

## 11. SIMPLICITY AND COMPLEXITY

### 1. Sext: *Just the newest psalm*

Magníficet te, Dómine, sanctorum tuorum Cosmæ et Damiáni beáta *solémnitas*: qua et illis glóriam *sempitérnam*, et opem nobis ineffábili providéntia contulisti. Per Dominum...

*Let the blessed feast of Thy saints, Cosmas and Damian, magnify Thee, O Lord, for on this day* [huh? I think my Collect website is wrong: they got the ax in September...] *Thou didst, in Thine ineffable providence, confer on them everlasting glory, and on us the resource of their help. Through...*

### 2. Other MSS.

### 3. Simplicity: Cantus Planus Binatim

- a. Reemergence(?) of simple (pre-Leonin) polyphonic traditions
- b. Continues at least until 1750 in Europe and until 1920 in Iceland!
- c. Purely Sacred polyphonic tradition

### 4. Other Sacred traditions: Cuthbert, “Counting our Losses”

- a. Working through the numbers

### 5. Keyboard traditions: the Faenza codex

### 6. The More Subtle Art

- a. Old view: Mannerism

Toward the end of the fourteenth century the evolution of notation led to a phase of unparalleled complexity and intricacy. Musicians, no longer satisfied with the rhythmic subtleties of the *Ars Nova*, began to indulge in complicated rhythmic tricks and in the invention of highly involved methods of notating them. It is in this period that musical notation far exceeds its natural limitations as a servant to music, but rather becomes its master, a goal in itself and an arena for intellectual sophistries. [...]

Frequently these elaborations of notation are mere tricks of affected erudition, since the effects desired could be represented in much simpler ways. In other cases they are indispensable, leading then to a product of such rhythmical complexity that the modern reader may doubt whether an actual performance was ever possible or intended. Regardless of their artistic value, these ‘pathological cases’ are of particular interest to the student of notation. (Willi Apel, *The Notation of Polyphonic Music*, 900–1600. Cambridge, Mass.: The Medieval Academy of America, 1945)

- b. *Augenmusik* — “music for the eyes”
- c. Newer view: struggle between *dulcedo* (sweetness) and *subtilitas* (a more intellectual side). More intellectually sophisticated
- d. Newest View: Anne Stone, 1990s: *Ars subtilior* as precision

- i. Johnny Hodges's Chorus: The Chronological Duke Ellington and his orchestra 1941. "Things Ain't What They Used To Be" (1:20 from end)

## 7. Examples of *subtilitas*

- a. Rossi codex vs. Later versions: *Naschoso el viso*
- b. Later examples of Rhythmic precision: **Mod A**, Zachara Credo no. 21. Rodericus, "Angelorum Psalat"
- c. Zacara, *Sumite Karissime* (one true *subtilior* work. Ciconia also wrote one)
- d. Baude Cordier, *Belle bonne sage*.
- e. Non-"rhythmically precise" *subtilior*: arguments against Anne Stone's view and back toward Willi Apel's: Encoding of Zacara's *Sumite Karissime*.
- f. "I admire her immeasurably.": *Je la remire sans mesure*.
- g. Earlier (mid-century): Rondeau, Machaut, *Ma fin est mon commencement*
- h. Solage, *Fumeux Fume*.

New Office and Office Hours: In 10–265

Office Hours: T, drop-in: 17:00–18:00; D, with prior appointment 17:00–18:00.

Or by appointment (M,W,F)

**Midterm Tuesday**