

REPRESENTATIONS OF MONTEVERDI IN CHARLES BURNEY'S *A GENERAL HISTORY OF MUSIC* AND SIR JOHN HAWKINS' *THE SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF MUSICK*: A STUDY OF CONTRASTING HISTORICAL APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES IN 18<sup>th</sup>-CENTURY ENGLAND

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A thesis submitted to the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Music.

Chapel Hill, NC  
2015

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## ABSTRACT

Stacey A. Garrepy: “Representations of Monteverdi in Charles Burney’s *A General History of Music* and Sir John Hawkins’ *The Science and Practice of Musick*: A Study of Contrasting Historical Approaches and Methodologies in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century England”  
(Under the direction of Mark Evan Bonds)

Nearly a hundred and fifty years following the death of Claudio Monteverdi, British scholars Charles Burney and John Hawkins published some of the first English language histories of music. This thesis traces the characterizations of Claudio Monteverdi and his music in their respective histories, with special emphasis on their treatments of *L’Orfeo* and the Monteverdi-Artusi controversy. I examine the differences between Burney and Hawkins’ historiographical methods, including that of antiquarianism versus Enlightenment-informed ideologies. I also contrast Burney’s view of music as progressing versus Hawkins’ tendency to look backward to the past, which resulted in a kind of ambivalence on the parts of both Burney and Hawkins toward Monteverdi and his 17<sup>th</sup>-century innovations. In closing, I evaluate the implication these writings had on subsequent histories of music, arguing that Hawkins’ method of presenting loosely connected material with minimal analysis would ultimately fall to the wayside, while Burney’s evaluative, style-centered chronological methodology reflects patterns of research that would coalesce in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century into the formal discipline of musicology.

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## Introduction

The purpose of music history is the research and exposition of the way in which the musical products develop; its object are the composers' creations, and precisely their genesis and composition, their belonging to categories according to their similarities and differences, and furthermore the interdependence, industrial evolution, and the impact of every composer.<sup>1</sup>

– **Guido Adler, *Methode der Musikgeschichte*, 1919**

Even prior to the establishment of musicology as an academic discipline in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, one can find in the works of Dr. Charles Burney (1726–1814) and Sir John Hawkins (1719–1789) some of the first English-language histories of music. Modern musicology owes an immense debt to these two historians for the sheer amount of content delivered through these two massive volumes. One can observe in Burney's historical-analytical approach the basis of what would later become Adler's chronological, style-centered methodology of musicology and in Hawkins an outmoded, loosely systematic methodology, which often involved anachronistic examples in his discussion of musical subjects. Though Burney and Hawkins were British contemporaries, their histories of music betray divergent thinking regarding both the nature of music and the process of how to historicize it, though neither author overtly stated the theoretical bases for his musical views.<sup>2</sup>

Maria Semi has illustrated many of these differences between the two scholars in her

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Maria Semi, *Music as a Science of Mankind in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, translated by Timothy Keates (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 107.

<sup>2</sup> Glenn Stanley, "Historiography," *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.

2012 monograph on the development of systematic, scientific musical thought in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Britain. Semi classifies Burney as a historian who arranged composers and their compositions chronologically and by school of thought. She sees Hawkins as an antiquarian, that is, as

...a scholarly figure who spends his life among papers and takes pleasure in research as such. [He is] eclectic in the full sense of the word since the objects of his study need have no connection between them, and the works he produces are brimful of the most extravagant detail and data.<sup>3</sup>

Hawkins formulated his research in a loosely systematic structure, at times melding it with the chronological approach but preferring to wander in and out of historic time periods in his discussion of musical materials.<sup>4</sup> I will build on Semi's work for this thesis, which highlights the differing musical principles and methodologies of Burney and Hawkins, in order to show the two authors' varying organizational approaches, as exemplified in their depictions of Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643). Semi provides the historical backdrop for the explanation of the “science” of music of which Burney and Hawkins spoke during the 18<sup>th</sup> century; I will build on the “practice” aspect as I examine the methodologies of each researcher as seen in their characterizations of the music of Monteverdi.

Why examine Monteverdi in Burney and Hawkins as a case study and not another composer more contemporary to the authors, such as Handel? Monteverdi's depiction merits investigation because the turn of the 17th century is widely regarded today as a watershed moment in Western classical music, and Monteverdi lies at the epicenter of this moment through his arguments with Artusi (1540–1613) over the role of music and text. Monteverdi is also seen as one of the innovators of what he called the *seconda prattica*: the establishment

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<sup>3</sup> Semi, *Music as a Science of Mankind*, 137.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 136.

of monody, greater dependency on the bass line to drive harmonic organization, and the nascent genre of opera.

One can observe in Burney and Hawkins two authors who, though they both had access to primary musical source documents and addressed the same general topic of music's history, employed extremely dissimilar approaches to writing history. Burney's desire to see music as progressing versus Hawkins' tendency to look longingly to music of the *stile antico* as the pinnacle of music resulted in a sort of mutual ambivalence toward Monteverdi and his 17<sup>th</sup>-century innovations. In Burney's case, Monteverdi proved a pivotal figure whose innovations in music qualified him to be discussed and critiqued; this representation is informed by Burney's Enlightenment principles as well as his high regard of Italian music in general. By the time Burney wrote his *History*, however, 173 years had passed since the dramatic innovations of *L'Orfeo*; Monteverdi's innovations were archaic by comparison to modern music of Handel or Purcell. Since Burney primarily lauded contemporary music, Monteverdi's innovations—significant though they may be—would never receive as much praise as composers such as Purcell or Handel. In his *History* Burney compared musical style developments to a ploughed field, in which one year corn is sowed, the next potatoes, and so on, but in which nothing after the harvest each year remains.<sup>5</sup> In this analogy, we can ascertain that Burney the historian saw the merit in Monteverdi's innovations, yet also perceived that England had since moved beyond them. Burney's analogy breaks down, however, when applied to his style-centered approach to music history: if, as Burney asserts, each musical "crop" is in and of itself different, then musical styles do *not* necessarily build upon one another, thus contradicting his methodological approach as seen in his *History*.

Hawkins, the antiquarian more consumed with presentation of the facts themselves, bothered

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<sup>5</sup> Burney, *A History of Music* 2: 380, and quoted in Semi, *Music as a Science of Mankind*, 145.

less with organization and analyses of Monteverdi's merits. Nevertheless, he still communicated an ambivalence based on his own desire to look backward to sacred music of the 16<sup>th</sup> century as the pinnacle from which all music forward was regressing.

As the first substantial English-language histories of music, Burney and Hawkins' volumes represented the burgeoning field of 18<sup>th</sup>-century musical scholarship; yet the publications' individual receptions and impacts were remarkably divergent. This is unsurprising, given that both scholars not only came from different upbringings but also were the first to write in English about topics such as music of the seventeenth century. Aside from foreign language sources like Praetorius' *Syntagma Musicum* (1614–1620) in Latin and Claude-Francois Menestrier's 1681 *Des representations en musique anciennes et modernes* in German, there was little writing about the seventeenth century that was readily available.<sup>6</sup> Burney and Hawkins were, in essence, feeling their way through the process with only a few secondary sources upon which to draw. In the end, Burney's history significantly outsold Hawkins', and Burney became widely regarded as the more authoritative musical scholar. Burney's approach has implications for musicology today, since we still see traces of modern musicological thought in the way in which Burney's history is organized. While generally recognized along with Burney's in its gravity, the details of Hawkins' volume are largely dismissed by the scholarly community, in large part due to the rambling nature and disorganization of his prose.<sup>7</sup> Burney and Hawkins' successes and failures with their publications had several causes, including their differing ideological approaches to music (as

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<sup>6</sup> Hawkins references Menestrier as an authority on the origin of dramatic music in *History of the Science of Musick* Vol. 4, 277–79. Burney cites Menestrier several times sporadically in his *History*, the two most notable being in Vol. 2 of his *History*, 57, when discussing psalms and hymns and Vol. 4, 509 on the invention of recitative. Hawkins cites Praetorius's *Syntagma* only in passing, while Burney ignores the *Syntagma* and largely dismisses Praetorius as “dry, devoid of genius, though correct in harmony” (*A History of Music* 4: 462).

<sup>7</sup> See Semi, *Music as a Science of Mankind*, 137–38.

exemplified in their depiction of Monteverdi) and their contrasting methodologies of research and writing.

In setting the stage for a comparison of approaches and methodologies, I will begin by describing the background and travels of Burney and the archival research of Hawkins, in order to gain an understanding of the impact their source materials had on their scholarship. Second, I will compare both authors' treatment of Monteverdi with special emphasis on *L'Orfeo*. Third, I will address Burney and Hawkins' attitudes toward the Monteverdi-Artusi debate and consider the broader implications at stake in the aesthetic dispute of text-music relationship. Finally, I will consider the reception of Burney and Hawkins and the implications that these two differing methodologies had for subsequent histories.

## **Chapter 1: Ideologies, Background, Travels, and Collections**

Though novel in terms of content, Burney and Hawkins' histories were written in established genres that had been in place since the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Britain. Historian Karen O'Brien traces this movement of constructing historical narratives in England as beginning with military histories in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and later expanding into societal and literary history. Later in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, books began to include high cultural elements such as music, in a phenomenon she defines as "cultural antiquarianism."<sup>8</sup> O'Brien notes that while histories of all kinds were published in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, British readers could readily discern what constituted an authoritative narrative history:

...it was a well-established genre of good, classical pedigree, and its orientation towards élite, educated audiences was usually underscored by expensive, multi-volume, folio formats, dedications to aristocratic or royal personages, and other para-textual material such as appendices, indexes, and endnotes.<sup>9</sup>

Both histories handily fall into this category of "authoritative narrative history" but differ in some critical areas with regard to organization and content. While loosely organized chronologically, Hawkins' history lacks a sense of cohesion and effective argumentation; it stands as more of a dry presentation of facts than an explication of them. Semi focuses on the

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<sup>8</sup> Karen O'Brien, "The History Market In Eighteenth-Century England," in *Books and Their Readers in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century England: New Essays*, edited by Isabel Rivers (New York: Continuum, 2003), 109.

<sup>9</sup> O'Brien, "The History Market," 105.

structural differences in Burney and Hawkins, specifically the number of “detours” Hawkins makes in his presentation of facts:

...Book Five of the General History starts with the reception of the Guidonian system in England, follows the traces of sacred music a little way, then jumps to Provençal song and thence to the genres of secular music. At one point, the author diverges into a reflection on the existing connection between musical practice and the conditions of life and society in individual epochs; and this, in turn, leads him to an excursus, first on Boccaccio and then on Chaucer, as sources for understanding the way of life in the fourteenth century.”<sup>10</sup>

Hawkins tried to follow a systematic approach but often pulled in examples from outside the topic in which he was working; this tactic led to an overall lack of cohesion. And despite its massive amount of content, Hawkins’ publication lacks a workable index (a feature Burney had painstakingly added to his own history). Their approaches to research were indeed vastly different: Hawkins the ineffective systematic organizer, and Burney the chronological codifier. The reception of these books and the continuation of Burney’s methodologies and organizational structures would ultimately differentiate the two further.

### **Biographical Background of Burney and Hawkins**

Charles Burney was born in Shrewsbury in 1726, but he spent his formative years in London. He came from humble beginnings, a fact that his daughter later went to great lengths to conceal in her memoirs of him.<sup>11</sup> British social politics of the 18<sup>th</sup> century distinguished starkly between “trades” and “professions,” of which Burney was considered to be a part of the former. Nevertheless, Burney worked tirelessly to move up the British social ladder, working as an organist and composer, studying with Thomas Arne, and later playing in

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<sup>10</sup> Semi, *Music as a Science of Mankind*, 137.

<sup>11</sup> Kerry S. Grant, *Dr. Burney as Critic and Historian of Music* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), 3.



Handel's orchestra at the Drury Lane Theatre.<sup>12</sup> In 1769 he was awarded honorary bachelor and doctoral degrees from University College in Oxford, having established himself as a composer and conductor. Immediately thereafter, he laid aside his career in performance and began his work in earnest as a scholar, while maintaining music students from London upper class in order to earn his living.<sup>13</sup>

Burney soon found himself overwhelmed by the extensive nature of his project, as well as by the sheer lack of information available to the English-speaking public. He resolved to write a history of music that would find an audience among more than musicians and antiquarians.<sup>14</sup> Burney intended his history to be accessible to the commoner, and yet this history had to appeal to those of upper social status as well. Unlike his rival Hawkins, Burney was an example of a self-made man of the Enlightenment who both revered Rousseau's principles of equality and voraciously acquired students, subscribers, and royal pensions in order to climb the social ladder. Ironically, Burney's status as a tradesman precluded him from possessing an immediate recognition of authority on his subject of musical history, in spite of the fact that he was an accomplished musician and composer. Scholarly authority in the 18<sup>th</sup> century could either be inherited through gentility (as in the case of Hawkins) or established by successful publications (as in Burney's case). Lacking the status of nobleman to afford him an air of validity as a researcher, Burney chose travel writing — an established scholarly manner in the 18<sup>th</sup> century — as a way to establish

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<sup>12</sup> Roger Lonsdale, *Dr. Charles Burney: A Literary Biography* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1986), 19.

<sup>13</sup> Lonsdale, *A Literary Biography* 79, and Kerry S. Grant, "Charles Burney," *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.

<sup>14</sup> Lonsdale, *A Literary Biography*, 84.

authority in the eyes of the general public.<sup>15</sup> Vanessa Agnew avers that Burney's travels served as social uplift for him, and were it not for his travels, he would not have been able to climb the social ladder and overcome his lowly status as a tradesman.<sup>16</sup>

In early 1770 Burney made plans to travel through France and Germany to Italy, obtaining letters of introduction to envoys and representatives of the Court from his influential friends, most notably Italian expatriate friends who were living in England at the time.<sup>17</sup> On June 5, 1770, Burney departed from Dover for France, where he stayed for two weeks before continuing on to Italy.<sup>18</sup> During his time in Italy he stayed in Bologna with Padre Martini. Martini, an Italian violinist, composer, and author was compiling his own history of ancient musics titled *Storia della Musica* and was at an advanced state of research at the time of Burney's visit. Burney and Martini's histories had very little overlap, owing both to the language difference and also the disparity in foci for their histories: Burney the comprehensive historian and Martini, who focused on the music of the ancients. Howard Brofsky typifies their relationship as entirely dissimilar both in education and also in philosophical background, asserting that as a scholar informed by Enlightenment philosophies, Burney respected the works of Voltaire and Rousseau and believed strongly that music was "progressing" and had its culmination in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Italian opera. Brofsky articulates that Burney saw music as an "innocent luxury," while Martini, as a devout

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<sup>15</sup> In the context of history writing of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, claims of authenticity were often dependent upon successful publication runs of one's writing and were thus cyclical in nature. Success in publication denoted authenticity, which drove the author to write more, furthering the cycle. See Karen O'Brien, "The History Market In Eighteenth-Century England," in *Books and Their Readers in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century England: New Essays*, ed. Isabel Rivers, 105–33 (New York: Continuum Publishers, 2003), 105–133.

<sup>16</sup> Vanessa Agnew, *Enlightenment Orpheus: The Power of Music in Other Worlds* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 23–24.

<sup>17</sup> Lonsdale, *A Literary Biography*, 85–86.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

Franciscan monk, held firmly to the supremacy of church music, even as society in Italy was becoming increasingly secularized.<sup>19</sup>

Martini warmly welcomed Burney as a guest during his stay in Italy. Burney wrote of his friendship with Padre Martini, “Upon so short an acquaintance I never liked any man more...It was impossible for confidence to be more cordial, especially between two persons whose pursuit was the same.”<sup>20</sup> As collegial and mutually deferential as this friendship was, Burney appears to have been somewhat disappointed in Martini’s final product of research. Martini’s history only covered ancient musics, and it was also was something of a recondite account, as Burney relays<sup>21</sup>:

As yet [Martini] has treated only the driest and most abstruse part of the subject [of music], in which he had great opportunities to shew his reading and knowledge, which are deep and extensive, but none to display the excellence of his character, which is such as inspires not only respect but kindness.<sup>22</sup>

We can ascertain from this quote that Burney was dismayed that the style in which Padre Martini wrote did not accurately reflect Martini’s warmth and kindness in person that Burney had experienced. Perhaps by producing a history that was organized chronologically and was assertive in its opinions, Burney was attempting to make his own personal magnanimity shine through his *History*, contrasting himself with older scholars who wrote in the more rambling antiquarian style such as Martini and Hawkins.

While we cannot substantiate whether or not Padre Martini took Burney to hear

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<sup>19</sup> Howard Brofsky, “Doctor Burney and Padre Martini: Writing A General History of Music,” *Musical Quarterly* 65, No. 3 (Jul. 1979), 339–40.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Lonsdale, 89–90.

<sup>21</sup> Howard Brofsky and Sergio Durante relay that Martini was only able to finish three of his total five volumes before his death. Of the three volumes published, Martini only got as far as music of ancient Greece. See Brofsky/Durante, “Giovanni Battista Martini,” *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/24463>.

<sup>22</sup> Brofsky, “Doctor Burney and Padre Martini,” 316–17.

*performances* of Monteverdi's music, we can surmise that Burney came into contact with large quantities of Monteverdi's music through Martini. We know that Martini's collection of printed music and manuscripts was extensive, given that Burney completed much of his own research and study in Martini's personal library.<sup>23</sup> Martini's library contained manuscripts and prints by both masters of *stile antico*, such as Orlando di Lasso, Jachet of Mantua, Palestrina, Luca Marenzio, Giaches de Wert, and Ludovico Viadana, as well as masters of the *stile moderno* such as Monteverdi.<sup>24</sup> Burney returned to England not only with information for his forthcoming book, but also with musical prints, treatises, and manuscripts. The music from Burney's estate sale confirms that he had in his possession music composed by Monteverdi; he possessed the 1620 and 1621 reprint of the first six madrigal books listed as "*Madrigali, a 5 Voce*," as well as the 1641 edition of the Seventh Book in six voices.<sup>25</sup> While Burney's personal music collection includes none of Monteverdi's dramatic or sacred works, his writings attend primarily to Monteverdi's dramatic works and madrigals. Only one mention is made of the sacred music, and even then only in comparison with the innovative harmonies in the madrigals:

And it seems to have been by design, and in his dramatic experiments at the expression of words, that he ventured to violate ancient rules, and militate against prejudice and pedantry: for neither his Church Music, nor the two first books of his madrigals, contain any licences [sic] that would offend or surprise orthodox ears,

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<sup>23</sup> Burney also shipped many of his primary sources that he acquired on the Continent back to London prior to his return. Presumably, all of his collecting added up to a substantial collection, for Burney had reported to his friend Samuel Crisp that when he came home he found many of his resources and manuscripts he had sent home still "very much dispersed." See Lonsdale, 90, 98.

<sup>24</sup> Anne Schnoebelen, "The Growth of Padre Martini's Library as Revealed in his Correspondence," *Music and Letters* 57, no. 4 (1976): 379–80. Also, see Schnoebelen's annotated index of Martini's letters for a more complete study of his library: *Padre Martini's Collection of Letters in the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale in Bologna : An Annotated Index* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1979).

<sup>25</sup> Charles Burney and A. Hyatt King, *Catalogue of the Music Library of Charles Burney, sold in London, 8 August 1814* (1973; repr., Amsterdam: Frits Knuf, 1973), 15.

even in the fifteenth century.<sup>26</sup>

John Hawkins (1719–1776) was born into a noble family from London. He apprenticed under attorney and solicitor John Scott. Scott proved a tough taskmaster for the young nobleman. Hawkins would often awaken at 4:00 am, studying both law books and famous literary works, and he became familiar with law, literature, and poetry.<sup>27</sup> As a nobleman and magistrate, Hawkins had not only a profession, but also the social quality that Burney lacked: gentility. Hawkins' daughter Matilda remarked that “profession constitutes gentility and a trade does not.”<sup>28</sup> As a lawyer and member of the House of Lords, Hawkins possessed this sort of gentility as a distinguishing characteristic.

Hawkins' elevated social circle served him well in the course of his research and writing. During the 1740's his associations with men such as celebrated lutenist and lawyer John Immyns allowed him to join the Academy of Ancient Music, where he became friends with well-known musicians, such as G.F. Handel (who shared a professional connection with Burney via Handel's orchestra) and John Stanley, the celebrated blind organist and composer, as well as Johan Christopher Pepusch.<sup>29</sup> Hawkins even became one of the first members of Samuel Johnson's elite “Turk's Head Club,” which boasted such members as

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<sup>26</sup> Charles Burney, *A General History of Music, Vol. 4* (London: T. Becket, J. Robson, and G. Robinson, 1776–1789), 190–91.

<sup>27</sup> Percy Scholes, “Sir John Hawkins,” *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.

<sup>28</sup> Edward Green, “The Impact of Rousseau on the Histories of Burney and Hawkins: A Story in the Ethics of Musicology,” in *Music's Intellectual History*, edited by Zdravko Blažeković and Barbara Dobbs Mackenzie (New York: Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale, 2009), 162.

<sup>29</sup> Bertram H. Davis, *A Proof of Eminence: The Life of Sir John Hawkins* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), 54.

Oliver Goldsmith, Edmund Burke, and Joshua Reynolds.<sup>30</sup> Hawkins would continue to harness the power of his influential connections throughout the course of collecting materials for his *History*. Colleagues such as Pepusch, whom Hawkins called “a dry composer, [yet] one of the greatest theoretic musicians of the modern times” supplied primary source documents for Hawkins to perform his research and deeded much of his own personal library to Hawkins.<sup>31</sup> Unlike Burney, Hawkins had not traveled through the Continent in order to research material for his *History*, preferring instead to do his archival research at the British Museum and by correspondence with his colleagues in scholarly institutions.<sup>32</sup>

According to his daughter, Hawkins received much of the encouragement to write his *History of Music* from Horace Walpole (1717–1797). Walpole was a well-known politician, art historian and antiquarian for whom the Middle Ages was a “bric-a-brac shop from which he could pick out material for an elegant and (inaccurate) historical essay.”<sup>33</sup> From Hawkins’ publications, we know that Walpole provided much of the primary source material from which Hawkins drew. Walpole’s name surfaces in Hawkins’ discussion of Italian-born painter and engraver Nicholas Lanieri, whom Hawkins came to know by way of Walpole; Hawkins then drifts into a discussion regarding Italian descent in musicians and Italian innovations:

During the reign of James I [1603–1625], the household musicians, those of the chapel, and many others of eminence, whom the patronage of Elizabeth had produced, were neglected, and very little of the royal favour was extended to any besides Lanieri and Coperario and for this it will not be difficult to align a reason: the one [Lanieri] was Italian by birth, and the other [Coperario] had lived in Italy till his style,

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<sup>30</sup> Percy Scholes, “Sir John Hawkins,” *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.

<sup>31</sup> Davis, *A Proof of Eminence*, 54–55.

<sup>32</sup> Percy Scholes, “Sir John Hawkins,” *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.

<sup>33</sup> Antiquarian scholar Stuart Piggott, quoted in Rosemary Sweet, “Antiquaries and Antiquities in Eighteenth-Century England,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34, no. 2 (Winter, 2001): 182.

and even his very name, were so Italianized, that he was in general taken for a native of that country: these men brought into England the *Stylo Recitativo*, as it is called in the masque mentioned by Mr. Walpole and improved by Claudio Monteverde.<sup>34</sup>

Hawkins seems to be giving credit to Walpole for recognizing the introduction of the Italian dramatic recitative style into England; at the very least, Hawkins leans heavily on Walpole as a substantial source of information. In 1733 Walpole recorded in his “Book of Materials” no fewer than 25 notes on English musicians, which were collected specifically for Hawkins.<sup>35</sup>

Hawkins also drew on sources in such places as the Oxford Music School (at which he was allowed in as a guest of his friend Thomas Hawkins, the chaplain of Magdalen College,), as well as the Bodleian Library.<sup>36</sup> Throughout the research process, Hawkins relied on his influential friends throughout the British Isles to supply him with the needed primary source documents to complete his *History*. The social position of Hawkins’ informants appeared to determine the authority of the source for him (and indeed, Hawkins’ position as a nobleman was his own claim to authority in the first place). By 1776, he had completed and published his *History* in all five volumes.

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<sup>34</sup> Sir John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Musick*, Book 3, (London: Payne, 1776), 381.

<sup>35</sup> W.S. Lewis Collection “Book of Materials,” cited in Davis, *A Proof of Eminence*, 115.

<sup>36</sup> Davis, *A Proof of Eminence*, 118–19.

## **Chapter 2: Summary of Monteverdi's Representation**

Both Hawkins and Burney's histories contain brief accounts of Monteverdi's life and significant compositions. However, in both volumes, the literary real estate dedicated to Monteverdi is diminutive when compared to other composers. The number of times a composer is mentioned within the context of a whole is significant because it gives a glimpse into the importance that the historian placed on the composer and his output. The table below gives a snapshot of the number of pages dedicated to Monteverdi (Italian/*stile moderno*) compared to two other composers: Morley (English/*stile antico*) and Palestrina (Italian/*stile antico*). This is not to diminish the substance of Burney and Hawkins' arguments by reducing them to a simple matter of composers and page counts, but rather to give another means of comparison in the course of evaluating Monteverdi's representation in these authors.

Author	Total Pages	Pages for Monteverdi	Pages for Morley	Pages for Palestrina
Burney	1831	23	25	47
Hawkins	2565	17	96	84

**Figure 1. Pages dedicated to Monteverdi, Morley, and Palestrina**

Compared with Burney's entire output, the number of pages on which he mentions Monteverdi comprises only 1.25% of his four-volume *History*. By comparison, Hawkins' references to Monteverdi cover only 0.67% of his five-volume *History*. Out of Hawkins' total 2565 pages, Monteverdi's biographical information takes up a scant two paragraphs on



a *single* page.

Both Burney and Hawkins acknowledged Palestrina's profound musical contributions and gave him appropriate representation in their histories. References to Palestrina comprise 2.6% of Burney's total page count; Hawkins' citations of Palestrina encompass 3.2% of his total page count. Burney likewise makes comparable room to include the Englishman Thomas Morley, who wrote in the older *stile antico* style, referencing him on twenty-five separate pages (1.4% of the total). By comparison, Hawkins mentions Thomas Morley 96 times and Palestrina 84 times! It appears that Hawkins suffered from either a lack of resources or lack of desire to give Monteverdi individual space in his history.

In terms of the individual musical compositions referenced, Hawkins and Burney are fairly consistent. Both authors point out specifically that Monteverdi set Rinuccini's *L'Arianna* and *L'Orfeo*; *L'Orfeo* is arguably more notably represented, owing to the fact that most of the music for *L'Arianna* is lost. Burney gives a four-page feature to the five-voice *Straccia mi pur il core* from the Third Book of Madrigals, a composition that Hawkins either lacked access to or neglected in his own *History*. Neither author mentions Monteverdi's church music specifically the 1610 *Vespers* and the 1641 *Selve Morale e Spirituale* are omitted from both accounts.

### **Hawkins: Omission and Accuracy of Details**

When compared with Burney's publication, Hawkins' *History* suffers from omission of critical details relating to Monteverdi's life and output. Hawkins fails to list dates for Monteverdi's birth and death. Monteverdi would not even be recognized as an exceptional composer, were it not both for his aesthetic tiff with Artusi and his madrigals and motets.

Hawkins gives a nod to Monteverdi's dramatic compositions in the beginning of his section on Monteverdi:

Claudio Monteverde, maestro di cappella of the church of St. Mark at Venice, was a famous composer of motets and madrigals, and flourished about the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the last century. In the year 1600 he became engaged in a dispute with some of the ablest musicians of his time, occasioned by certain madrigals of his, in which the dissonances were taken in a manner not warranted by the practice of other musicians. The particulars of this controversy are related by Artusi in the second part of his treatise, 'De Imperfettioni della moderna Musica.'<sup>37</sup>

Hawkins focuses only on Monteverdi's dramatic achievements in opera for the majority of his relatively brief biographical section. Despite Monteverdi being employed at one of the greatest centers of sacred music of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Hawkins' account of the composer contains nothing on the composer's many accomplishments at St. Mark's. Rather, Monteverdi's career is reduced to his argument with Artusi over dissonances, as well as his dramatic innovations. I propose two potential reasons for this glaring omission: first, and most obvious, is that Hawkins had scant access to any of Monteverdi's sacred music. The catalogue of the British Museum (where Hawkins would have done his primary research) lists multiple compositions by Monteverdi in its catalogues: for example, *I bei legami* from the *Scherzi Musicale* and *La Giovinetta* from the Third Book of Madrigals. However, missing from Monteverdi representation in the British Museum, are pieces which are sacred in genre.<sup>38</sup> Second, and more speculative in nature, I suspect that, given the great affinity he had for the *stile antico* (and his association with organizations such as the Academy of Ancient Music), writing in this style became associated with gentility and refinement for

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<sup>37</sup> Hawkins, *History of the Science of Musick* 4: 77.

<sup>38</sup> Augustus Hughes-Hughes, *Catalogue of Manuscript Music in the British Museum*, vol. 2 (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1965), 164, 166. Volumes 1 (Sacred Vocal Music) and 3 (Instrumental Music, Treatises) were consulted in the process as well.

Hawkins. As he speaks of Palestrina, the great master of *stile antico*, Hawkins describes Palestrina's printer Petrus Phalesius, as a learned man with refined tastes, going on to celebrate the "dignity of style" of Palestrina:

There are also extant of [Palestrina's] composition Motets and Hymns for 4, 5, and 6 voices, printed in large folio, and published in 1589. Some of these motets were also printed in a collection intitled [sic] 'Florilegium facrarum cantionum quinque vocum pro diebus dominicus et festis totius anni, e celeberrimis nostri temporis musicis.' This collection was given to the world in 1609 by Petrus Phalesius, a printer of Antwerp, who was a man of learning, and, as it should seem, a lover of music, for he published many other collections of music, and before his house had the sign of King David playing on the harp. It is in the motets of Palestrina that we discover that grandeur and dignity of style, that artful modulation and sweet interchange of new and original harmonies, for which he is so justly celebrated with respect to these excellencies let the following composition speak for him.<sup>39</sup>

That Hawkins featured the Artusi controversy at the forefront of his discussion of Monteverdi gives the subtle impression that he saw the composer as one who lacked that certain quality of gentility by not heeding the established traditions of the *stile antico*.

Hawkins does recognize Monteverdi for his role in the invention of recitative, noting that

Monteverde is celebrated for his skill in recitative, a style of music of which he may be said to have been one of the inventors; at least there are no examples of recitative more ancient than are to be found in his opera of Orfeo, from which an extract is inserted in the next preceding volume of this work; and indeed it may with truth be said that Monteverde was the father of the theatric style.<sup>40</sup>

However, Hawkins seems unsure of his facts and hedges somewhat when discussing Monteverdi's years in the service of the Gonzaga family at Mantua.

It seems that before his advancement to the dignity of chapel-master of St. Mark's, he was chapel-master to the duke of Mantua, for he is so styled in his fifth book of

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<sup>39</sup> Hawkins, *History of the Science of Musick* 3: 174.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

madrigals represented at Venice in the year 1612. Monteverde was one of the original members of the Accademia Filomusi, erected at Bologna in the year 1622. Some very fine madrigals of his composition are extant in the collections published by Pietro Phalesio and others, about the year 1600.<sup>41</sup>

Hawkins seems not to recognize Monteverdi's profound historical significance in the grand scheme of musical history. While scholars may find this lack of recognition troubling today, one must remember that Hawkins worked with the limited resources he had at his own disposal in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Even with the vast amounts of musical knowledge currently available, present-day historians still work with incomplete records, and the study of history is a constant reevaluation of source materials and their significance. Such was the case with Hawkins' *History*, and even with his rival Burney's *History*, as we will see.

### **Burney: *Stile Antico* and *Stile Moderno***

Burney's account of Monteverdi is decidedly more detailed than Hawkins', as he fleshes out both Monteverdi's history and stylistic patterns. Describing Monteverdi's development as a composer in Mantua, he declares:

He first distinguished himself as a performer on the Tenor Viol; and being taken into the service of the Duke of Mantua, applied himself to the study of composition under the direction of Marcantonio Ingegneri, of Cremona, Maestro di Capella of that court, and a considerable composer for the church. Soon after he went to Venice, where the republic appointed him Maestro of St. Mark's church [1613], a place which has been always filled by professors of great abilities.<sup>42</sup>

Burney also demarcates Monteverdi stylistically, classifying him in what he calls the "Lombard School," along with Costanza Porta and Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, crediting

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<sup>41</sup> Hawkins, *History of the Science of Musick* 4: 77–78.

<sup>42</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 4: 190.

Padre Martini with the discovery of this school of thought.<sup>43</sup> He also acknowledges Monteverdi's watershed place in history and looks to him as one who formed a "memorable epoch" in music's history. Burney writes, "As the innovations of Monteverdes [sic] form a memorable epoch in the history of the art, it seems necessary to acquaint the musical reader in what they consisted."<sup>44</sup> He then summarizes the elements of the *stile antico*, though not naming it as such, and arguing that the pleasures of the ear and the rules arising from the same were what compelled men to write in this style:

The laws of harmony, like those of tragedy, comedy, and epic poetry, when once established check invention, and frequently impel men of real genius to become imitators. Unluckily musicians had not such perfect models before them, as antiquity has furnished to poets in the dramatic works of Sophocles, Euripides, and Terence, or the epic poems of Homer and Virgil... However, men were too great friends to the pleasure of the ear, not to encourage such happy licences as those with which Monteverde was charged; and since that time, every fortunate breach of an old rule seems to be regarded as the establishment of a new, by which means, the code is so enlarged that we may now almost pronounce every thing to be allowable in a musical composition, that does not offend cultivated ears.<sup>45</sup>

According to Burney, a transgressing of the rules is acceptable so long as it did not offend those whose ears had been trained musically. Breaking the rules of *stile antico* counterpoint (*à la* Palestrina) was almost to be regarded as the founding of a new rule. This perspective betrays Burney's Enlightenment sensibilities, in that a rule could be broken and indeed, a new one established, so long as it is acceptable by those in charge of keeping musical standards: presumably, those who had received musical training. So strong was this need to appeal to those with musical discernment that before his first volume was published, Burney felt the need to justify his foray into music of "barbaric periods" (*i.e.* musics of

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 183.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 191–192.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 190–191.

ancient Greece) to people of good taste by reminding them that he would eventually cover the topic of modern music in another volume in his history. More importantly, Burney was reassuring his readers that his investigation of older musics had not impaired or somehow tainted his taste for modern music.<sup>46</sup>

In highlighting Burney's apparent affinity for modern music, I am not implying in any way that Burney held the masters of *stile antico* in contempt. Burney greatly admired Italian music, and he gives great deference for the esteemed *stile antico* master Palestrina:

Palestrina having brought his style to such perfection, that the best compositions which have been produced for the church since his time are proverbially said to be *alla Palestrina*, it seems as if this were the place to discuss its merit. Though good taste has banished fugue, canon, and elaborate compositions from Dramatic Music, yet sound judgment has still retained them in the Church; to which, from the little use that is made of them elsewhere, they are now in a manner appropriated.<sup>47</sup>

Burney approves of the use of the style *alla Palestrina* in the Church, while the dramatic style reigns in the secular realm. To Burney, the aesthetic of the sacred and secular are completely separate and as such encompass two different styles: *stile antico* for the Church and *stile moderno* for secular productions.

In his discussion of the *stile moderno*, Burney displays ambivalence toward Monteverdi. He qualifies his praise of Monteverdi's innovation, writing that he "was one of the *more eminent composers* of the period under consideration."<sup>48</sup> Burney does not name Monteverdi "the most eminent composer" or even "the most eminent Italian composer" but rather "one of the more eminent composers." Burney's hedging of Monteverdi's eminence

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<sup>46</sup> Lonsdale, *A Literary Biography*, 190.

<sup>47</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 2: 161.

<sup>48</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 4: 190 (emphasis mine).

reemerges in several other areas, particularly that of his discussion of *L'Orfeo*, to which I now turn my attention.

### **Chapter 3: *L'Orfeo***

Despite their differences regarding Monteverdi's significance in the history of music, both Burney and Hawkins recognized *L'Orfeo* as a towering dramatic work of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The similarities, however, end at that point. Burney makes use of *L'Orfeo* as a way to show explicitly how Monteverdi wed music and text in the form of recitative and also place him in the context of other dramatic composers of the time. Hawkins, on the other hand, in keeping with his antiquarian heritage, presents the musical evidence and allows it to speak for itself. On the whole, Burney presents himself as one who has done the thorough comparisons needed in order not only to effectively tell, but also to *show* Monteverdi as the dramatic innovator he was. Burney's analyses are peppered with value statements throughout, giving the reader no uncertainty regarding his affinity for "modern" (*i.e.* post-1600) music. On the contrary, Hawkins presents evidence of Monteverdi's innovation in terms of recitative and instrumentation but rarely delivers any value judgments thereon and draws few conclusions of his own, leaving the reader to evaluate Monteverdi solely on the evidence presented in the form of long excerpts.

#### **Burney on *L'Orfeo***

Burney calls attention to the "new modulations and discords," which Monteverdi "hazarded, seemingly for the first time" in the recitative in *L'Orfeo*; it is precisely this



innovative harmonic aspect of the opera that seems to make the greatest impression upon Burney.<sup>49</sup> He compliments Orpheus' recitative in Act II of *L'Orfeo*:

The best piece of recitative that I have been able to find in the whole opera seems to be the scene, page 39, where Orpheus, after hearing of the death of Euridice, determines to quit the world, and descend into the infernal regions to try the power of song over Charon, Cerberus, and Pluto, in prevailing on them to restore his Euridice. In this recitative there are several new modulations and discords hazarded, seemingly, for the first time: such as the sharp seventh with the fourth and second, extreme sharp sixth, & etc.<sup>50</sup>

Burney appears to be in agreement with Monteverdi's implicit assertion that the power of music and text to extricate dramatic meaning gives credence to breaking of the rules of counterpoint. He works analytically describing *L'Orfeo*, even going so far as to compare several different versions of recitative by masters of the style (such as Cavelieri, Peri, and Caccini) and carefully chooses the excerpts to use as examples that signify unifying similarities in style.

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<sup>49</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 4: 519.

<sup>50</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 4: 525.



**Figure 2. Burney's comparison of similar passages in *L'Orfeo*.<sup>51</sup>**

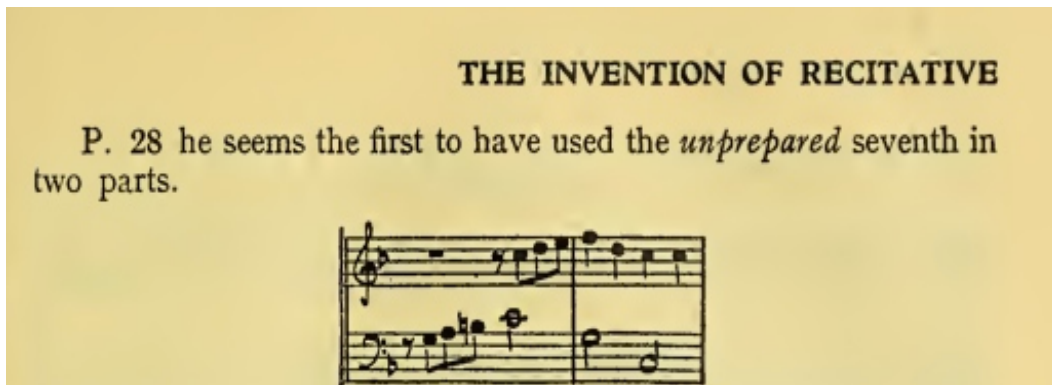
Burney was not necessarily in favor of every one of Monteverdi's musical practices that he established or even all of Monteverdi's publications as a whole. Burney exhibited ambivalence toward the publication quality of Monteverdi's scores in his assessments,<sup>52</sup> Evidence of Burney's inconsistency can be seen in his account of *L'Orfeo*; Burney writes that "The work [*L'Orfeo*] is so ill-printed, that some sagacity is necessary to discover the

<sup>51</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 4: 523.

<sup>52</sup> Burney was driven by an intense desire to advance his career forward and be liked by the general public, and this often manifested itself in ambivalence in his writings. Even if he held a certain belief about a composer or musical composition, a fear that expressing it would ostracize him in the eyes of the public often led him to mask his true views. See Kerry S. Grant, "Critic in Conflict," in *Dr. Burney as Critic and Historian of Music* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), 11.

errors of the press from those of the composer.”<sup>53</sup> Burney inserts carefully selected score examples from *L’Orfeo* in his text, so as to guide his reader and exemplify where the printer went wrong (and perhaps show his own sagacity in uncovering those “errors”).

Publishing errors were not the only target of Burney’s criticism. He also points out several “errors” in Monteverdi’s own compositional style, going out of his way to note the offending unprepared seventh in *L’Orfeo*. However, Burney qualifies his remark by saying that Cavalieri had done something like it in the first act of his *Rappresentazione di ’Anima, et di Corpo*.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps, in retrospect, those “errors” of Monteverdi’s did not hold as much stigma for Burney as they did for Hawkins.<sup>55</sup> For Monteverdi was the first to make these “errors,” but they were errors only because of the established *prima pratica* tradition of the time.



**Figure 3. Burney’s notation of the unprepared seventh in *L’Orfeo*.**

As he discusses Monteverdi’s compositions, Burney commits what may be considered a terrible insult to Monteverdi’s innovations: comparing the composer’s signature

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<sup>53</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 4: 525.

<sup>54</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 4: 519.

<sup>55</sup> Though Hawkins had an explicit preference for sixteenth-century (*stile antico*) music, he neglects to point out the “errors” Monteverdi made in such compositions as *Cruda Amarilli*.

hemiola rhythm in Act II of *L'Orfeo* to that of the Italian-born, French-nationalized Lully.

Burney found Lully (and indeed, nearly all of French music) insufferable in terms of artistry:

In the ritornel of page 32 there are more frequent changes of measure than in any of Lulli's French operas, where it has been imagined that the expression or metre of the words was thought to require broken measures; but this ritornel or symphony, which the reader will see on the next plates, is purely instrumental.<sup>56</sup>

In Burney's eyes, meter can be broken (another "error" in terms of musical composition) so long as it serves the rhetorical purpose of bringing out the text. Burney has shown that he has no particular qualms against breaking rules *per se*, provided that the rules broken contribute toward the overall aesthetic goal of bringing out the text. However, lilting rhythms such as the hemiola in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* provide a feeling of broken rhythms but have no connection to the text. Likewise, the "Passacaglia" of Lully's *Armide* is purely instrumental, having no apparent link to the text, and provides the same sort of lilting, broken meter, thus leaving it open to Burney's scorn.



**Figure 4. Burney's reproduction of the hemiola in the ritornello of Act II of *L'Orfeo*.**

Perhaps in a subtle way, Burney desired to contrast these two foreign composers (Monteverdi and Lully) with the operas of Purcell, the Englishman who did not engage in such metrical shifts. So enamored was Burney with Purcell's dramatic music that he argued that while other older styles would eventually die out and be forgotten, Purcell's would live on in

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<sup>56</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 4: 519.

Britain's cultural memory:

So changeable is taste in Music, and so transient the favour of any particular style, that its history is like that of a ploughed field such a year it produced wheat, such a year barley, peas, or clover; and such a year lay fallow. But none of its productions remain, except, perhaps a small part of last year's crop, and the corn or weeds that now cover its surface. Purcell, however, was such an excellent cultivator of his farm in Parnassus, that its crops will be long remembered, even after time has devoured them...His songs seem to contain whatever the ear could then wish, or heart could feel. My father, who was nineteen years of age when Purcell died, remembered his person very well, and the effect his anthems had on himself and the public at the time that many of them were first heard; and used to say, that 'no other vocal Music was listened to with pleasure, for near thirty years after Purcell's death; when they gave way only to the favourite opera songs of Handel.'<sup>57</sup>

Burney says nothing particularly negative about the Purcell, and he does highlight dramatic moments even in his sacred pieces, in which the rhetorical effect of the text is enhanced by the music. For Burney, whether discussing the Purcell or Monteverdi, the Baroque styling of *musica rappresentativa* appears to be of prime interest when discussing effectiveness of the composer at hand.

### **Hawkins on *L'Orfeo***

Like Burney, Hawkins seems convinced of the historical significance of *L'Orfeo*; he gives a total of six pages to reproduce the music of Apollo's entire Act V recitative and three pages of text to describe the musical structure of the drama and the instruments used:

The opera then begins with a speech in recitative by a shepherd, which is immediately succeeded by a chorus of five parts in counterpoint, directed to be sung to the sound of all the instruments. Other choruses are directed to be sung to the sound of guitars, violins, and flutes, as particularly mentioned in the opera: solo airs there are none; but Recitatives, Chorusses, and Ritornellos, Terzetti, Duetti, make up the whole of this opera, which concludes with what the author calls a Moresca; this is a composition in five parts, merely instrumental, and conjectured to be the tune of a dance a la Moresca, or after the fashion of the Moors, who it is well known long before this time settled in Spain, and introduced into that kingdom many customs which were adopted in other countries.

A specimen of recitative music, in the form which it was originally conceived, cannot

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<sup>57</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 4: 380, 382–83.

at this day be deemed as a curiosity; as must also an air in one of the first operas ever composed: for these reasons the following dialogue and duetto are inserted, taken from the fifth act of the *Orfeo* of Claudio Monteverde.<sup>58</sup>

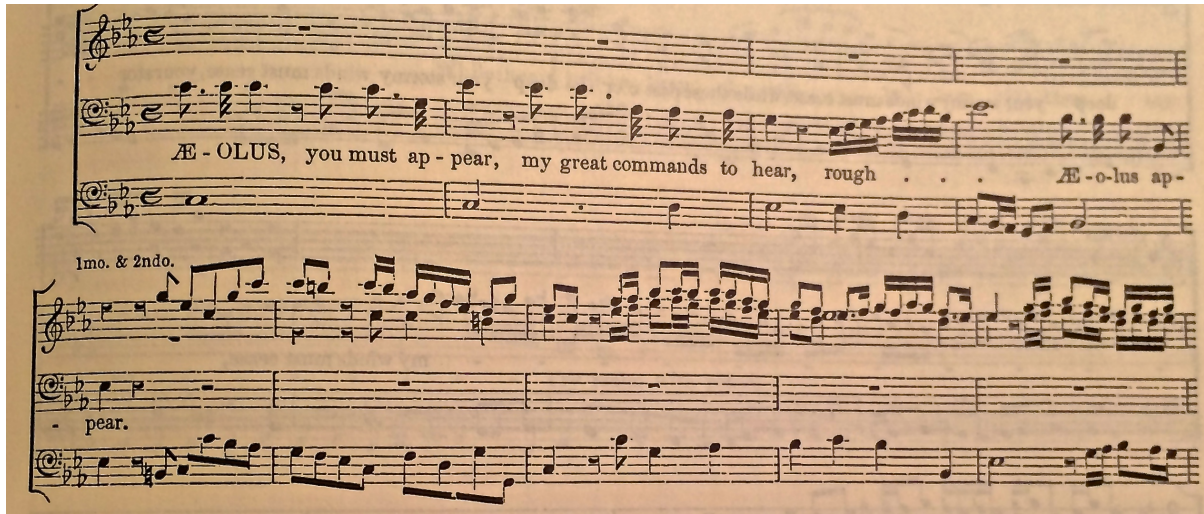
Aside from the descriptions of the instrumentation and structure of the drama, however, Hawkins gives scant musical analysis or commentary. In so doing, he expects the music to speak for itself. In addition, he gives no rationale to why he chooses Act V for his representative example. We can surmise one of several scenarios for Hawkins' tacit rationale in choosing Act V: first, that he saw this particular recitative as representative of Monteverdi's dramatic style. Hawkins' overall lack of commentary on the composer does not support this conjecture however. The second scenario is that since Hawkins drew upon his colleagues in order to acquire his sources, he simply enumerated whatever scores of *L'Orfeo* he had at his disposal: in this case, Act V. This is the more likely scenario, as it was his pattern to give whatever information he had available and allow the reader to formulate his or her own conclusions and interpretations. In an example from his account of Henry Purcell (about whom Hawkins had much more at his disposal in terms of primary source materials), he presented a recitative from Purcell's semi-opera *The Tempest*, in the course of discussing *Orpheus Britannicus*, noting:

It is conceived that the *Orpheus Britannicus* suffered not a little from the impatience of those who were contributors to the expense of it; for had due time been allowed, there would have been found among the author's compositions, particularly his music for plays, a great number of songs, for the omission whereof no reason but that above can be assigned. To go no farther, in the *Tempest* are many recitatives and songs equally good with the best in the *Orpheus Britannicus*; and if this should be doubted, let the following, taken from that drama, and which has never been printed, speak for itself.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Hawkins, *History of the Science of Musick* 3: 432.

<sup>59</sup> Hawkins, *History of the Science of Musick* 4: 511.



**Figure 5. A portion of Hawkins' transcription of recitative from Purcell's *The Tempest*.**

In breaking with his regular practice of reserving value judgments, Hawkins is deeming recitatives in *The Tempest* to be “equally good with the best” in *Orpheus Britannicus*.

Presentation of only one recitative amongst a collection does fall in line with the previously stated goals of antiquarian collectors and writers: publish material that had not, as yet, been disseminated, and allow the material to be interpreted by the reader at will. However, the value judgment that Hawkins assigns to *The Tempest* brings into question his motivation when compared to his rather aloof treatment of Monteverdi.



Figure 6. Apollo's recitative in *L'Orfeo*, as transcribed in Hawkins' *History*.

Chap. I. AND PRACTICE OF MUSIC. 433

Apollo descende in una nuvola cantando.

PERCH'a lo sdegno & al dolor inpreda Co-  
 si ti doni d'ing-lia? Non è nonè consiglio Di gene-roso pet-  
 to seruiral proprio af-fet to Quinci biasmo e periglio  
 Già soua star ti veggia Onde mouo dal Ciel per dar-  
 ti ai-ù Hor tu m'ascolta en'haurai lo - - deevi-  
 Vol. III. N n n

ORFEO

-ta Padre cer-te-se al maggior vo po'arri-vi  
 Ch'a dispera-to fine Con estre-mo do-lo-re  
 M'hauian condotto già - sdegna & A-more eccomi dunqua  
 - tenta tue ra-gioni Celeste padre hor cio' che vuoi m'imponi

APOLLO

Troppo trop-po giois-ti Di tua lieta ven-tu-ra



Hor troppo piagni Tua forte acerba e du-ra  
ancor non fai Come nulla qua giù diletta e  
du-ra? Dun-que se goder bra-mi immortal

vi-ta Vientenemeco-al Ciel ch'a se t'in vi-ta.

ORFEO  
Si non vedro piu mai De l'amata Eu-ri-

APOLLO  
dice i dolci ra-i Nel fo-le e nelle stelle Vagegge-

ORFEO  
rai le sue sembianze belle Ben di cotanto Padre farci non

degno figlio se non seguisci il tuo fedel consiglio.

Apollo, & Orfeo ascende  
al cielo, cantando.

SALIAM - - - - - Saliam  
Sali- - - - -  
Sali- - - - -



can-tan

d'al

can-tan

Cie-lo Doue ha uir-tù ve-ra

d'al Cie-lo Doue ha uir-tù ve-ra

ce Degno premio di fe-di-let

ce Degno premio di fe

toe pace Doue ha virtù ue-ra-ce De-

Doue ha virtù ue-ra-ce De-

gno premio di fe-di-let

gno premio di fe-di-let

toe pace.

toe pace.

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDE

For Hawkins, Monteverdi's music was largely self-explanatory, and he provides little commentary on the content and style. It is precisely Hawkins' lack of elaboration and analysis that places him firmly in the camp of cultural antiquarians. William Weber points out that Hawkins wrote his *History* as one would have written a scientific natural history, retelling facts and allowing the reader to interpret them. Even the mode (correspondence) in which Hawkins carried out the research for his *History* resembles the same method in which 18<sup>th</sup>-century scientists researched natural histories in Britain.<sup>60</sup> In so doing, Hawkins gives readers no sense of where he sees Monteverdi in the larger context of musical history, not does it appear to be his goal to do so. Rather, readers are left to draw their own conclusions.

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<sup>60</sup> William Weber, "Intellectual Bases of the Handelian Tradition, 1759–1800," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 108 (1981–1982): 103, n. 11.

## **Chapter 4: The Artusi Controversy and Text-Music Relationships:**

### **The Stakes of the Aesthetic Debate**

Burney and Hawkins' 18<sup>th</sup>-century discourse about 17<sup>th</sup>-century music encompassed an aesthetic debate whose premises extend backward to the ancients: the ontological nature of music and its relationship to text. Music serves as more than an outlet for emotional expression or medium for entertainment and distraction, and the definition of music in the context of society touches cultural, political, religious, and personal arenas of life. Since we will examine Hawkins and Burney's representations of one of the most significant moments in Western musical history, we must contextualize the stakes of the aesthetic debate that caused so much strife in the first place.

One of the ideals of the early Baroque involved connection with music of the ancient Greeks, and thus we will begin with Pythagoras. With his discovery of musical ratios, Pythagoras crossed from a discussion of pure mathematics into the realm of the musical, articulating that these musical ratios governed the entire universe, which he viewed as a "cosmic order." As complementary parts of the Quadrivium, both music and arithmetic were wedded together in Pythagorean logic. Moreover, not only music and mathematics but also theology, as the Queen of the Sciences, necessarily has a place at the table of discussion of the musical, mathematical ratios of the cosmos. Theologian Jeremy Begbie notes that to make music according to the Pythagorean vision was a matter of being tuned to the

universe's (including God's) harmony, mediating number both to mind and ear.<sup>61</sup> In other words, mathematics and music, as well as a proper understanding of theology (*i.e.* the cosmic order) were inseparable.

This concept of music being connected to the cosmos, and ultimately to God, places incredibly high stakes on the significance of musical meaning and expression for 17<sup>th</sup>-century musicians such as Monteverdi. For if music only exists for the purpose of earthly pleasure, then human beings (and their ever-changing tastes) are the final arbiter of its moral qualities or lack thereof. If, however, music is linked to a grander cosmic order and is ontologically capable of reflecting and capacitating connection to the Divine, then one's choices related to musical aesthetics—including those in which Monteverdi was embroiled—take on a much heavier moral meaning.

Articulating the aesthetic debate over music and its function clarifies the height of stakes that were raised during Monteverdi's dispute with the Catholic cleric Artusi. Late medieval mentality held that music had the power to elevate one in relationship to God or to pull one off a moral path. While this argument in music is not novel, the depiction of music's delights and rhetorical affect had not only cultural but theological implications in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and thus, in Burney and Hawkins' histories, as well. Further heightening the cultural stakes of this debate are Suzanne Cusick's arguments that the Monteverdi brothers (Giulio Cesare and Claudio) reinforced the gendered model of masculine composer and musical femininity in their discourse with Artusi.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Jeremy Begbie, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 80.

<sup>62</sup> Suzanne Cusick, "Gendering Modern Music: Thoughts on the Monteverdi-Artusi Controversy," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 46, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 3.

On the surface, the debate was about dissonance, but the core of the debate involved music's ontological qualities and how music's interactions with the text defined or redefined it. As is often noted, Monteverdi saw *expression* as music's essence, while Artusi took a more restrictive view of music, limiting it to its sonic materiality in terms of consonances and dissonances. Scholars such as Gary Tomlinson have argued that Monteverdi's dissonant musical divergences in his secular music must be contextualized to the specific texts he chose to set, as well as the social arena of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the scholastic-humanist discourse.<sup>63</sup> In this discussion, I will contextualize Hawkins and Burney's accounts in the text and music debates, while examining more closely what the two scholars thought of the very nature of music.

### **Burney on Monteverdi and Text-Music Relationships**

In the first few pages of his *History*, Burney includes a commentary on the nature of musical criticism, presumably to describe his approach in the course of his research. Burney defines music as “the art of pleasing by the succession and combination of agreeable sounds”:

Every hearer has a right to give way to his feelings, and be pleased or dissatisfied without knowledge, experience, or the fiat of critics; but then he has certainly no right to insist on others being pleased or dissatisfied in the same degree. I can readily forgive the man who admires a different Music from that which pleases me, provided he does not extend his hatred or contempt of my favorite Music to myself, and imagine that on the exclusive admiration of any one style of Music, and a close adherence to it, all wisdom, taste, and virtue depend.<sup>64</sup>

The listener's pleasure in hearing the musical sounds is of primal importance to Burney and

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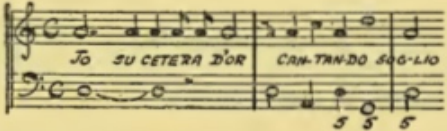
<sup>63</sup> Gary Tomlinson, *Monteverdi and the End of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); see also Tim Carter's review of Tomlinson in *Early Music History* 8 (1988): 245-260.

<sup>64</sup> Charles Burney, “Essay on Musical Criticism,” in *General History of Music* 1: 7.

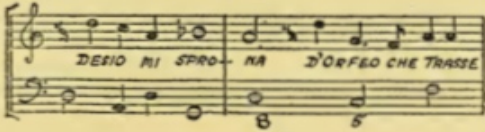
is indeed the final arbiter of taste. In the context of musical meaning, recitative and its function of bringing out the textual and dramatic connotations was of utmost concern for Burney. In this arena Burney finds Monteverdi somewhat lacking:

It has been said that recitative had great obligations to Monteverdi; for though Emilio de Cavaliere, Jacopo Peri, and Caccini had attempted that style before him, yet he had so much improved it, that he might almost be called its inventor. But being in possession of most of the works of those early dramatic composers, I am unable to discover Monteverdi's superiority. More forms of phrases of musical recitation still in use may be found in Peri and Caccini, than in Monteverdi. But what surprised me still more, was that this counterpoint in two parts is more frequently deficient than in the other two composers, who had never, like him, distinguished themselves in the learned styles of masses, motets, and madrigals.<sup>65</sup>

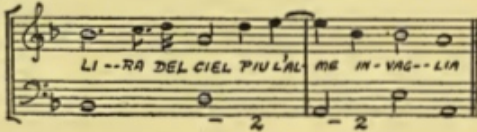
In the prologue, which is only in two parts, there are three fifths by contrary motion, which, when unaccompanied, offend my ear as much as if direct :



P. 4. the falling from the octave to the fifth, in two parts, is still worse.



The following anticipations are beyond my comprehension; and by the difficulty of finding such in other composers, it should seem as if they would be as unpleasant to other ears as my own.



**Figure 7. Burney's examples of Monteverdi's rule breaking in the Prologue of *L'Orfeo*.**

Just as the general public was the final arbiter of Burney's work as a scholar, Burney saw "the public ear" as arbiters of artistic taste in his writings. From the beginning of the first volume of his *History*, the idea that the listening public was the final authority on taste and music's individualistic ability to please makes its way into his writing.

<sup>65</sup> Burney, *General History of Music* 4: 517.

Ideals of equality and democratic approval made their way into Burney's account of the Monteverdi-Artusi debate. After introducing Monteverdi's biographical sketch Burney, like his rival Hawkins, is also quick to mention the conflict with Artusi, in the context of madrigal writing:

Here, in 1582, he published Madrigals for three [1584], four [1583], and five voices [1587] in the style of the times; but his courage increasing with experience, in his subsequent productions he dared to violate many rules of counterpoint, which, having been long established, were held sacred by orthodox professors. He had, therefore, many opponents, who treated him as an ignorant corrupter of the art. Among these, the principal was Gio. Maria Artusi, of Bologna, who, in the first part of his tract on the Imperfection of Modern Music, published in 1600, as well as in the second, which appeared in 1603, inveighed with great asperity against Monteverde. Musicians entered the lists on both sides, and the war became general.<sup>66</sup>

Burney justifies Monteverdi's breaking of the rules in an argument befitting the composer himself: the pleasure it gave to listeners through the marriage of music and text. Burney notes that "Monteverde defended himself in prefaces and letters prefixed to his works; but his best defence [sic] was the revolution he brought about in counterpoint; for his licences [sic], pleasing the public ear, were soon adopted not only by Dilletante, but professors."<sup>67</sup> In other words, pleasure of the ear and approval of the listening public not only proved to be Monteverdi's best defense against Artusi's arguments, but also his justification for continuing his innovation going forward in his compositions. Burney is deeply concerned with facilitating the pleasant wedding of poetry and music, and with the listener as the final arbiter of taste. The limitation of harmonic innovation is reached when those innovations are no longer pleasing to the educated ear. He writes in his introductory essay on musical criticism at the beginning of his *History*,

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 155.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 190.



Of Composition and the genius of particular instruments, whose opinion, but that of composers and performers, who are likewise possessed of probity and candour, can be trusted? There are, alas, but too many professors who approve of nothing which they themselves have not produced or performed. Old musicians complain of the extravagance of the young; and these again of the dryness and inelegance of the old.<sup>68</sup>

While Burney affirmed the right of any listener to reject a piece of music or composer based on pleasing tones to the ear, he simultaneously saw performers and composers of music as better equipped to criticize its aesthetic values.

### **Hawkins on Monteverdi and Text-Music Relationships**

Hawkins seems to have misgivings about vocal and instrumental music coming together in the form of dramatic music. In Book III, he discusses instruments such as the lute that are used to accompany vocal pieces. As he discusses instruments in dramatic contexts, Hawkins expresses concern that the addition of instruments would hinder the beauty of the voices by virtue of the lack of ability of instruments to blend in the same way that voices do:

This innovation [of adding violins to vocal lines in the form of dramatic music] gave rise to a new church style, in which the principal end of the composer was rather to display the excellencies of either some fine singer or instrumental performer, than to inspire the auditory with those sentiments which should accompany divine worship... Whether vocal music gains more than it loses by being associated with such instruments [as violins] as it is usually joined with, may admit of a question: It is universally agreed, that of all music that of the human voice is the sweetest; and it may be remarked, that in a chorus of voices and instruments the sounds never coalesce or blend together in such a manner, as not to be distinguishable by the ear into two species; while in a chorus of voices alone, well sorted, and perfectly in tune, the aggregate of the whole is that full and compleat [*sic*] union.”<sup>69</sup>

In keeping with his objective stance, Hawkins takes a more cautious approach than Burney in his treatment of Monteverdi, noting that Monteverdi was “celebrated for his skill in

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<sup>68</sup> Charles Burney, “Essay on Musical Criticism,” from *General History of Music* 1: 9.

<sup>69</sup> Hawkins, *A History of Musick* 4: 346.

recitative, a style of music of which he may be said to have been one of the inventors.”<sup>70</sup>

Of course, not only the textual meaning was at stake in the discussion of recitative, but also the music’s overall dramatic *affect*: the ability to move the emotions. On this issue Burney and Hawkins were also in opposition to each other. Hawkins readily held to the belief in the power of music to move the emotions, and saw a Scriptural basis for the moving of the passions for devotional purposes. Hawkins writes in regards to 17th-century Anglican music,

That there is a tendency in music to excite grave, and even devout, as well as lively and mirthful affections, no one can doubt who is not an absolute stranger to its efficacy; and though it may perhaps be said that the effects of music are mechanical, and that there can be nothing pleasing to God in that devotion which follows the involuntary operation of sound on the human mind: this is more than can be proved; and the Scripture seems to intimate the contrary.<sup>71</sup>

We can see in these passages from the preface to his *History* a different Hawkins, who diverges from his dry, fact-based style of writing to wax philosophical, lamenting the innovation of the dramatic style leaching into church music, to the point that in style church music both resembles opera and incorporates dance rhythms. He asks,

...why is it assumed of music that it is continually improving, or that every innovation in it must be for the better? That the music of the church has degenerated and been greatly corrupted by an intermixture of the theatric style has long been the subject of complaint...indeed the evidence of this corruption must be apparent to every one that reflects on the style and structure of those compositions for the church that are now most celebrated abroad, even those of Pergolesi, his masses, for instance, and those of Iomelli and Perez, have nothing that distinguishes them but the want of action and scenic decoration, from dramatic representations: like them they abound in symphony and the accompaniment of various instruments, no regard is paid to the sense of the words, or care taken to suit it with correspondent sounds; the clauses Kyrie Eleison and Christe Eleison, and Miserere Mei and Amen are uttered in dancing metres and the former not seldom in that of a minuet or a jig. Even the funeral service of Perez, lately published in London, so far as regards the measures of the several airs, and the instrumental aids to the voice-parts, differs as far from a

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 77.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 42.

sacred and solemn composure as a burletta does from an opera or musical tragedy. From these premises it may be allowed to follow, that a retrospect to the musical productions of past ages is no such absurdity, as that a curious enquirer need decline it.”<sup>72</sup>

Hawkins viewed music through eyes more befitting of an ancient such as Augustine, as he recognized music’s inherent dangers but also saw proper musical training at academies such the Academy of Ancient Music as its remedy. In a 1760 fundraising pamphlet Hawkins published for the Academy, he portrayed it as a place where music for noble purposes was taught; in other words, the affective power of musical pleasure for moral ends was evoked:

Here the student in the musical faculty will find the means of forming his style after the most perfect models. Here the timid and modest performer may acquire that degree of firmness and confidence which is necessary for displaying his excellencies in public Here the ingenuous youth, who prefers the innocent pleasures of music, to riot and intemperance, may taste of that mirth which draws no repentance after it; and hither may those repair, to whom the studies or labours of a day must necessarily endear the elegant delights of a musical evening.<sup>73</sup>

Hawkins espouses a view of music in which performance of music from the “most perfect models” leads one to noble endeavors; perhaps, in retrospect, he saw a lack of modern “perfect models” as a cause for the stylistic creep of monody into church music.

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<sup>72</sup> Hawkins, *A History of the Science of Musick* 1: xxxv.

<sup>73</sup> Quoted in Davis, *A Proof of Eminence*, 120–121.

### **Conclusion: The Reception of Burney and Hawkins' Histories**

The predispositions of these two authors, the trends of English scholars of the day, and their rivalry all profoundly influenced the historiography of seminal composers such as Monteverdi. Hawkins' treatment of *seicento* music as a whole was more general and data-based than that of his rival Burney; Hawkins' analysis of Monteverdi centers primarily around three features: his role as a church musician, second, his innovative approach to opera, and third, his madrigals.

Hawkins' *History*, published just prior to Burney's four volumes, was initially received positively; but the dry, factual, rambling structure of Hawkins' volume, as well as Burney's fiercely cutthroat approach to finding subscribers, ultimately proved detrimental for sales of Hawkins' *History*. Burney competed with Hawkins for the general market share of readers who would support their scholarly endeavors and solicited positive reviews of their publications. Partially due to his existing connections with the general public, Burney had a list of subscribers that he desired to add to in numbers. Though Hawkins had no subscribers, we can surmise that he relied on his social connections to solicit sales of his history.

Initial reviews of Hawkins' *History* were mixed, some criticizing the nobleman scholar as rambling and others seeing him as brilliant. An author from the *Critical Review* wrote of Hawkins' volume in December of 1776,

Amidst the general observations which we meet with in this part of the work [the ‘Preliminary Discourse’], the scientific knowledge, the large fund of information, and the philosophic discernment of the writer, all conspire to impress the mind with such ideas of the dignity of music as can only be excited by one who is intimately conversant with the beauties and principles of the art.<sup>74</sup>

Hawkins’ volumes received rave remarks from his friend Horace Walpole, from whom he had received many of his resources for his *History*.<sup>75</sup> Walpole wrote to the Reverend William Cole of Cambridge,

As you have time and patience too, I recommend to you to peruse Sir John Hawkins’ new *History of Music*. It is true there are five huge volumes in quarto, and perhaps you may not care for the expense, but surely you can borrow them in the University, and though you may no more than I, delight in the scientific part, there is so much about cathedral service and choirs, and other old matters, that I am sure you will be amused with a great deal, particularly the last two volumes, and the facsimiles of old music in the first. I doubt it is a work that will not sell rapidly, but it must have a place in all great libraries.<sup>76</sup>

Meanwhile, as Burney biographer Roger Lonsdale attests, Burney had convinced his colleague William Bewley of the *Monthly Review* to write a series of reviews criticizing Hawkins’ writings. According to Lonsdale, this accusatory style of Bewley was uncharacteristic, as Bewley’s prior reviews had been generally expository and neutral; however, in Bewley’s review of Hawkins, “his intention was clearly to ‘prosecute’ the author, to argue a case against him and to draw only upon material and extracts which would support that argument.”<sup>77</sup> Indeed, according to Hawkins biographer Bertram Davis, not only did Bewley take this prosecutorial approach to Hawkins, but he also included what Davis refers

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<sup>74</sup> Quoted in Davis, *A Proof of Eminence*, 126–127.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 115–116.

<sup>76</sup> Quoted in Davis, *A Proof of Eminence*, 127.

<sup>77</sup> Lonsdale, *A Literary Biography*, 210.

to as “frequent nods of approval in the direction of Charles Burney.”<sup>78</sup> Davis summarizes Bewley’s critiques of Hawkins:

[Bewley] first struck at Hawkins’ lack of ‘any visible plan,’ and particularly at his failure to place any guideposts in the form of table of contents or chapter headings...His next objective was Hawkins’ detail: ‘he has not spared a single cobweb of antiquity that lay *within his reach*’: John Mundy, for example, has been ‘dragged from his tomb in the cloyster [sic] at Windsor, where he...had quietly and deservedly been suffered to sleep ever since 1630.’... Some of Hawkins’ biographical articles, on the other hand, may be condemned for their paucity of detail. ‘On the two Scarlattis the Author does not bestow three quarters of a page.’<sup>79</sup>

The “paucity of detail” that Bewley accused Hawkins of has been exemplified in our account of Hawkins’ treatment of Monteverdi.

While Bewley took a somewhat apologetic tone after seeing how his publication had negatively affected Hawkins, he eventually concluded that the useful information in Hawkins’ history was always “blended and confounded with an inordinate mass of other matter, on which candour itself, in one of its most generous fits, cannot honestly bestow a more favourable appellation than that of *rubbish*.”<sup>80</sup> This series of scathing reviews of Hawkins’ dry, antiquarian history, combined with the poor sales of the books, tarnished Hawkins’ reputation as a scholar of music in the eyes of the British public. Davis points out that “the only really obvious effect of Bewley’s review is that it elevated the ridiculing of Hawkins to a respectable and even fashionable pastime.”<sup>81</sup> In a turn of irony, it became fashionable for proper and educated people to deride Hawkins, who himself was a genteel and educated man. Burney had, in effect, won the war in terms of public opinion.

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<sup>78</sup> Davis, *A Proof of Eminence*, 139.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 143–144.

<sup>80</sup> Lonsdale, *A Literary Biography*, 217.

<sup>81</sup> Davis, *A Proof of Eminence*, 148.

We can gather from this study of Burney and Hawkins that what is considered worthy of study in any given time may well reflect more about the historian and his culture than that of the composer being studied. In the case of Burney and Hawkins, the fact that music as a cultural artifact was included in written histories indicates that the repertoire was significant enough in the eyes of the British to merit both documentation and analysis. In comparing Burney and Hawkins to the traveling Orpheus, Vanessa Agnew sums up their core purpose of creating musical narrative:

Theirs was a project that hinged on determining the relationship between relativism and universality and hence on making a synchronic (if piecemeal and often prejudicial) study of the world's musical vernaculars...Historicizing music meant interrogating ancient claims about music as ethos, and it meant comparing those claims with the way that music worked in the present.<sup>82</sup>

For over a hundred years past the publication of Burney's and Hawkins' histories, British musical thought was shaped by the results of these historians' cultures, different upbringings, and varying methodologies. Hawkins antiquarian method (and indeed, much of his history) went into general oblivion after its publication, while Burney's analytical, chronological-based synthesis became part of the basis for 19<sup>th</sup>-century studies such as that of Adler. What other musical perspectives might we as 21<sup>st</sup>-century scholars gain by, like Burney, being willing to travel, inquire, synthesize, and stitch together meanings past the initial names and dates? This, I argue, is precisely why our discipline of musicology exists in the first place.

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<sup>82</sup> Agnew, *Enlightenment Orpheus*, 14.

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