

PAUL COLLINS (ED.), *RENEWAL AND RESISTANCE: CATHOLIC CHURCH MUSIC FROM THE 1850S TO VATICAN II* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010). ISBN 978-3-03911-381-1, vii+283pp, €52.50.

In *Renewal and Resistance: Catholic Church Music from the 1850s to Vatican II* Paul Collins has assembled an impressive and informative collection of essays. Thomas Day, in the foreword, offers a summation of them in two ways. First, he suggests that they ‘could be read as a collection of facts’ that reveal a continuing cycle in the Church: ‘*action* followed by *reaction*’ (1). From this viewpoint, he contextualizes them, demonstrating how collectively they reveal an ongoing process in the Church in which ‘(1) a type of liturgical music becomes widely accepted; (2) there is a reaction to the perceived inadequacies in this music, which is then altered or replaced by an improvement ... The improvement, after first encountering resistance, becomes widely accepted, and eventually there is a reaction to its perceived inadequacies—and on the cycle goes’ (1). Second, he notes that they ‘pick up this recurring pattern at the point in history where Roman Catholicism reacted to the Enlightenment’ (3). He further contextualizes them, revealing how the pattern of *action* and *reaction*—or *renewal* and *resistance*—explored in this particular volume is strongly influenced by the Enlightenment, an attempt to look to the power of reason as a more beneficial guide for humanity than the authority of religion and perceived traditions (4). As the Enlightenment despised the contemplative life, the subsequent reaction to it, as exemplified in the *Sturm und Drang* movement in German literature of the late eighteenth century and the Romanticism of the nineteenth century, embraced ‘powerful emotions, feelings, and spiritual yearnings’ (6).¹ In turn, the music composed to express these ‘powerful emotions, feelings, and spiritual yearnings’ led to excesses that spawned the Cecilian movement, a reform committed to purging them and returning the liturgical music of the Church to a more purified state—not dissimilar to what Pope Pius X, in reaction ‘to a modern world that horrified him’ (9), would characterize as the need to restore all things in Christ (8).

Day’s summation is certainly accurate. At the same time, Collins’s text offers its readers far more than what Day suggests. Collins has carefully chosen a selection of essays, each of which gives a particular viewpoint of the liturgical reform movement from the mid-nineteenth century through to the mid-twentieth century. On the surface it might appear that their relationship is rather loose, simply demonstrating the pattern of *action* and *reaction* that Day eloquently summarizes. However, they unfold something much more profound. The liturgical and musical reforms of Pope Pius X were, as Day rightly points out, one facet—the most central and crucial one—in the Holy Father’s efforts to fight the devastating effects of secular humanism, liberalism

¹ See also Robert A. Skeris’s chapter in this volume, 191–2.

and modernism, all of which were driving society to an ever-increasing anthropocentric world view with no use for God or the propitious sacrifice of His Son (9).² These essays, while they focus largely on the musical aspects of these reforms, show both the breadth geographically with which these reforms were engaged and the importance they held for the future of the Church. They create a delicately crafted tapestry of interwoven stories that collectively give a multifaceted account of the movement that no single author could have accomplished. In particular, they demonstrate the global nature of various musical or liturgical movements, from the concerted Mass, to Cecilianism, to the work of the Solesmes monks. They also reveal relationships between activities around the world that were possibly not evident as they were happening.

For example, in Eckhard Jaschinski's 'The Renewal of Catholic Church Music in Germany/Austria, France and Italy in the Nineteenth Century', the author refers to the combination of the 'operatic style' and the 'radical directives of the Enlightenment' (16) in the music of German-speaking areas, along with 'popular operas by Verdi and Puccini, as well as other secular influences [having] a strong effect on sacred music' in Italy (26). This is as might be expected. At the same time, the book demonstrates that these same forces were also unfolding across the Atlantic and the Pacific in Baltimore and Melbourne, respectively.³ Similarly, the Cecilian movement, with its culminating papal *motu proprio* 'tra le sollecitudini' of Pope Pius X, and the work of the Solesmes monks from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century are discussed in virtually every essay, offering local perspectives regarding their impact in Europe (Germany/Austria, France, Italy, Ireland and England), the United States (Baltimore and Milwaukee) and Australia (Melbourne and Sydney). The sway of these key elements of the liturgical/musical reforms during this period are also surveyed with regard to the United States as a whole in the chapters by Keith F. Pecklers and Susan Treacy.

Several of the chapters present perspectives on the reform that might be unknown to many readers: for example, Collins's article on 'Emissaries to "a believing and a singing land": Belgian and German Organists in Ireland, 1859–1916'. Americans are likely to be familiar with the generation of Irish priests that were sent across the Atlan-

² See also Anthony Cekada, *Work of Human Hands: A Theological Critique of the Mass of Paul VI* (West Chester, Ohio: Philothea Press, 2010). While the work is a curious mixture of scholarship and editorializing, it offers a discussion regarding the theology of the Mass that parallels the discussions in *Renewal and Resistance* regarding the music of the Mass.

³ See the chapters by Ann Silverberg and John Henry Byrne in this volume.

tic in the mid-twentieth century.⁴ It might, however, be something of a surprise to them to learn that musical leadership in Irish churches had to be imported for over half a century because the Irish Church ‘had repeatedly failed to afford its native musicians the opportunity to avail of proper training in sacred music in Ireland’ (51). Kieran Anthony Daly’s essay on ‘The Dublin Eucharistic Congress: *Tra le sollecitudini* in the Phoenix Park’ unfolds a story of an Irish Eucharistic congress offering more, however, than the simple chronicle of an event. It also describes the struggles in the Irish Church with early efforts to implement the *motu proprio* of Pope Pius X. While many church musicians are familiar with the successes of the chant restoration movement in the first half of the twentieth century, far fewer are familiar with its struggles. Daly reveals the low level to which the use of chant had fallen in the Irish Church by the end of the nineteenth century—not unlike the situation at the end of the twentieth century—and the difficulty the Church encountered in restoring chant to the Mass.

Susan Treacy’s article, ‘A Chronicle of Attitudes towards Gregorian Chant in *Orate Fratres/Worship*, 1926–1962’, is a jewel of research growing from the serendipitous situation of Treacy’s institution, Ave Maria University in Florida, having a complete set of all the issues of the *Orate Fratres/Worship* journal. This allowed her the opportunity to offer a fully documented view demonstrating how the expansion of attention to chant in the early years of the journal paralleled the successes of the chant restoration movement in the United States, while the diminution of attention to chant in the later years of the journal paralleled the lack of interest in the movement, at least by some of the movement’s leaders, as the Second Vatican Council approached.

Similarly, a unique research opportunity, that of only recently discovered correspondence between a John Donovan and Cardinal Merry del Val, the Secretary of State to Pope Pius X, provides the nucleus for the chapter, ‘*Disputatur inter Doctores: A Disagreement between two Australian Bishops on the Binding Nature of a Papal Motu Proprio*’, in which John De Luca unfolds a story of resistance in Australia to the music reforms of Pope Pius X. At the same time, John Henry Byrne’s ‘Archbishop Daniel Mannix and Church Music in Melbourne, 1913–1963’ confirms initial Australian resistance to Pope Pius X’s reforms as well as the slow adoption of the reforms that took place following the Apostolic Constitution *Divini cultus* of Pope Pius XI in 1928. These two chapters are particularly interesting with regard to the possible comparison they provide to current resistance to the reforms in the 2007 *motu proprio* of Pope Benedict XVI.

⁴ Thomas Day discusses this at length in his book *Why Catholics Can’t Sing: The Culture of Catholicism and the Triumph of Bad Taste* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1992).

Two of the articles take on something of a sociological hue: Bennett Zon's 'Victorian Anti-Semitism and the Origin of Gregorian Chant' and Helen Phelan's 'Ireland, Music and the Modern Liturgical Movement'. Zon explores the Victorian era as one with a 'developmental' view of the world, in which ancient civilizations are viewed as essentially primitive and the history of the world as one in which these primitive cultures are improved as later cultures become more developed. The theory that Hebrew music formed the basis of Gregorian chant (119) easily fed anti-Semitic attitudes by interpreting this theory in a developmental way: Hebrew music was music reflective of a primitive culture, and its development into Gregorian chant similarly reflected the improvements that the Christian culture made over Hebrew culture. Phelan reveals fascinating societal attitudes in Ireland regarding the reform movement. At the time of the *motu proprio* of Pope Pius X, Ireland already had a practice of singing vernacular songs, at least during low Mass. The chant reform movement embraced by Pope Pius X associated congregational singing/participation with the restoration of Gregorian chant to the Mass. Thus, in Ireland, congregational singing of Latin chant was perceived as 'progressive', while the retention of singing vernacular songs was considered more 'traditional', quite the opposite of perceptions today after the 2007 *motu proprio* of Pope Benedict XVI.

Yet, while every article in this collection unfolds a particular aspect of the reform movement, perhaps the greatest achievement of *Renewal and Resistance* is the larger perspective that it offers regarding the changes in Catholic church music from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. For example, the impact of opera on sacred music is seen as a worldwide phenomenon, as discussed above. The global impact of the Cecilian movement, the work of the monks of Solesmes and the *motu proprio* of Pope Pius X, all also referenced above, likewise become evident. Various relationships between events in one part of the world are tied together with those in other parts of the world, just as the contributions of certain individuals are seen as having more than a local effect. The contributions of Swiss musician Johann Baptist Singenberger, for example, are mentioned in four of the collection's essays. Similarly, personalities such as Michael Haller and Franz Xaver Witt, who today are relatively unknown, are rightfully recognized many times in the volume for the significant and far-reaching contributions they made during these years. Dom Prosper Guéranger and Franz Xaver Haberl become far more than mere names in dusty history texts. They are more like live action figures in Pope Pius X's battle 'to restore all things in Christ'.⁵

⁵ A motto of that pope's encyclical of 4 October 1903: see <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius10/p10supre.htm> (accessed 1 May 2012).

Ostensibly, much of this interconnection between events around the world was made possible because of late-nineteenth-century advances in technology and because of global interaction brought about during and after two world wars. Even so, the worldwide perspective that this book offers regarding the reform movement during this period is unique and remarkable. It clearly establishes the chant revival movement started by the monks of Solesmes and furthered greatly by the *motu proprio* 'tra le sollecitudini' of Pope Pius X as the farthest reaching and most influential musical reform in the Church since the development of Gregorian chant in the Carolingian era.

Finally, Collins's collection most aptly illuminates the struggles of the period in terms that certainly apply to the present-day situation. Returning to thoughts explored at the beginning of this review, Robert Skeris notes that the nineteenth-century renewal was needed to restore the theocentric nature of the Liturgy, which was being destroyed by the 'rationalistic, anthropocentric attitude of the age' (191). By the 1950s, while the battle was by no means over, progress had been made toward the restoration of a music that would support the Liturgy's theocentric nature—and the Church. However, the relentless pressure of a secularism fed by a rationalistic, anthropocentric societal attitude has in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries nearly expunged most of the gains of the chant revival movement. In 2007 Pope Benedict XVI saw the need to revitalize the Church's efforts to reorient its worship toward God rather than toward man. His *motu proprio*, 'Summorum pontificum', which reaffirms the value of the Church's traditional Liturgy, and, implicitly, the music that most appropriately adorns this Liturgy, has given a new energy to the reform movement. Collins's text offers a marvellous guide for the revitalized movement, reminding its leaders of the various successes and failures over the last century and offering the invaluable resource that only history can provide for making decisions that will result in new successes rather than repeated failures.

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