

European Music

1520-1642



Edited by
JAMES HAAR

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5

EUROPEAN MUSIC, 1520–1640

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CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	vii
<i>Abbreviations</i>	ix
1. Renaissance Humanism and Music <i>Gary Tomlinson</i>	1
2. The Concept of the Renaissance <i>James Haar</i>	20
3. The Concept of the Baroque <i>Tim Carter</i>	38
4. Italy, <i>i</i> : 1520–1560 <i>Giulio Ongaro</i>	58
5. Italy, <i>ii</i> : 1560–1600 <i>Noel O'Regan</i>	75
6. Italy, <i>iii</i> : 1600–1640 <i>Tim Carter</i>	91
7. Music for the Mass <i>Allan W. Atlas</i>	101
8. The Motet <i>Anthony Cummings</i>	130
9. France, <i>i</i> : 1520–1560 <i>Richard Freedman</i>	157
10. France, <i>ii</i> : 1560–1600 <i>Jeanice Brooks</i>	171
11. France, <i>iii</i> : 1600–1640 <i>David Tunley</i>	182
12. Chanson and Air <i>Kate van Orden</i>	193
13. Madrigal <i>James Haar</i>	225

14.	The Netherlands, 1520–1640 <i>Kristine K. Forney</i>	246
15.	Music, Print, and Society in Sixteenth-Century Europe <i>Iain Fenlon</i>	280
16.	Concepts and Developments in Music Theory <i>Karol Berger</i>	304
17.	Germany and Central Europe, <i>i</i> : 1520–1600 <i>Peter Bergquist</i>	329
18.	Germany and Central Europe, <i>ii</i> : 1600–1640 <i>David Crook</i>	353
19.	The Reformation and Music <i>Robin A. Leaver</i>	371
20.	Renewal, Reform, and Reaction in Catholic Music <i>Craig Monson</i>	401
21.	Spain, <i>i</i> : 1530–1600 <i>Todd M. Borgerding and Louise K. Stein</i>	422
22.	Spain, <i>ii</i> : 1600–1640 <i>Louise K. Stein</i>	455
23.	Early Opera: The Initial Phase <i>Giuseppe Gerbino and Iain Fenlon</i>	472
24.	England, <i>i</i> : 1485–1600 <i>Roger Bray</i>	487
25.	England, <i>ii</i> : 1603–1642 <i>Jonathan P. Wainwright</i>	509
26.	Instrumental Music <i>Victor Coelho and Keith Polk</i>	527
	<i>Index</i>	557

PREFACE

THE authors who have loyally stuck with this volume over a period longer than any of us care to remember will recall that the original core of these essays was intended to form one of a series of books on the history of Western music. Owing in part to the dilatory behavior of some contributors, in part to the editor's procrastination, the project got behind schedule, and the original publisher, losing confidence in it and indeed tiring of the whole series, agreed with me that it might be as well to drop it.

I did so with regret, not just for letting down the colleagues who wrote for the book but because the essays contain a lot of good stuff, very little affected by the passage of a few years. Here enters the *deus ex machina* of this tale: Bruce Phillips, who got me started on the original project, not only agreed that it was too good to let go but managed to interest another publisher in taking it up. The old publishers gave me free rein; new commissions were sent out to replace the incorrigible no-shows; the long-suffering contributors were coaxed into revising and updating their essays. A new volume—what is before the reader here—was the result.

The publishing house of Boydell and Brewer is the heaven-sent means through which this was accomplished, and I know that the authors of these essays join me in expressing our gratitude to them. I hope that they and the readers of this book will agree that the project was indeed worth saving. Special thanks are owed to Jeffrey Dean for his expert copy-editing and his refined choice of elements of typographical design.

The original plan for the volume, which has survived essentially intact, was to combine a group of essays on topics relevant to the musical culture of Europe in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries with a series of chapters outlining the chronological development of this culture. The dates chosen, 1520–1640, were not and are not arbitrary: 1520 marks the establishment of the *ars perfecta* represented (for Glareanus) by the completed work of Josquin; 1640 is an appropriate if approximate terminus for a late-Renaissance/early-Baroque period including the career of Claudio Monteverdi. The essays were to be concerned with genres (mass, motet, madrigal, chanson, etc.); contemporary events and phenomena with important consequences for music (the Reformation, Protestant and Catholic; printing, humanistic currents) and musical thought characteristic of the period (theory) as well as terminology used to characterize the period (“Renaissance” and “Baroque,” now much criticized but surely no worse than the lame and linguistically clumsy “early modern”). These essays were to be followed by the second part

of the book—in no way second in importance—comprising accounts of the music of the Italian peninsula, France, the Netherlands, Germany and Central Europe, England, and Spain, each divided (not very precisely) into chronological segments. In the book's present state the two sections have been mixed, themes alternating with chronologies so that their complementary nature may stand in better relief. The chapters may be read as they come or in any order the reader prefers; but, kind reader, if you do skip about, keep going back to the table of contents so that you don't miss anything.

Not wishing to limit the authors' independence any more than was absolutely necessary, I imposed very few guidelines on them. This was just as well, since few of them paid much attention to what I did tell them. They are—the scholars represented here—an independent-minded bunch. For me this individuality of approach and style adds interest and life to the volume. Since it is no longer one of a series of all-but-textbooks, uniformity is of no particular value here. Some effort has been applied to keep single contributions internally consistent, but that is all. What is important is that every one of the contributors is either an established authority in his/her field or, in a few instances, an up-and-coming scholar from whom much may be expected in coming years. They have given of their best, and I am proud of each and every one of them.

James Haar

Chapel Hill, North Carolina
April 2005

ABBREVIATIONS

Books

Brown	Howard Mayer Brown, <i>Instrumental Music Printed before 1600</i>
CEKM	Corpus of Early Keyboard Music (American Institute of Musicology)
CMM	Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae (AIM)
DDT	Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst
DTB	Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Bayern
DTÖ	Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich
EDM	Das Erbe deutscher Musik
MSD	Musicological Studies and Documents (AIM)
RISM A/1	Répertoire international des sources musicales, <i>Einzeldrucke vor 1800</i>
RISM B/1/1	Répertoire international des sources musicales, <i>Recueils imprimés, XVI^e–XVII^e siècles: Liste chronologique</i>
RISM B/VIII	Répertoire international des sources musicales, <i>Das deutsche Kirchenlied</i>

Libraries

<i>B</i> : Belgium	<i>Br</i>	Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1 ^{er}
<i>CH</i> : Switzerland	<i>Bu</i>	Basel, Universität Basel, Öffentliche Bibliothek, Musikabteilung
	<i>N</i>	Neuchâtel, Bibliothèque publique et universitaire
	<i>SGs</i>	St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek
	<i>Zz</i>	Zurich, Zentralbibliothek
<i>D</i> : Germany	<i>Bs</i>	Berlin, Stadtbibliothek preussischer Kulturbesitz, Musikbibliothek
	<i>Mbs</i>	Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek
<i>E</i> : Spain	<i>Bbc</i>	Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya
	<i>Mn</i>	Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional
	<i>OL</i>	Olot, Biblioteca Popular
	<i>PA</i>	Palma de Mallorca, Biblioteca Fundación Bartolomé March Severa
	<i>SIM</i>	Simancas, Archivo General
	<i>TZ</i>	Tarazona, Catedral, Archivo Capitular
<i>F</i> : France	<i>Pc</i>	Paris, Bibliothèque du Conservatoire (in <i>Pn</i>)
	<i>Pn</i>	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France
<i>GB</i> : Great Britain	<i>Cfm</i>	Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum

<i>GB</i> (cont.)	<i>Lbl</i>	London, British Library
	<i>Ob</i>	Oxford, Bodleian Library
	<i>WRec</i>	Windsor, Eton College Library
<i>I: Italy</i>	<i>Fñ</i>	Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale
	<i>Fr</i>	Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana
	<i>Ma</i>	Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana
	<i>MOe</i>	Modena, Biblioteca Estense e Universitaria
	<i>Nñ</i>	Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III
	<i>Rc</i>	Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense
	<i>Rv</i>	Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana
	<i>Rvat</i>	Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
	<i>Tñ</i>	Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria
<i>P: Portugal</i>	<i>La</i>	Lisbon, Biblioteca de Ajuda
<i>PL: Poland</i>	<i>Kp</i>	Cracow, Biblioteka Polskiej Akademii Nauk

RENAISSANCE HUMANISM AND MUSIC

Gary Tomlinson

FOR students of the Renaissance, “humanism” is a term that sends up warning flares. Its use is entrenched, its usefulness unquestionable, but it remains unsettled in meaning and hence worrisome, begging apology and qualification even from writers who have done much to define it. Thus Paul Oskar Kristeller opened his watershed Oberlin lectures half a century ago by noting that, although “the term ‘Humanism’ has been associated with the Renaissance and its classical studies for more than a hundred years, . . . in recent times it has become the source of much philosophical and historical confusion”; his became, then, a mission of delimitation and definition. More recently Donald R. Kelley began in a similar tone his admirable survey of the subject: “Renaissance humanism’ joins two debatable abstractions, one that suggests a cultural revival and the other a secular philosophy, perhaps divested of higher religious concerns.” Such ambivalence is found also among musicologists. James Haar ventured so far as to entitle a chapter in his *Essays on Italian Poetry and Music* “The Early Madrigal: Humanistic Theory in Practical Guise”; but he only came around to addressing humanism, near the end of the chapter, in order to complain that “The term is overworked in general in scholarly and popular writing on the Renaissance and so often misused in discussions of music that I considered not using it at all.”¹

This caution includes a good measure of valor, and it certainly has the virtue of forthrightness. Too often, instead, discussions of humanism evade the term’s historiographical difficulties. Anyone versed in modern writings on the Renaissance, musicological or otherwise, knows the frustration aroused by sidelong references to an undefined humanism, to unspecified humanists, or to a vague humanist “orientation,” “inclination,” or “spirit.” Renaissance humanism has provided

¹ Haar has since helped set straight some of this misuse, contributing the admirable overview “Humanism” to *The New Grove Dictionary* (where however the subject entry had to await the edn of 2000 for its first appearance). See Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic and Humanist Strains* (New York, 1961), 8; Donald R. Kelley, *Renaissance Humanism* (Boston, 1991), 1; and James Haar, *Essays on Italian Poetry and Music in the Renaissance, 1350–1600* (Berkeley, 1986), 74.

a historiographical terrain more congenial than many to the persistent growth of an undisciplined *Geistesgeschichte*—a particular fertility that lives on from the earliest uses of the term, in which it was connected to such broad and, for the Renaissance, questionable notions as individualism and secularism. The caution of students of humanism such as Kristeller reacts against this ongoing nomenclature-creep.

On the positive side, both the caution and the carelessness gauge the richness of the concept of humanism, the multiplicity of meanings that have accrued to it in the century-and-a-half of its usage to describe aspects of Renaissance culture. This multiplicity and its connections to music history will emerge more clearly in what follows. I should say at the outset, however, that they will emerge under the auspices of my conviction that the usefulness of humanism as a concept increases as its implications are understood to be more and more diffused through Renaissance culture, to seep across permeable boundaries into sometimes unexpected spaces in the manner of all complex cultural phenomena. “No neat definition of humanism will be meaningful,” Brian Copenhaver and Charles Schmitt have written,² and any helpful measure of its significance will need to embrace conceptual profusion while skirting intellectual anarchy. This careful control within multiplicity is, finally, the historiographical task at hand. The remedy for the sprawling proliferation of Renaissance humanisms is not to constrain artificially and *a priori* the term’s range of implication but instead to plot ever more carefully the many situations in which appear cultural tendencies we might usefully term humanist.



OVER the last century-and-a-half a number of paradigmatic interpretations of humanism have been advanced by general historians and taken up by music historians. In these we may trace, side by side, the general and musical historiographies of humanism. No doubt the earliest of these paradigms to take hold was what I will call WHIG HUMANISM. In this view humanism was seen as a prominent force—even the guiding force—in the assumed emergence during the Renaissance of modern forms of subjectivity and worldliness. Humanism here takes the form of an emergent individualism, the Renaissance moment in a putative progress of humankind toward a modern sense of autonomous selfhood and of the Enlightened liberalism and egalitarianism that were its political reflections. The Whig interpretation arose from nineteenth-century conceptions of the Renaissance that were themselves closely in touch with Enlightenment progressivism and anticlericalism, above all Jules Michelet’s famous notion of the Renaissance “discovery of the world and of man” (from his *Histoire de France* of 1855), borrowed by Jacob Burckhardt as a central theme of his *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (1860). From such sources the Whig view constructed teleologies guided by individualist,

² Brian P. Copenhaver and Charles B. Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford, 1992), 24–25.

humanitarian principles and leading, it would imply, to ever freer forms of society and expression.³

Among music historians the chief exponent of Whig humanism has no doubt been Edward E. Lowinsky. Lowinsky came honestly by his stance, inheriting it in a direct line from Burckhardt via German musicologists, especially his teacher Heinrich Bessler. Lowinsky saw the musical Renaissance as an “emancipation” from the supposedly rigid strictures and structures of medieval music-making, a liberation that allowed the forging of newly flexible musical styles capable of expressing—as he put it, echoing Michelet and Burckhardt—“the outer world of nature and the inner reality of man.” In the course of this liberation a novel conception of musical creativity was discovered, one that adumbrated later notions of innate, unteachable genius. Most importantly, humanist musicians turned their attention more and more to the meaning and affect of the poetry they set and away from its formal outlines; for Lowinsky this indubitable tendency of certain sixteenth-century styles and genres was part and parcel of the more general emancipation. In this these composers set in motion nothing less than a sweeping “humanization” of music that pointed the way to the glories of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert. The individualism of Burckhardt’s Renaissance man, we cannot but conclude, found its consummation in the Hegelian culture-hero. Meanwhile the humanist liberation of the musical spirit did not proceed unopposed. Lowinsky’s famous hypothesis of a “secret chromatic art” in the Netherlands motet, formulated long before he had said much about humanism, posits a musical subversion of illegitimate religious authority that is in hindsight entirely in keeping with the liberal goals of his Renaissance humanism.⁴

The difficulties of the Whig view are obvious enough, perhaps, even in this brief sketch. However much it might touch on basic shifts in European society from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries—above all the burgeoning of certain societal forms associated with the resurgence of cities and towns—and despite its helpful highlighting of the sense on the part of Renaissance writers themselves of cultural progress and enlightenment, it troubles in its progressivism, in its limited vision of medieval society and culture as a crimped foil for Renaissance developments,⁵ and in the confidence with which it maps modern modes of subjectivity

³ See Burckhardt’s *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S. G. C. Middlemore, ed. Irene Gordon (New York, 1960); for individualism, Part 2; for his dependence on Michelet, Part 4 and specifically 225 n.

⁴ Lowinsky developed these views in essays that sometimes do not speak specifically of humanism, especially “Music in the Culture of the Renaissance” (1954) and “Musical Genius: Evolution and Origins of a Concept” (1964); he connected his views explicitly with historians’ conceptions of humanism in “Humanism in the Music of the Renaissance” (1982, with a long genesis reaching back to the 1950s). All these essays are republished in Edward E. Lowinsky, *Music in the Culture of the Renaissance and Other Essays*, 2 vols., ed. Bonnie J. Blackburn (Chicago, 1989); see esp. 38–39, 50, 56–57, and 218. See also Lowinsky, *Secret Chromatic Art in the Netherlands Motet* (New York, 1946), esp. chs. 8 and 9. For Bessler’s views, see his “Das Renaissanceproblem in der Musik,” *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*, 22 (1966), 1–10.

⁵ This inability to take account of the societal and expressive vitality of the Middle Ages is surely the most fundamental weakness of Whig humanism; in the Lowinskian view it should

onto a pre- or early-modern world. Moreover, because of its sweeping conclusions and resonant political progressivism it has a special attraction for authors of generalizing accounts. This has given it an unfortunate staying power and a propensity to turn up, unexamined and unelaborated, in elementary music-history texts and similar locales.

The Whig paradigm of humanism is not the only one rooted in Burckhardt's *Kultur der Renaissance*. For him an important force in the emergence of a new Renaissance individualism was the revival of ancient letters and thought, which brought with it a new corpus of themes, topics, and modes of self-expression. Looking over his shoulder at German educators of the generations preceding his, he termed this emphasis on ancient Greek and Latin writings *Humanismus*. Since Burckhardt's time this revival has exerted a guiding influence on Renaissance studies, so powerfully indeed that there is scarcely a conception of humanism formed over the past century that has not reserved an important place for it.⁶

In strict application this second paradigm might be called PHILOLOGICAL HUMANISM. Here humanism is equated with scholarship on ancient texts *tout court*. Like the Whig interpretation, this view tends to be suggested especially in surveys that make only synoptic reference to humanism, for the simple reason that any more careful scrutiny of Renaissance study of ancient texts inevitably opens deep and wide questions of its aims, ideals, and strategies. Kristeller himself pointed out that in its narrowest formulations the philological view is insufficient to characterize the novelty of humanist agendas; in particular it "fails to explain the ideal of eloquence persistently set forth in the writings of the humanists,"⁷ a positive valuation of rhetorical suasion we will examine below. Neither does this strict view explain, from the other side, the fact that the philological emphases and expertise the humanists pioneered in their efforts to exhume and interpret certain ancient texts were quickly exploited by many scholars of very different temperament (reading very different texts). We need, in order to construct a rich panorama of Renaissance scholarly culture, to reserve a place for anti-humanist scholarship on ancient texts. Philological expertise should not retain the name "humanism" when stripped of other humanist emphases.

Perhaps the most famous Renaissance advocate of a philology brimming with broader agendas, and a scholar who sits near the heart of most recent interpretations of humanism, is Lorenzo Valla (1405–1457). It is useful to introduce him here not so much because his studies brought him, by virtue of his redating of the Donation of Constantine, to the center of Roman ecclesiastical politics. More to

probably be understood as the reflection of political dichotomies Lowinsky witnessed in his own lifetime. Lewis Lockwood sums it up well as a failure "to allow for the possibility that the Renaissance can be distinguished from the Middle Ages by other means than as a period of alleged 'freedom' in contradistinction to—the contrast is inevitable—'tyranny.'" See Lockwood, "Renaissance," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd edn., 2001), XXI: 184.

⁶ See Burckhardt, *The Civilization*, Part 3. For the coining of the term *Humanismus* in the early 19th century, see Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, 8–9.

⁷ *Renaissance Thought*, 98.

the point is the fact that his approach to philology raised large issues that will help us define humanist views through the later Renaissance.

Valla's readings of ancient Latin texts, outstripping those of his predecessors (and most of his followers) in precision, constructed a history for the Latin language more elaborate than had ever before been achieved. In the process he made clear the great changes that had occurred in the evolution of Latin from Cicero's time to his own. He suggested that languages in general were inextricable from particular societal and cultural circumstances, and by doing so he distanced ancient Latin from modern concerns—paradoxically, in the light of the Burckhardtian model of humanist classicism—and portrayed it as a historical, now-dead vernacular, equivalent in its ancient usage to modern vernaculars. This tendency to understand past utterance in its own setting advanced a kind of humanist historicism rooted in the study of linguistic usage and situated self-representation. In some later Renaissance voices, especially after the mid-sixteenth-century revival of ancient skepticism, this view could approach an almost relativistic sense of historical and cultural difference (Montaigne's is the most notable such voice); Kelley justifiably points to its connection to the post-Renaissance poetic historicism of Giambattista Vico.⁸ Finally, in his philosophical writings Valla justified his emphasis on philology by proposing that human reason itself was not abstractable from everyday language use but rather shaped by it. We will return below to the radical implications of Valla's philology.⁹

Most musicological writings on humanism adopt in some fashion the philological interpretation. But they usually do so in a moderated form that, if it does not examine the deepest values embedded in humanist scholarship, at least does not strip away the particular and specific agendas individual scholars pursued *through* philology. Two music historians who worked most productively along these lines are Claude V. Palisca and D. P. Walker. Neither hesitated to explore the motives—personal, polemical, institutional—behind Renaissance classical scholarship. Walker set out, in his pathbreaking essays on “Musical Humanism in the 16th and Early 17th Centuries,” now more than half a century old, to lay to rest the notion that imitation of ancient musical practice had no impact on late-Renaissance music-making. He sketched the outlines of such impact by describing scholarship and debate on four topics of special interest to ancient writers on music: the

⁸ It is no accident that one of Montaigne's most striking essays in this mode, “Of Cannibals,” concerns non-European peoples, for humanist tendencies toward historical relativism found ample support in growing European awareness of non-Europeans through the late Renaissance. For Vico, see Kelley, *Renaissance Humanism*, 101, 103, 109–10, and 128.

⁹ The secondary literature on Valla has burgeoned in recent decades. See *inter alia* Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford, 1964); Cesare Vasoli, *La dialettica a la retorica dell'Umanesimo* (Milan, 1968); Jerrold E. Seigel, *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism: The Union of Eloquence and Wisdom, Petrarch to Valla* (Princeton, 1968); Salvatore Camporeale, *Lorenzo Valla: Umanesimo e teologia* (Florence, 1972); Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986); and Richard Waswo, *Language and Meaning in the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1987). For good surveys of Valla's significance, see Kelley, *Renaissance Humanism*, and Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*.

melodic genera; intonation systems; modes and their varying ethos; and music's reflection or expression of the words it sets. Palisca examined the Renaissance exhumation of ancient musical thought in a series of essays extending from the 1950s, through his publication (in 1960) of the correspondence between Girolamo Mei and Vincenzo Galilei, to his book of 1985, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought*. Across this body of work, Palisca remained sensitive to the variety of uses to which revived ancient knowledge was put.¹⁰

Both Walker and Palisca highlighted the new emphasis in the sixteenth century on the emotional and ethical powers of music, as Lowinsky had; but instead of viewing this as a march toward spiritual emancipation they linked it to the rhetorical aims of much humanist thought and activity—to the humanist “ideal of eloquence,” as Kristeller put it. This brings us to a third paradigm of humanism, one that begins to ground and explain the new place in Renaissance culture of suasive oratory: RHETORICAL HUMANISM. This interpretation starts from curricular rearrangements in schools and universities of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Although it is already signaled, again, by Burckhardt, it is owed above all to Kristeller, especially to a series of foundational essays he produced in the 1940s and '50s.

Kristeller argued that humanism spread as a set of curricular emphases in liberal arts education apparent in Italian universities and schools by the fifteenth century. They arose especially in reaction to the importation of scholastic methods and priorities from France during the fourteenth century; later they were taken up in northern universities as well. In the trivium of verbal arts passed down from late antiquity, including grammar, rhetoric, and logic, scholastic thought had given pride of place to logic as a means of understanding natural philosophy and theology. The humanists laid more emphasis on grammar and especially rhetoric in their teaching; to these they added the study of poetry, history, and ethics. By the late fifteenth century these five subjects could be referred to collectively as the *studia humanitatis* or “humanities,” and a teacher of them could be called a *humanista*. The humanist emphases of grammar and rhetoric answered to the communal needs of Italian urban culture of the late Middle Ages and were manifested in the writing and speechmaking techniques of the *dictatores*, the notaries and public scribes of the period. From this heritage humanists took their tendency to see education in the verbal arts as serving pragmatic ends, preparing young men for civic, governmental, or religious service. The humanists differed from their medieval pre-

¹⁰ Walker's “Musical Humanism in the 16th and Early 17th Centuries,” originally published in *The Music Review*, 2 (1941), 1–13, 111–21, 220–27, 288–308; 3 (1942), 55–71, has been reprinted several times; see D. P. Walker, *Music, Spirit, and Language in the Renaissance*, ed. Penelope Gouk (London, 1985). For Palisca, see *Girolamo Mei: Letters on Ancient and Modern Music to Vincenzo Galilei and Giovanni Bardi* (American Institute of Musicology, 1960), *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought* (New Haven, 1985), and, for a collection of essays published across three decades, *Studies in the History of Italian Music and Music Theory* (Oxford, 1994); for a summary of his views see his “Humanism and Music,” in *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms and Legacy*, 3 vols., ed. Albert Rabil, Jr (Philadelphia, 1988), III: 450–85.

decessors, however, in the strength of their insistence that elegant and persuasive speaking and writing needed to be patterned after classical models.¹¹

Kristeller's curricular paradigm offered a number of advantages not found in earlier interpretations. First, it suggested how the rhetorical emphases of the humanists arose in response to particular conditions of late medieval Italy, more fully and quickly urbanized and commercialized than northern Europe. Second, by elaborating the agendas of humanist scholarship it proposed that classical studies in themselves were not a sufficient determination of humanist orientation. Instead the specific priorities of humanist classicism—especially the humanists' exaggerated reverence for Cicero and, later, Quintilian—were a means to achieve a new, more forceful and persuasive eloquence. Third, it countered the unsubstantiated but widespread assumption that humanism was a systematic philosophy that displaced an earlier scholasticism. In place of this view it offered the more nuanced picture of academic turf wars, so to speak, between the rhetorical culture of Italy and the fashions of scholastic logic and argumentation introduced there from France at the end of the Middle Ages. Finally, it portrayed this opposition as a lasting one, thus bringing the confrontation of humanist and scholastic orientations to the fore as an issue for late-Renaissance historiography. As Kristeller concluded, "The humanism and the scholasticism of the Renaissance arose in medieval Italy about the same time, that is, about the end of the thirteenth century, and . . . they coexisted and developed all the way through and beyond the Renaissance period as different branches of learning."¹²

For music historians Kristeller's curricular view has had, in its specific arguments, less impact than it might. Musicologists still have far to go in understanding the relations between music as it was presented in humanist schools, music as included in university curricula, music as taught to the choirboys from whose ranks polyphonic composers most often matured, music as it was mastered by courtly purveyors of semi-improvisatory solo song, and so forth.¹³ In a more general sense, however, the emphasis on eloquence in rhetorical humanism has been so richly suggestive that few recent studies of late-Renaissance musical expression do not

¹¹ In Kristeller's large output, see especially two essays in *Renaissance Thought*, "The Humanist Movement" (3–23) and "Humanism and Scholasticism in the Italian Renaissance" (92–119), and his more recent summary of his views, "Humanism," in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. Charles B. Schmitt, Quentin Skinner, Eckhard Kessler, and Jill Krayer (Cambridge, 1988), 113–37. See also Hanna H. Gray, "Renaissance Humanism: The Pursuit of Eloquence," in *Renaissance Essays*, ed. Paul Oskar Kristeller and Philip P. Wiener (New York, 1968), 199–216; and, for a refinement of Kristeller's connection of humanists and *dictatores*, Ronald Witt, "Medieval 'Ars Dictaminis' and the Beginnings of Humanism: A New Construction of the Problem," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 35 (1982), 1–35. For Burckhardt's emphasis of humanist rhetoric, see *The Civilization*, Part 3, passim; for universities and schools, 166–69.

¹² "Humanism and Scholasticism," 116. For details of the confrontation of these contrasting curricular agendas in the later Renaissance, see Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance & Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995).

¹³ Kristeller's own contribution along these lines, "Music and Learning in the Early Italian Renaissance," in *Renaissance Thought II: Papers on Humanism and the Arts* (New York, 1965), 142–62, points up the scantiness of evidence concerning musical education in the period but offers tantalizing suggestions as to humanist musical priorities and education.

embody it in some form. It anchors our understanding of the conditions that fostered one of the most important tendencies of the Renaissance: the pervasive and finally selfconscious rhetoricization of musical technique and expression. It underscores how music was perceived during the Renaissance to be suspended between two categories of knowledge: the mathematical arts of the quadrivium, in which music had found its intellectual niche since late antiquity and to which it still looked for its theoretical and rational foundation, and the speaking arts of poetry and rhetoric. Of course this ambivalence of music had long been palpable, captured already in Platonic juxtapositions of musical mathematics with musical ethics, codified later in divisions like Boethius's *musica mundana, humana, and instrumentalis*, and in any case ever implied in the Western division of musical thought from musical practice. But both humanist rhetoric and humanist attention to ancient accounts that allied music with verbal arts and emphasized music's ethical and affective powers exacerbated the ambivalence and helped broach music's performative dimensions in ways that countered the abstractions of Boethian theory. They fostered the musical polemics characteristic of the late Renaissance, polemics that often turned on questions of the relative weight given to performative eloquence on the one hand and mathematical demonstration on the other in the creation and judgment of musical styles.¹⁴

Indeed, in Italy such debates took their place in a larger polemical literary culture also engendered in some degree by humanism. The strengthening of music's alliance with verbal arts prepared the way for writers on music to pose a counterpart to the late-sixteenth-century floodtide of treatises on poetic theory. If music-theory treatises of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries usually remained far afield from the humanist verbal arts, it is clear that from the middle of the sixteenth century on they often engaged the kinds of questions then being debated by the literary theorists: questions of genre and generic decorum, of definition of style, of imitation of earlier styles, and of stylistic evolution.¹⁵ The confluence of these two bodies of theory, musical and literary-rhetorical, is captured emblematically in the title of the most important music treatise of the century, Zarlino's *Istitutioni harmoniche*, framed to recall Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*. The distance music theory had traversed in the century preceding Zarlino is measured in his scorn for the mensural concerns that still preoccupied a writer like Tinctoris (whatever the other tendencies—such as an interest in ancient accounts of music's powers and

¹⁴ Many of these topics are taken up by Ann E. Moyer in her study of the changing affiliations of musical thought in late-Renaissance structures of knowledge, *Musica Scientia: Musical Scholarship in the Italian Renaissance* (Ithaca, NY, 1992).

¹⁵ The issue of imitation of earlier styles has proved especially fertile in musicological discussions. For essays particularly concerned with parallels between musical and rhetorical imitation, see Warren Kirkendale, "Ciceronians versus Aristotelians on the Ricercar as Exordium, from Bembo to Bach," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 32 (1979), 1–44, and Howard Mayer Brown, "Emulation, Competition, and Homage: Imitation and Theories of Imitation in the Renaissance," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 35 (1982), 1–48; for cautions regarding such parallels, see Honey Meconi, "Does *Imitatio* Exist?," *Journal of Musicology*, 12 (1994), 152–78.

a progressive sense of historical change—that made Tinctoris a harbinger of musical humanism).¹⁶

In northern Europe, meanwhile, rhetorical humanism influenced musical thought along a somewhat different route. There a university culture emphasizing Ciceronian rhetoric, led by scholars such as Philipp Melanchthon and Johann Sturm, suggested musical analogues. Nicolaus Listenius, Gallus Dressler, and other writers on music picked up on the suggestion, elaborating a new theoretical category, *musica poetica* (roughly, composition), and comparing the organization of musical works to that of formal oratory. By the 1590s Joachim Burmeister, trained in both rhetoric and music, transferred rhetorical terms and techniques to the parsing of musical works, inventing a practice he termed—after the Greek *analyein*, to unloose, dissolve—analysis.¹⁷

Thus curricular and rhetorical humanism has deep and broad implications for the music historian. Nevertheless it shares a limitation with philological humanism: like that view, it tends to describe the symptoms of humanist culture rather than diagnosing its internal condition. Just as studies couched in the philological paradigm sometimes trace the patterns of scholarly activities while barely questioning what ends were served by renewed interest in the revival and emulation of classical authors, so the curricular view often only hints at the cultural and ideological sources of its rhetorical priorities. The question of the deep roots of the humanists' ideal of eloquence remains unanswered.

Another paradigm of humanism, CIVIC HUMANISM, has built upon Kristeller's rhetorical view in an attempt to answer this question. It took its impetus from the insight that humanism's roots reach back to medieval Italy and its burgeoning town and city society. In this view, the exigencies and pressures of civic life and governance fostered the new emphasis on effective and persuasive communication. The humanist reevaluation of rhetoric sprang from the particular social requirements of the *polis*. This interpretation was adumbrated already in the 1940s by Eugenio Garin and came into sharp focus in Hans Baron's *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance* (1955). Baron argued that rhetorical humanism matured in the heat of political crisis, specifically in 1400–1402 in a Florence threatened with invasion by the armies of Giangaleazzo Visconti of Milan. In this crucible the armament of humanist rhetoric was fired and tempered. The wavering of earlier humanists such as Petrarch between a life of solitary study and a life of political commitment was settled firmly in favor of the latter. The special significance of Cicero for the humanists was discovered in his own political struggles, parallel to those of modern Florentines, and was defined by his use of rhetoric in defense of republicanism and political pluralism. This involved a view of ancient Rome not as some unattainable golden age but rather as a society parallel to modern Florence

¹⁶ See Tinctoris, Dedication of *Proportionale musices* (1473–74), and Zarlino, *Istitutioni harmoniche* (1558), Book 3, ch. 71; both are translated in *Strunk's Source Readings in Music History*, III: *The Renaissance*, ed. Gary Tomlinson (New York, 1995), 123–29 and 158–84.

¹⁷ See Palisca, "Humanism and Music," 474; for an analysis of a Lasso motet from Burmeister's *Musica poetica* (1606), see *Strunk's Source Readings*, III: *The Renaissance*, ed. Tomlinson, 189–93.

from which real-life political lessons might be learned. In turn, this novel historical perspective accorded a greater dignity to modern society and in particular to vernacular Italian writing. The effects of this whole congeries of views, finally, lived on in later ideas of freedom, political self-determination, and individual dignity.¹⁸

Both in its particulars and in its broadest sweep Baron's argument has been challenged. Nevertheless the general notion has endured that the rhetorical emphases of humanism were related to the politics of city life, were rooted in the revival and proliferation of cities in late-medieval Italy, and were sustained across the Renaissance by the ideological, political, and military struggles of Italian city-states. The legacy of Baron's work has lived on in a series of self-conscious attempts to understand the links between humanist rhetorical culture and individual urban political contexts, especially republican ones.¹⁹

Musicology, until recent years loath to knock about overmuch in political concerns, has been slow to exploit this understanding of humanism, even in the 1980s, when Renaissance regional and city studies burgeoned. One recent study clearly enough indebted to the civic-humanist paradigm is Martha Feldman's *City Culture and the Madrigal at Venice* (1995). Although Feldman does not take up Baron's thesis or address explicitly the topic of humanism, she examines the development of the mid-sixteenth-century Venetian madrigal from the broad context of the city's expressive culture and the rhetorical ideals it gave rise to and embodied. She traces across various strains of Venetian society connections musicologists have long suspected between the Ciceronian poetics of Pietro Bembo and the *Musica nova* style of Willaert and its offshoots. She demonstrates the illumination of musical styles (even styles as opaque as the *Musica nova*'s) to be gained from close reading of local urban cultures. Along the way she deepens our understanding of the dispersion and implications of humanist rhetoric.²⁰

A fifth paradigm of humanism stems from the opposition Kristeller and others had discerned of humanism to scholasticism—an opposition not, remember, of a Renaissance philosophy to an earlier, medieval one but of strains of culture emerging simultaneously in Italy and intertwined throughout the Renaissance. This view, which we might call ANTISCHOLASTIC HUMANISM, interprets the later Renaissance in the light of broad divergences that divided against itself the elite culture of the time. It emphasizes a continuing tension, through the period

¹⁸ See Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1955; rev. edn 1966); also Eugenio Garin, *Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance*, trans. Peter Munz (New York, 1965), esp. ch. 2.

¹⁹ The arguments against Baron are marshaled in Jerrold Seigel, "‘Civic Humanism’ or Ciceronian Rhetoric? The Culture of Petrarch and Bruni," *Past and Present*, 34 (1966), 3–48. A more recent assessment is James Hankins, "The ‘Baron Thesis’ after Forty Years, and Some Recent Studies of Leonardo Bruni," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 56 (1995), 309–38. For an overview of Baron's civic humanism thesis and its reception and for summaries of humanism in five Italian cities, see *Renaissance Humanism*, ed. Rabil, vol. 1, chs. 7–12. The case for the afterlife of civic humanism in 16th-century Florence and in 17th- and 18th-century England and America is made by J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, 1975).

²⁰ Martha Feldman, *City Culture and the Madrigal at Venice* (Berkeley, 1995).

and beyond, between opposed visions of history, authority, humankind, and the world: visions of change, mundane instability, and partial truth on the humanist side, of stability, transcendent constancy, full knowledge, and appeal to authority on the scholastic. This interpretation understands humanist rhetoric as a means of channeling and controlling unpredictable human passions in an early-modern world haunted by novel anxieties—a world destabilized by geographical, technological, and anthropological discoveries, by a burgeoning of printed matter on a wealth of subjects, and by cataclysmic disease and warfare. It attempts to explain the humanist ideal of eloquence, in other words, as a pragmatic recourse to persuasion in a world considered mutable and capricious.

The antischolastic interpretation was elaborated, in a way that showed its indebtedness to Baron's civic-humanist model, by William Bouwsma in *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty* (1968). Bouwsma analysed the events leading up to the Venetian interdict of 1606 so as to lay bare the deeper oppositions embedded in them. He conceived these oppositions in terms of large medieval and Renaissance "visions" that were not successive cultural stages but coexisted in late Renaissance culture and were closely tied to scholasticism and humanism respectively. The medieval vision embodied in his view an optimistic estimation of human potential for attaining truth and understanding the order of things, while the Renaissance vision reflected the pessimistic view that the human intellect could at most aspire only to a dim, partial comprehension. In its on-the-ground operation the medieval vision encouraged a constant and even rigid response to worldly vagaries, a response based on the confidence that a stable and whole truth was perceivable behind them; Bouwsma allied it with political authoritarianism. The Renaissance view instead fostered a flexible adjustment to changing circumstances whose causes could not be fully known, an approach that depended on a fluid, persuasive interaction in language with others; it found its political metier in republicanism.²¹

This antischolastic view of humanism has remained an important one, because it recognizes and accommodates the persistence through the Renaissance of scholastic modes of thought, and above all because it aims to characterize the chasmal divides that, by any account, cut through late Renaissance culture. But the particular ideological and political spin that Bouwsma put on his opposed visions has certainly been challenged. Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, in *From Humanism*

²¹ William J. Bouwsma, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty: Renaissance Values in the Age of the Counter Reformation* (Berkeley, 1968); see esp. ch. 1, where Bouwsma details his medieval and Renaissance visions and their connections to scholasticism and humanism. For Bouwsma's views on humanism, see also "The Culture of Renaissance Humanism," American Historical Association, pamphlet no. 401, 1973, and his essays collected in *A Usable Past: Essays in European Cultural History* (Berkeley, 1990), esp. essays 1, 2, and 9. His last book, *The Waning of the Renaissance, 1550–1640* (New Haven, 2000), attempts from a cultural-historical vantage to celebrate the liberatory aspects of Renaissance thought and describe their decline amid the growing anxiety and malaise of the period about 1600; behind this analysis stand, still, the cultural divisions Bouwsma had perceived in his study of the Venetian interdict. For the northern, especially academic dimensions of this cultural divide, see Rummel, *The Humanist–Scholastic Debate*.

to the *Humanities* (1986), have even turned on their head the kind of political and intellectual affiliations Bouwsma perceived. They depict the later humanism of the sixteenth century as a force that was above all one of intellectual and social orthodoxy, serving European rulers by reinforcing the superiority of hereditary elites and forging a docile bureaucracy of educated functionaries. For them humanism led to the orthodoxy codified in the educational pragmatism of Petrus Ramus, divorced by now from the ethics that had once formed a part of humanist schooling. The political usefulness of humanism to those in power insured its “victory.” Humanist, not scholastic, education encouraged meek acceptance of authority, and “Scholasticism bred too independent an attitude to survive.”²²

The difference between these two interpretations is certainly consequential—but not as much so as the recognition both share of the fundamental ideological divisions that ran through sixteenth-century society and culture. Humanism played a major role in the making and expression of these divisions; given the variety of definitions we have already surveyed, however, it should not surprise that there is no consensus as to the nature of this role. The position of humanism in the at times contentious emergence of the new science provides an example. In one view, typified by the work of Lynn Thorndike and John H. Randall, Jr, a bookish, poetizing humanism was antithetical to experimental method and empirical observation of the world, which instead arose directly from the continuing development of Aristotelian scholasticism. A more recent, revisionist argument voiced eloquently by Eric Cochrane describes instead a worldly and venturesome humanism, one encouraging anti-authoritarian observation and hypothesis, a productive but un-Aristotelian merger of mathematics with technology, and the persuasive vernacular argumentation deployed most famously by Galileo.²³

The emphasis of the divisions of Renaissance culture, and in particular the divide between humanism and scholasticism, has proved suggestive in musicological work aiming to discern the underpinnings of stylistic changes and contrasts. My own *Monteverdi and the End of the Renaissance* (1987) brings the views of Bouwsma, Cochrane, and others to bear on late-Renaissance poetic ideologies, aligning Monteverdi’s shifting allegiances to Petrarchan and Marinist styles with the broader flux of humanist and scholastic values about 1600. A more general antischolastic interpretation, parallel to Bouwsma’s if not influenced by it, was advanced by Nino Pirrotta. His essay of 1966, “Music and Cultural Tendencies in 15th-Century Italy,” contrasted the musical predilections of two types of educated

²² Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986): see p. xiv. For a nuanced response to Grafton and Jardine’s views from the perspective of English humanist pedagogy, see Rebecca Bushnell, *The Subject of Humanism: Reading Early Modern Pedagogy* (Ithaca, 1995), esp. ch. 1.

²³ For the negative assessment, see for example Lynn Thorndike, *Science and Thought in the Fifteenth Century* (New York, 1929), and John H. Randall, Jr, *The School of Padua and the Emergence of Modern Science* (Padua, 1961); for the positive one, Eric Cochrane, “Science and Humanism in the Italian Renaissance,” *The American Historical Review*, 81 (1976), 1039–57; for a recent survey leaning toward Cochrane’s position, Pamela O. Long, “Humanism and Science,” in *Renaissance Humanism*, ed. Rabil, III: 486–512.

men, scholastic and humanist. Scholastic clerics, Pirrotta argued, preferred elaborate polyphony while humanists, who gained increasing power and prominence in the mid-fifteenth century, sponsored a more overtly rhetorical art: the (generally unwritten) accompanied solo song of *improvvisatori* like Serafino Aquilano. In the shifting prominence of these differing types, with their different musical tastes, Pirrotta sought some explanation for what he and others have seen as the submergence of elaborate polyphony in early- to mid-fifteenth-century Italy.²⁴

It is clear enough that Pirrotta's dichotomy has sometimes been overstated by his supporters and even by Pirrotta himself.²⁵ Recent work by Lewis Lockwood and Allan W. Atlas on particular musical centers in fifteenth-century Italy has suggested no general humanist distaste for written polyphony, and indeed Margaret Bent has discerned humanist sponsorship of such music in Padua in the early decades of the century. These studies do not attempt to dismiss unwritten or little-written musical traditions of the Renaissance or to make them disappear by assimilating them to written polyphonic traditions (as Reinhard Strohm has recently done); Lockwood, for example, pays special attention to the famous singer-lutenist Pietrobono of Ferrara. Attempts such as Strohm's fly in the face of too much musical and anecdotal evidence to be convincing. The stylistic, repertorial, and performative distinctions we have tended to gather under the written/unwritten dichotomy were recognized facts of elite Renaissance music-making. Whatever the degree of overlap between various traditions of unwritten song and written polyphony, we need a clearer explanation of the distinct cultural niches they occupied, either along Pirrotta's or other, yet-to-be-suggested lines.²⁶

²⁴ See Nino Pirrotta, "Music and Cultural Tendencies in Fifteenth-Century Italy" (1966) and "Novelty and Renewal in Italy: 1300–1600" (1973), both reprinted in Nino Pirrotta, *Music and Culture in Italy from the Middle Ages to the Baroque* (Cambridge, MA, 1984), 80–112 and 159–74; also Gary Tomlinson, *Monteverdi and the End of the Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1987).

²⁵ In "Novelty and Renewal," 167, for instance, Pirrotta wrote: "With the spreading of humanistic thoughts and attitudes, the new breed of literati came to despise polyphony as a contrived, unnatural form of musical expression, and to see its procedures and theory as typical examples of medieval lore."

²⁶ For area studies, see Allan W. Atlas, *Music at the Aragonese Court of Naples* (Cambridge, 1985); Lewis Lockwood, *Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 1400–1505* (Cambridge, MA, 1984); and Margaret Bent, "Humanists and Music, Music and Humanities," in *Tendenze e metodi nella ricerca musicologica*, Atti del convegno internazionale (Latino 27–29 sett. 1990), *Historiae musicae cultores* Biblioteca, 71, ed. Raffaele Pozzi (Florence, 1993), 29–38. For Strohm's view of unwritten songs as "reduced or simplified" renderings of written repertory see Reinhard Strohm, *The Rise of European Music, 1380–1500* (Cambridge, 1993), part 4, ch. 4, passim and especially 565–66. Strohm's whole account, which doubts "whether Italy's unwritten music-making was in itself so typically Italian" (542), seems tendentious in its merger of a congeries of song traditions in Italy—some written, some unwritten, some partially written—under the single banner of written polyphonic art-song. Such a merger carries to excess Strohm's more moderate view (585) that across Europe "polyphonic song around 1500 was developing along parallel lines," a view that can still accommodate, within limits, the interaction of practices differing in regional and social affiliation, style, and performance means. For evidence from these years of stylistic and performative distinctions that intersect with questions of written and unwritten transmission see the passages from Paolo Cortesi's *De cardinalatu*, Vincenzo Calmeta's *Life* of Serafino Aquilano, and Castiglione's *Courtier* translated in *Strunk's Source Readings*,

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