healing in the modern world' in P. Gouk (ed.), *Musical Healing in Cultural Context* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2000) pp.113-136. On Ficino, see Angela Voss, 'Marsilio Ficino, the Second Orpheus' in Horden (ed.), *Music as Medicine* pp.154-172.

[61] Strunk, *Source Readings:* pp. 333, 337.

[62] *The well tuned cymbal* p. 18.

disseminate doctrine to a physician administering bitter medicine (with Basil) - the Holy Ghost had

> mingled the efficacy of singing with his doctrine: that whiles the eares are delighted with the sweetnesse of the verse, the profite of the worde of God might by little and little distill into their mindes.[63]

As the writer of the *Praise of Musicke* put it, with Augustine, 'by the delight [of music] the weake minde might be brought into a feeling of Religion.' It was by 'the melodie of pleasant songs that men may the more easily thereby be brought to a remorse of conscience and sorrowe for their sinnes.'[64]

Calvin was also acutely aware of the power of music to effect positive moral change - as he wrote in the *Epistle to the Reader* in the Psalter of 1542:

> we know from experience that song has great force and vigor to arouse and inflame the hearts of men to invoke and praise God with a more vehement and ardent zeal[65]

However, this feeling also provoked Calvin to restrict the texts used in the church to the Psalms, God's very own word, as he was also fearful of the same effectiveness of music if used wrongly:

> it is true that every evil word (as Saint Paul says) perverts good morals, but when the melody is with it, it pierces the heart that much more strongly and enters into it: just as through a funnel wine is poured into a container, so also venom and corruption are distilled to the depth of the heart by the melody

This was a potentiality with a long Platonic heritage - as one commentator has put it, this was 'pure Plato, even to the metaphor of the funnel.'[66]

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[63] Prologue to *Ennarationes in Psalmos*: *The Praise of Musicke* p.120: Basil, as cited above, argued: 'God mingles the sweetness of harmony with the divine Truth so that while we are enjoying the pleasures of hearing the music we may unconsciously gather up the benefits of the words which are being spoken. This is just what a wise doctor will do when, obliged to give bitter medicine to a sick man, he lines the medicine-cup with honey. The skilful harmonies of the psalms are worked out for our benefit, so that we, who are young in years or at any rate immature in character, may in the act of singing be in fact taming the uncouthness of our spirits.' Sermon I. 3 (*PG* xxxii.1135): Routley, *Church and Music* p. 228.

[64] pp. 98, 116.

[65] Garside, "The Origins of Calvin's Theology of Music, 1536 - 1543", *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* new series 69 (1979), part IV; p. 17: see also H. P. Clive, "The Calvinist Attitude to Music", *Bibliotheque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* (1957 - 8) 80 – 102.

This was a conjunction that was common currency amongst many of the writers we are considering. Richard Hooker stressed music's ability to 'conveye as it were by stealth the treasure of good things into man's minde.' The composer Thomas Morley also was confident of the positive devotional effects of music - 'it will draw the auditor (and specially the skilful auditor) into a devout and reverent kind of consideration of Him for whose praise it was made.' [67] In a letter to Peter Martyr of March 1560, John Jewel reported

> You may now see sometimes at Paul's cross, after the sermon, six thousand persons, old and young, of both sexes, all singing together, and praising God. This sadly annoys the mass- priests, and the devil. For they perceive that by these means the sacred discourses sink more deeply into the minds of men, and that their kingdom is weakened and shaken at every note.[68]

Humphrey Sydenham suggested that God's general providence was able to work through music on the soul:

> in Harmony when Men sound and heare, God striketh upon and stirreth the heart; so that, where corporall musicke is unable of it selfe to work such extraordinarie effects in our soules, God by his Ordinarie naturall providence produceth them.[69]

For Sydenham, music could lead to the

> addition of lustre & majesty to God's service as having power to elevate our devotions more swiftly towards Heaven, to depresse and trample under foot (for the present) all extravagant & corrupter thoughts, rowzing and relieving those.[70]

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[66] Ibid.; p. 23; the article referred to is H.G. Koenigsberger, "Music and Religion in Modern European History" in J.H. Elliott and Koenigsberger (eds), *The Diversity of History* (London, 1970), pp. 37 - 71 p. 44.

[67] W. Speed Hill (ed.), *The Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity, Book V (The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker)* (Harvard, 1977) p. 153: R. Alec Harman (ed.), *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (London, 1952), p. 293.

[68] J. Ayre (ed.), *The Works of John Jewel* (4 volumes , Cambridge, Parker, 1845-50) iv.1231. The letter is dated 5th March 1560.

[69] *The Well Tuned Cymbal* p. 21.

[70] Ibid., pp. 14 – 15.

Music in Sydenham's scheme was firmly subjugated to the essentially Word-orientated centre of the faith, secondary to meditation and the use of Reason

> And therefore doubtlesse in spir indeed,

However, he continues:

> this overtcurious Ayre that ere was set, is not half so harmonious as one groane of the Spirit) doe not always attend those deeper cogitations, but now and then intermingle their devotions with this sacred sensualitie, which as a pleasant path leadeth to the Fountaine of spirituall joy and endlesse comfort. [71]

It 'Puritanism' and 'social control' or the 'reformation of manners.'[72] Whilst acknowledging the complexities of motivation in attempts to restrict, eradicate or annexe forms of popular festivity, it is possible nonetheless to discern a fear among the godly of the power of popular festivity to induce licence and vice. The conclusion that Calvin was led to through his conviction of the enormous power of music to inculcate the text, as well as restricting those texts used in church to the psalms, was also to attempt to eradicate popular song altogether, and to put the psalms in its place.[73]

This is a concern also prevalent among English writers. Edward Elton, on the text from Ephesians 5 ('Bee not drunken with wine') drew a contrast between those who

> as drunkards when they are full of wine and strong drinke, then they use to belch and bellow out (according to the folly and rottenness of their stinking hearts) carnall and filthy songs and rimes; so looke that thou bee fulfilled with the Spirit, that from the

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[71] Ibid., p. 28.

[72] See, *inter alia*, K. Wrightson and D. Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525-1700* (London, 1979); the essay by Martin Ingram in Barry Reay (ed.), *Popular culture in seventeenth century England* (London, Routledge, 1988); Margaret Spufford, 'Puritanism and social control ?' in A.J. Fletcher and J. Stevenson (eds), *Order and disorder in early modern England* (Cambridge, CUP, 1985). More generally see David Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion* (Oxford, OUP 1985) and Ronald Hutton, *The rise and fall of merry England: the ritual year 1400-1700* (Oxford, OUP, 1994) pp.69-152.

[73] Charles Garside Jr, 'The Origins of Calvin's Theology of Music: 1536-43' *Trans. Amer. Phil. Soc*. NS 69 (1979) Part IV, 5 – 35; pp.24-26. Garside traces this development in Calvin's thought in part to the are capable of mixing our spirits powerfully and ardently) should be used in no other way except for sacred praise, prayer, teaching, and admonition .. so that absolutely no song and no instrumentalising may be sung or used except by and for Christian spiritual activities.' *Ibid*., p.25.

> motion of the Spirit, that you may sings song sutable to such a mover, containing matter spirituall and heavenly.[74]

William Prynne resoundingly condemned

> such Songs, such Poems as these abundantly condemned as [. . .] filthy and unchristian defilements, which contaminate the soules, effeminate the mindes, deprave the manners, of those that hear or sing them, exciting, enticeing them to lust; to whoredome, adulterey, prophanes, wantonness, scurrility, luxury, drunkenness, excesse; alternating their mindes from God, from grace and heavenly things : and Syren like, with their sweet enchantments entrap, ensnare, destroy men soules, proving bitter potions to them at the last, though they seem sweet and pleasant at the present.[75]

Several of the psalters published in England explicitly advertised themselves to the end of not only purifying church music, but also popular song. The 1563 Day psalter was "set forth for the encrease of vertue, and the abolyshing of other vayne and triflying ballades" and the Cosyn psalter of 1585 provided psalms "for the private use and comfort of the godlie, in place of many other Songs neither tending to the praise of God, nor conteining any thing fit for Christian eares."[76]

Perhaps the most well known of such expressions of intent was that of Myles Coverdale:

> O that men's lips were so opened, that their mouths might shew the praise of God ! Yea, would God that our minstrels had none other thing to play upon, neither our carters and ploughmen other thing to whistle upon, save psalms, hymns and such godly songs as David is occupied withal ! And if women, sitting at their rocks, or spinning at the wheels, had none other songs to pass their time withal, than such as Moses' sister, Glehana's wife, Debora, and Mary the mother of Christ, have sung before them, they should be better occupied than *hey nony nony, hey troly, loly* and such like phantasies..[77]

The explicit role attributed to dancing as a door to vice, and the association of music with dancing, are also constants in this literature. Stephen Gosson condemned the propensity of musicians to discard the traditions in which

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[74] *An Exposition* p.532.

[75] *Histriomastix* p.267.

[76] Boyd, *Elizabethan Music and Musical Criticism* p.53. William Daman's 1579 collection was likewise "to the use of the godly Christians for recreatyng them selves, in stede of fond and unseemely Ballades."

[77] G Pearson (ed.), *Remains of Myles Coverdale* (Oxford, 1846) pp.537-8 as cited by Hallett Smith, 'English Metrical Psalms in the Sixteenth Century and their Literary Significance' *HLQ* 9 (1945-6) 249-71; p.258.

they worked, and experiment with new styles. When the Sicilians, in the new colony of Sybaris

> forsooke the playnsong that they had learned of their auncestors in the Mountaynes, and practised long among theyr heardes, they founde out such descant in Sybaris instrumentes, that by daunsing and skipping they fel into lewdnesse of life.[78]

Prynne attacked those

> Fidlers and Musicians, who passe the time of their flourishing age in villanies, together with Dances and songs drawne forth in publike by wicked persons, enervate the virility of mens bodies with their lewd inticements, and soothing their souls with that public consort, doe breake thorow them, and stirre up Drunkards to the embracing of all filthy and unlawfull pleasure. Their eares are taken with the sweet harmony, but such as may pricke them on to a flagitious lubricity &c. [79]

Music and the Effeminate

This accusation of Prynne that such fiddlers and musicians 'enervate the virility of mens bodies' belongs to another important strain of rhetoric concerning the power of music, and one which connects very directly with the context of anti-popish paranoia discussed above. One of the series of interlocking binary polarities between Christ and Anti-Christ identified by Peter Lake was that between a sober, spiritual, masculine godliness and the carnal, sensual, bewitching power of popish ceremony, appealing to the 'heart of carnal man, bewitching it with great glistering of the painted harlot.'[80] It is possible to see various connections between this opposition, the conventional supposition of the carnal and therefore irrational nature of woman, the fear of some manifestations of court culture under Charles, and the nature of music and its effects.

The place of women in the theoretical models of the patriarchal family, community and state have come under detailed scrutiny in recent years, and particularly the debate over the particular nature of woman, as opposed to and contrasted with the

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[78] 'The Schoole of Abuse'; Arber (ed.), *English Reprints* (no.3, London, 1868) p.28.

[79] *Histriomastix* p.277.

[80] 'Anti-popery: the structure of a prejudice' p.75. The phrase is of W. Charke, *An answer to a Jesuit* (London, 1580).

man.[81] Woman, as the carnal, irrational half of the species to man's sober, rational, responsible opposite, was constitutionally incapable of constancy in love or thought. Her nature, and particularly her sexuality, were more likely to be an entrapment and snare to her husband, an enticement to vice. Linda Austern has recently opened up an important musical aspect to this.[82] As Woman was at once an incitement to dissolution and, if properly under self control, an aid to the achievement of virtue, music could (as we have already explored) lead to licence, but also in some way towards the contemplation of the divine. Music then is often personified as a woman 'because of its similar ability to move the affections, to ravish the mind and , at its noblest, to inspire divine love.'[83]

As Austern notes, this equation of music with the carnal, wanton and lascivious is widespread within discussions of music. Thomas Becon wished that

> Ah, would God that all minstrels of the world, yea, and all sorts of persons, both old and young, would once leave their lascivious, wanton, and unclean ballads, and sing such godly and virtuous songs as David teacheth them, whereby they might be advocated and called away from sin, and excited and stirred up unto virtue and goodness [84]

Edward Elton criticised those who used music to 'stirre up their wanton lusts, tripping and dancing after their musicke wantonly and immodestly'.[85] For Owen Feltham, it was the case that music

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[81] On political patriarchy, see Susan D. Amussen, An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England (Oxford, Blackwell, 1988) and her 'Gender, Family and the Social Order, 1560-1725' in A. Fletcher and J. Stevenson (eds), *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, CUP, 1985) pp. 196-217. David Underdown examines the evidence for a heightened questioning of the role of women between 1560 and 1640, and its economic causation, in the 'The Taming of the Scold: the enforcement of patriarchal authority in early modern England', also in Fletcher and Stevenson, *Order and Disorder* pp.116-136. On the content of the pamphlets of the period, and the various interlocking stereotypes, see Katherine Usher Henderson and Barbara F. McManus, *Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640* (Urbana, Uni. of Illinios, 1985) pp.3-20, 47-127. See also Linda Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind 1540-1620* (Brighton, Harvester, 1984) pp.152-181.

[82] Linda Phyllis Austern, "Alluring the Auditorie to Effeminacie': Music and the idea of the feminine in early modern England *M&L* 74 (1993) 343-354. Se also her "Sing Againe Syren': The female musician and sexual enchantment in Elizabethan life and literature' *Renaissance Quarterly* 42 (1989) 420-448.

[83] Ibid. p.348.

[84] 'David's Harp full of most delectable harmony newly stringed and set in tune by Thomas Becon' ed. Ayre, *The Early works of Thomas Becon* pp.263 – 303: p.266.

[85] *An Exposition* p.536.

> softens the mind; the curiosity of it, is fitter for Women than Men, and for Curtezans than Women.....

However, the central tension generated by the dual nature of music was also evident, as he continued:

> .But yet againe tis pity, that these should be so excellent, in that which hath such power to fascinate. It were well, Vice were barr'd of all her helpes of wooing . Many a minde hath beene angled unto ill, by the Eare.[86]

This terminology was not confined to the godly. John Cosin (in an odd display of anachronism) stated 'how ill pleasing [and] harsh the effeminate Geneva tunes were to the gravity and ears of the ancient Church, and how highly esteemed the solemn music of the Christians was by all pious and learned men, even in primitive times.'[87]

In this connection of music in some form (and it is well to note that in this discussion there is little on how to distinguish between the types of music) with effeminacy and by association degeneracy, we can see another, albeit subsidiary, explanatory factor in the conflation of music in the rhetoric of anti-popery in the 1630s. Much historiographical ink has been spilt over the supposed divide between 'court' and 'country' since Perez Zagorin first published his study of the same title, and it may be argued that little of the theory of a fundamental divide in culture between court and country has been left standing.[88] However, leaving aside the question of the extent to which such perceptions had a basis in fact, there was undoubtedly a perception of a moral degeneracy and doctrinal laxity in court culture, with its roots in the reign of James, but exacerbated under Charles. The work of Malcolm Smuts has explored the heterodoxy of court poetry and the

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[86] *Resolves*: p.255.

[87] 'Notes and Collections on the Book of Common Prayer': *Works* v.62.

[88] *The Court and the Country* (London, Routledge, 1969). See, *inter alia*, Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment. The politics of literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge 1987) pp. 5-53: Richard Cust and Ann Hughes, 'Introduction: After Revisionism' pp. 18-21 and Christopher Thompson, 'Court Politics and Parliamentary Conflict in 1625', both in Cust and Hughes (eds), *Conflict in Early Stuart*

influence of classical paganism.[89] P.W. Thomas has similarly documented a Puritan, but not exclusively so, aversion to courtly dress, the use of make-up, the length of men's hair and above all the masque and other plays – all means by which men and women might appear to be that which they were not, and be distracted from study and the pursuit of godliness.[90] All these ideas were to be found in earlier Puritan writers such as Stephen Gosson and William Perkins, but the polarisation of the 1630s is demonstrated by the terms in which they were put by Prynne. It is in this context of heightened sensitivity to the dissimulation implied by effeminacy, and its part in the suspicion of popish conspiracy that we encountered above, that we must situate the fear of the feminine power of music to seduce and corrupt.

As well as noting the omnipresence of concepts of the harmony between cosmos, society and the individual, it was also the case that such figures of speech could be applied at other levels. Manifold were the instances of the poetic conceit of music as a 'holy harmony', as John Toy in his 1638 *Worcester Elegy and Eulogy* to 'Master Thomas Tomkins, Bachelor of Musicke'

> And thou great Master of melodious skill
> This holy harmony didst helpe to fill;
> When in this dismall Cadence, no sound else
> Was heard but Mournefull groanes and mortall bels,
> Thy hand an Organ was of ample good
> To act in tune, and cheere our mourning mood.
> According to thy Tenor, thou dist lend
> Us Meanes, our low and base state to mend.

England. Thompson's article is at pp.168-192. See also R.C. Richardson, *The Debate on the English Revolution* pp.130-2.

[89] Malcolm Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England* (Philadelphia, Un. Of Pennsylvania Press, 1987) pp. 219-228. On the court in general, and the contrasting styles of Charles and his father, and the Caroline re-emphasis on the ritual of divine monarchy, see Kevin Sharpe, 'The image of viture: the court and household of Charles I, 1625-1642' in D. Starkey (ed.), *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (Harlow, Longman, 1987), especially pp. 227-242.

[90] 'Two Cultures ? Court and Country under Charles I in Conrad Russell (ed.), *The Origins of the English Civil War* (London, Macmillan, 1973) pp.168-196; see pp.171-82. Prynne condemned long curled hair as a 'vile and abominable abuse .. much now used in this our Realm … an effeminate unnatural amorous practice' cited by Thomas, p. 180. Linda Woodbridge has noted the connection made between urban life and effeminacy, as

> T`accomplish now this song of courtesie
> in triple time our thanks shall trebbles be.
> These lines are Briefe, but know, thy Restlesse song
> Of fame, shall stand in notes both large and long. [91]

Alongside this commonplace there was also a thread amongst the writings of the godly of the harmony of the community of the saints. Henry Barrow, who advocated a radical purification of the church and its worship along Presbyterian lines in the 1580s, still believed that

> But most heavenlie is that harmonie, where all the members knit together in the same faith, both in general and particular, with one accord goe forward in their callings and duties, still amending what is found amisse, and daylie indevouring to doo better.[92]

The writer of 'The Holy Harmony' of 1643 located this harmony in the life of the community, rather than in any specifically musical context. In contrast to the overblown music of his day, the 'holy and sweet sighes, or silent expressions of the soul are most acceptable'. This was preferable to a 'thousand crouds of sackbutts, this is the holy harmony'. Under Solomon, it had been a holy harmony

> when the King and people joyn in prayer and sacrifice, for I find it no prejudice to holy David in descending to the poorest though holy expressions of his people; the Crown and Scepter is not prejudic'd in the observation of the meanest acts of devotion.

In reaching a conclusion, he expressed his joy that the Parliament had made progress towards the purification of the church

> and have marched with a noble resolution to procure to us a Harmony heere which shall be a preparation to that Harmony the Angels make at the throne of the Lamb, to whom be glory now, and for evermore Amen.[93]

Conclusion

The thinker dealing with the question of music in general and church music in this period was heir to a tangled legacy of Christian and pre-Christian concepts about the

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[91] Boyd, *Elizabethan Music and Musical Criticism* p.72.

[92] *A Plaine Refutation of M. G. Giffardes reprochful booke* (Dort, 1591), in Leland H. Carlson (ed.), *The writings of Henry Barrow 1590-1* p.33

[93] (London, 1643, no pagination.)

musical character of the universe, and of man, and the moral character of music and its power. Many of these notions existed at the level of commonplaces, and cut across the traditional theological lines of division in English religion. With this almost universal consensus on the power of music to affect the man for good or ill, but with no discussion among either theologians or musicians on precisely which types of music, instrumentation, use of harmony and so on, would in themselves tend in either direction, the potential for dispute over the ordering of particular music in particular times and places was very great indeed.