

Music as Text and Text as Music

Prologue in 1997

In my Hauptreferat for the 1993 Freiburg Congress «Musik als Text» I took up three different kinds of relationships between musical text and verbal text, avoiding the two most familiar relationships of the kind: notated musical text as document, and composed verbal text as something to be set to music. Sounding music was provided, most of it recorded, some of it sung on the spot by myself; some of the less accessible music is represented here in transcribed examples. Passages of verbal text that were projected on a large screen while music was being heard or as they were being discussed are here shown in print. Two of the topics have already been adapted as essays published or soon to be published, as indicated in notes below.

Since one of my relators was the distinguished humanist scholar Heinrich Glarean, long associated with Freiburg, I took the occasion to say a few words of thanks to Hermann Danuser, another distinguished humanist scholar, still at Freiburg in 1993. He had made his own distinguished contribution to the subject «Musik als Text» some years ago in his book *Musikalische Prosa*.¹ Chapter VI of that book, entitled «Konstruktion des Romans bei Gustav Mahler» is a detailed multi-layered reading of the first movement of Mahler's Third Symphony, a brilliant elaboration on Chapter IV of Adorno's book on Mahler²; it recently reappeared as the first part of Chapter III of Danuser's own book on Mahler.³ Two different three-part quasi-sonata-form schemata are combined and then read as a Hegelian musical novel: Thesis, Antithesis, and Synthesis, or Reality, Recollection, and Reprise; in Danuser's words, Exposition des inneren Programms, Traum als Erinnerung, Epische Synthesis.

What follows now is an account adapted for print medium of the three music/text relationships I spoke of at the Freiburg Congress *Musik als Text*: (1) two passages of Mozart's music as read in prose by two musicologists; (2) a portion of Glarean's modal theory as read in two musical compositions by a composer friend; (3) reciprocity between the oral tradition for rendering the North Indian *rāga* (melodic type) *Āśāvārī* purely extempore, and verbal descriptions of its features and of how it ought to be rendered. A fourth music/text relationship, regarding selected episodes in Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe* as read by a librettist and composer in terms of the generic expectations of mid-19th-century Italian opera, was omitted under time constraint, and is therefore omitted here as well.

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1. Mozart⁴

In the prospectus for the Freiburg Congress that Professor Danuser sent me with his invitation, he expressed in a succinct way an intellectual model even more up-to-date than his own or Adorno's: converting «Musikalische Prosa» into «Musik als Prosa», so to speak, and thence into «Musik als Text». In summarizing poststructural and deconstructionist literary criticism he wrote that

«Text» nicht mehr als eine abgeschlossene, in ihrer Bedeutung vom Autor geprägte schriftlich fixierte Sprachform verstanden wird, sondern als eine offene Kategorie, deren Struktur eine Vielzahl von Lesarten — losgelöst vom Primat einer kodierten Autorintention — erlaubt [...]

Transferring this to our field allows us to read a piece of music in any way we like, including reading it as a text that can be translated into prose, and into any kind of prose we like.

Susan McClary's reading of the development section of the slow movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto K. 453 follows below.⁵ The bracketed numbers, dividing the passage for later discussion, are mine, and I have also added measure numbers in brackets. It should be noted, moreover, that this is in no way a feminist reading;

1 Hermann Danuser, *Musikalische Prosa (Studien zur Musikgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts 46)*, Regensburg 1975.

2 Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: Eine musikalische Physiognomie*, Frankfurt 1960.

3 Hermann Danuser, *Gustav Mahler und seine Zeit*, Regensburg 1991.

4 What follows in section 1 is the substance of an essay now in print, much expanded and extended from my Freiburg presentation, as «Reading Mozart's Music: Text and Topic, Syntax and Sense», in: *Current Musicology* 57 (1995), pp. 5-44.

5 Susan McClary, «A Musical Dialectic from the Enlightenment: Mozart's Piano Concerto in G Major, K. 453, Movement 2», in: *Cultural Critique* 4 (Fall 1986), pp. 148-50.

it should be taken, rather, as McClary's response to a specific challenge from Adorno: «Of all the tasks awaiting us in the social interpretation of music, that of Mozart would be the most difficult and the most urgent.»⁶

- [1] The middle section of the movement, the development, begins with yet another statement of the still-enigmatic motto, stated now in the key of the dominant in which we find ourselves [mm. 64-68]. After the usual pause,
- [2] the piano enters [m. 69]. Once again [as at measure 35], it chooses to pivot to the minor mode and to plunge into the negative emotional side; and once again its affect is fairly easily identified through conventional semiotics. This time, however, it is less deliberately theatrical in style. It is expressive now of melancholy. Many of the same signs [as at mm. 35 ff.] reappear (the throbbing, reiterated harmonies — which now seem like a dull, persistent ache — the leaps, the turns), but they all fold back on themselves. It is as though the piano is no longer concerned with public display (to say nothing of the facile escapism offered by the orchestra [mm. 42 ff.]), but rather with genuine expression of loss.
- [3] The orchestra, always confident of its therapeutic capabilities, enters to try once again to console; but the piano resists with ever more insistent melodic gestures, moving farther keywise in the direction of ever greater tension. It spirals into increasingly remote (read: irrational) key areas, with the orchestra always tagging behind trying to lure it back [mm. 74-81]. Finally,
- [4] the piano throws the orchestra's would-be influence off altogether and lays bare its despair in twisted melodic turns, perversely altered pitches, and reiterations (in several different registers) of an utterly gloomy cadential conclusion [mm. 81-ff].
- [5] The piano finally lands on the dominant of C¹ minor, a G¹ major triad [m. 86]. The movement itself is in C major. While these two keys are based on pitches separated by only a half-step (the smallest increment in the tonal scale), they are functionally as far apart as is conceivable. From the point of view of tonal norms, the piano has retreated to a position of the most extreme irrationality, and normal tonal logic cannot really be marshalled to salvage it.⁷

Yet we are also at the moment in the composition at which the return to both the tonic key and the opening thematic material is conventionally required. [...] But to get back to C major from C¹ minor in a tonally logical manner (that is, to make the return seem naturally inevitable) would take quite a long time. Mozart foregoes this alternative and chooses rather to cut right through the Gordian knot. In the scant interval of four measures, the orchestra seizes this remote key and forces it (through a series of sleight-of-hand harmonic puns) back to the tonic and the opening motto [mm. 86-90].

Before taking up McClary's narrative we should set aside two obvious technical errors so that they may not interfere with her interpretive strategy. First, the music described in the passage numbered «1» in the narrative (mm. 64-68) continues hard upon the final cadence of the first solo exposition and closes with a half-cadence in the second principal key. It ought therefore to be identified as the tutti/ritornello closing and capping the exposition, rather than the beginning of the development. Second, in the passage numbered «3» the piano figuration is aptly said to «spiral», but it is not the piano that takes the music «into increasingly remote key areas». It is the orchestra that takes the music from one key area to another, moving each time to a dominant chord in a new key in the circle of fifths, and it is the piano that «lures it back» harmonically, as it resolves each new dominant into its own temporary tonic.

But these formal and harmonic missteps are only *ad hoc*, tactical so to speak, at a different level from McClary's overall strategy for narrative reading: (1) the personification of the performing forces, and (2) the use of highly colorful language to convey a particular way of hearing the music. This approach has a long and honorable historical tradition. In the *Cours complet d'harmonie et de composition musicale* (1803-05) by Jérôme-Joseph de Momigny, for instance, there are extensive analyses of the first movements of Mozart's Quartet K. 421 and Haydn's Symphony 103 in which technical descriptions are succeeded by narrative or dramatic readings.⁸ What is new in McClary's reading of Mozart K. 453/II, in no way foreshadowed in hermeneutics like Momigny's readings, is a second layer of interpretation, one that responds to Adorno's challenge quoted earlier, to interpret Mozart's music socially. For the retransition characterized in the passage of her narrative account numbered «5», for instance — Mozart's mm. 86-90 — McClary has suggested two possible social readings. The hermeneutic premise behind both is sociopolitical:

The ways in which musical conventions are manipulated in particular pieces always constitute a form of social practice. Inasmuch as these (socially shared and sanctioned) conventions embody the norms of musical behavior in that society, they stand for order. Instances of departures from these norms qualify as noise. A piece of music therefore can be perceived as a dialectic between order and noise, a strategic model of how violence or deviance may be tolerated and channeled within a given social framework.⁹

6 Theodor W. Adorno, *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, trans. by E. B. Ashton from *Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie* [1962], New York: Continuum, 1969, p. 70.

7 In Freiburg an abbreviated version of this much of McClary's narrative was shown on the screen while a recording of the passage was heard.

8 See Albert Palm, «Mozarts Streichquartett d-moll, in der Interpretation Momignys», in: *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 1962/63, pp. 256-79: melodic lines of the first sixty measures of the movement, with the text on Dido's farewell to Aeneas that Momigny composed to fit the music, are on pp. 260-61; pp. 263-67 include a discussion and tabulation of Momigny's analytic breakdown by section, period, and phrase.

For English translations of Momigny's analysis and his dramatic narrative for Haydn 103/I, with bibliographic information on Momigny's *Cours complet*, see now *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century*, Volume II: *Hermeneutic Approaches*, ed. by Ian Bent, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 127-40.

9 McClary, «A Musical Dialectic», p. 133. Her choice of the word «noise» to designate unusual musical procedures follows Jacques Attali, *Noise: the Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massoumi, with a preface by Susan McClary, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985.

McClary offers two interpretations of Mozart's mm. 86-90, grounded in the foregoing premise, in order to suggest how the passage can be said to mean socially (again the bracketed numerals are mine):

There are several possible readings of this abrupt return, and again, one's positioning with respect to the soloist and the narrative thus far will influence heavily one's reading of this moment.

- [1] For instance, it might appear that the collective suddenly enters and saves the day. Just at the moment when the soloist seems hopelessly lost in despair, the orchestra valiantly salvages the situation, returns the piece to the comfort of (rationality): a *deus ex machina* turnaround (though if rationality is what we are celebrating, then attaining it by irrational means seems questionable at best).
- [2] It could just as easily seem (especially if one has identified with the soloist protagonist) that the organic necessities of the individual are blatantly sacrificed to the overpowering requirements of social convention. In that case, what we have here would be no diplomatic Enlightenment move in which differing points of view are rationally negotiated and reconciled to consensus. It would have to be perceived as an ends-justify-the-means strategy: the social norm comes to the fore and stamps out the deviant strain.¹⁰

The musical features in McClary's premise — that the passage can be read in terms of a parameter that begins from convention, representing order, and tends more and more toward noise, that is, disorder, as it departs from convention — seem to me unexceptionable, and well put. But here what appears to be just another tactical misstep in this case seems to subvert the strategy in the dialectic premise itself, with its assumption of bipolar conflict, for in the bipartite opposition of «soloist» and «collective» a basic textural aspect of Mozart's Vienna piano concertos has been ignored. In many passages in those works (not all), oppositions are not bipartite but tripartite: piano, winds, strings. The development section of K. 453/II is a particularly cogent instance. The musical dialogue taking place in mm. 74-90 is not one of unbalanced forces of solo and orchestra but rather one of oppositional equality between piano and winds, with the strings carrying on in a third and more neutral texture as background to both. It seems more like a conversation than a confrontation, an exchange of views: the winds offer a melodic proposition moving a modest change of orientation, which is confirmed by the piano in a pianistic way; the winds, evidently satisfied with the piano's confirmation but not its rhetoric, persistently reassert the proposed change, starting each time from the new orientation. The piano continues to answer, confirming each change, but with increasingly florid agreement (*agrément*s). Meanwhile, the strings have been trying to preserve some sort of decorum throughout, providing a stable environment supporting both the kind of change repeatedly proposed by the insistent winds and the ever more airy support from the frivolous piano.

This triangular conversation, or something similarly structured, would seem more appropriate to the musical texture. One could go on in similar vein, or in many other ways, but none of them at any rate simplistically dialectic, whether with respect to individuals in conversation or classes in conflict.

There is no question that the return in mm. 90-94 is abrupt and eccentric, but the requirements of McClary's dialectic premise led her once again to interpret music that is merely eccentric (very eccentric to be sure) as disorderly, to read what she first so aptly described as «a series of sleight-of-hand harmonic puns» as a return made by «irrational means». The means here are just as rational as the circle of fifths just described that precedes the passage, though in this case they are uniquely Mozartean (though in Mozart not unique). The «sleight-of-hand» comprises a one-by-one replacement of the pitch classes of a G⁺-major triad with those of the dominant seventh chord of C major, moving a chromatic half step down in each measure: *b*⁺ to *b*, *d*⁺ to *d*, *g*⁺ to *g*, the last being accompanied by a simultaneous upward move by diatonic half step from *e* to *f*. But if the G⁺-major triad in the perspective of the moment of its arrival is then left enharmonically as an A⁺-major triad — this is an «harmonic pun» all right — then the three chromatic half steps become diatonic half steps — *c* descends to *b*, *e*⁺ descends to *d*, and *a*⁺ descends to *g*, as though borrowed from the tonic minor of the movement. That Mozart was capable of such enharmonic tomfoolery, making no distinction between *g*⁺ and *a*⁺ or *d*⁺ and *e*⁺ when it suited him, was roundly criticized as a tendency to «disorder» by his contemporary Giuseppe Sarti.¹¹

A similar slithering return by sideslipping halfsteps may be seen in the analogous passage of development returning to reprise in the first movement of Mozart's concerto K. 459, mm. 241-247.¹² So whatever story one tells about the return in K. 453/II, a similar story might be told about the return in K. 459/I; and McClary has herself pointed out the converse, that a single passage of music can tell more than one story. But of course it would come as no surprise to a narratologist that a single theme can have two narrations: a single *fabula*, two *suzhyeti* — a single *histoire*, two *récits*. Nor will it surprise a hermeneutically inclined musicologist not only that a single verbal narrative might be read musically in more than one way but also that a single musical passage might be assimilated to more than one narrative sequence, or that a characteristic musical effect — in this last case an abrupt return from a distant tonal center made by shifting scale degrees by a half step in one voice at a time with crescendo — has been realized more than once by the master of harmonic and enharmonic ambiguity.

¹⁰ McClary, «A Musical Dialectic», p. 151.

¹¹ Sarti's *Esame acustico fatto sopra due frammenti di Mozart* — in which, among other criticisms of the quartets K. 465 and K. 421, Sarti excoriated Mozart for failing to distinguish between so-called enharmonic varieties of the «same» scale degree — survives only in an abridged German translation published thirty years after Sarti's death in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (6 June 1832). It is reprinted in Otto Erich Deutsch, «Sarti's Streitschrift gegen Mozart», in: *Mozart Jahrbuch* (1962/63), pp. 7-13.

¹² This passage in K. 459 is less outright than the passage in K. 453, but it is symmetrically analogous, returning from an A-major triad above the F major of the reprise as the passage in K. 453 returns from a G⁺-major (sc. A⁺-major) triad below the C major of the reprise.



It is also possible to read music of the Viennese Classic composers in a way that is arguably grounded in the common musical culture of the late eighteenth century, rather than in the individual responses of a late-twentieth-century listener as refracted through a prismatic premise drawn from a mid-twentieth-century philosopher, derivative in its turn of a nineteenth-century theory of class conflict. Such readings involve a different kind of premise and a different methodology, however. The premise, as Kofi Agawu has put it, is that «just as poems can be about poems, films about films, and novels about novels, so music can be about itself».¹³

A reading of Mozart's music on this premise will present it as an intertextuality of musical genres, types and styles, an intertextuality of *topoi*: musical mimesis. To be sure, the music that a *topos* in a Classic piece is about may well be music that has a social or political association: something grand and marchlike, be it processional, or military, or funereal; a dance type like the courtly minuet, or the *haut-bourgeois* gavotte, or the popular contredanse; a pastoral 6/8, or an imitation of hunting horns; a bit of learned counterpoint with its ecclesiastical echoes; a sophisticated lyric melody reminiscent of an operatic aria; or perhaps music echoing instrumental music from the theater, such as music for storms or battles.

This is at one remove from McClary's Adornian mode of discourse, and that remove is of the essence: the music in question is music about music, music familiar to members of a particular society, not about that society directly. If it can be interpreted as having «extra-musical» meaning, that meaning is mediated rather than immediate.

Wye Jamison Allanbrook has described the first movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, K. 332, as «a miniature theater of human gestures and actions, which is crafted by imitating the kinds of music used to accompany these gestures». She provides the following brief topical outline of the first group of the exposition, here broken up and numbered according to the musical units to which she refers, with measure numbers in brackets.¹⁴

It begins with

- [1] four measures in a simple singing style [mm. 1-4],
- [2] answered by a four-measure parody of learned counterpoint [mm. 5-8]. The double opening statement of the sonata [followed by a four-measure cadential phrase] is matched by
- [3] ten measures of hunt calls, which fall to a strong cadence in F major [mm. 12-22].
- [4] A passage of *Sturm und Drang* music [mm. 22-40] dramatizes the move to the dominant, its minor tonalities and arpeggiated sixteenth notes imitating the self-consciously «tragic» style often affected by C.P.E. Bach, and by Mozart and Haydn after him. Moving into C minor [29-34], the *Sturm und Drang* culminates in an augmented sixth [mm. 35-36] and a dramatic cadence on the dominant [37-40].
- [5] Arrival in C major is «nailed down» by a bright and symmetrical minuet tune [41 ff].¹⁵

Allanbrook begins from a premise for the «miniature theater» that is contemporaneous with the music she analyzes — Guy de Chabanon's claim that music can imitate music, and indeed only music:

Imitation in music is not truly sensed unless its object is music. In songs one can successfully imitate warlike fanfares, hunting airs, rustic melodies, etcetera.¹⁶

She then expands and generalizes from Chabanon's proposition, making what he took as a limitation on the notion of musical mimesis into its prime virtue instead:

Art music should represent the passions through the mediation of the simpler music which men use to accompany their daily activities and amusements.¹⁷

The first movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata K. 332 lends itself particularly well to a musically mimetic analysis — indeed in this respect it is not unlike much of Mahler's music, with its marches, chorales, Ländler, post-horns, cowbells, folk tunes, and the like — and in fact the movement had first been characterized in terms of musical *topoi* in a single brief sentence by Allanbrook's teacher Leonard Ratner.¹⁸ V. Kofi Agawu, himself also a Ratner student, has given a topical analysis of K. 332/1 in considerable detail.¹⁹ Allanbrook has fully validated Ratner's topical-mimetic approach in a later essay by contrasting a yet more detailed topical analysis of K. 332/1

13 V. Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991, p. 47.

14 As with the passage by Susan McClary, in Freiburg this passage too was shown on the screen as a recording of the music was being heard.

15 Wye Jamison Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983, pp. 6-7.

16 «L'imitation Musicale n'est sensiblement vraie que lorsqu'elle a des chants pour objets. En Musique on imite avec vérité des fanfares guerrières, des airs de chasse, des chants rustiques, &c.» Michel Paul Guy de Chabanon, *De la musique considérée dans elle-même et dans ses rapports avec la parole*, 2d ed. rev., Paris 1785, p. 56.

17 Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart*, p. 6.

18 Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music*, New York: Schirmer, 1980, p. 237.

19 Agawu, *Playing with Signs*, pp. 44-48.

with an equally persuasive analysis of the far less obviously mimetic first movement of Mozart's Sonata K. 333.²⁰

Though much remains to be done in this domain, I believe that topical analysis, pursued collegially, will be more fruitful for the understanding of musical meaning in Mozart — «music» meant to be heard that is then being read «as text» verbally — than the individual personal responses, however vivid or perceptive, of twentieth-century critics motivated by social ideologies. The premises of topical analysis in no way exclude other kinds of modern readings of a Classic instrumental piece, based on other premises. They do, however, provide a common language for verbal discourse about this particular kind of music that critics of any ideological persuasion may use.

2. Glarean²¹

In Kofi Agawu's *Playing with signs* the topical approach to Viennese Classical music — he calls it «extroversive semiosis» — is developed in extended analyses of three complete movements, among them the first movement of Beethoven's quartet Op. 132. In concluding that chapter, Agawu alluded briefly to other analyses of the late quartets, and recommended in general that analysis should not be limited to

the detailing of sources, either procedural or material, from earlier music

and he went on to comment in passing that such analyses as

Sieghard Brandenburg's elucidation of the background to the «Heiliger Dankgesang» movement from this quartet seem to me to stop too soon.²²

Even from Agawu's point of view, however, Brandenburg's study of the sources for the third movement of Opus 132 does not really stop too soon. Brandenburg has neatly isolated the essential contrast of two similarly broad meaningful *topoi* in Beethoven's Op. 132/III — ecclesiastical style versus modern style — in concluding that

in the alternating five-section plan of the movement [...] the elements adopted from church music are integrated with the language of classical form.²³

The movement is an alternating double-variation movement of the general type established by Haydn. In Beethoven's verbalization, the «Heiliger Dankgesang eines Genesenen an die Gottheit in der Lydischen Tonart» is contrasted with «neue Kraft fühlend». In the context of an «unmarked» Classical style represented in «neue Kraft fühlend» Beethoven's «Heiliger Dankgesang» — the «church music» in Brandenburg's words — is «marked» with two concurrent *topoi*.²⁴ It imitates the revived Lutheran chorale style that was coming to be a symbol for ancient Germanic piety in the early 19th century. But there is another *topos* here as well: in Beethoven's sketches the chorale started out to be in ordinary F Major, but in the end he finally composed it «in der lydische Tonart» — in the Lydian mode — thus invoking the supposedly pre-tonal modes surviving in the German chorale tradition.²⁵

In the conclusion to his discussion of the Lydian-mode music of Beethoven's «Heiliger Dankgesang», Sieghard Brandenburg pointed out that

the archaising harmony and melody are inspired by contemporary theories, and they exhibit the realisation of one of its ideals, of which however there is no example in ancient music.²⁶

20 Allanbrook, «Two Threads through the Labyrinth: Topic and Process in the First Movements of K. 332 and K. 333», in: *Convention in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Music: Essays in Honor of Leonard G. Ratner*, ed. by Wye Jamison Allanbrook, Janet M. Levy, and William P. Mahrt, Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1992, pp. 125-71. This passage and other aspects of the hermeneutic reading of music are discussed in «Reading Mozart's Music.»

21 The following has become an essay entitled «The Lydian mode: Gregor Meyer reads Glarean», presented to the Symposium «Music As Heard» organized by Rob Wegman, Princeton University, 27-28 September 1997.

22 Agawu, *Playing with signs*, pp. 125-6.

23 Sieghard Brandenburg, «The historical background to the «Heiliger Dankesang» in Beethoven's A minor Quartet Op. 132», in: *Beethoven Studies* 3, ed. by Alan Tyson, Cambridge University Press 1982, pp. 161-91, p. 191.

24 The contrasting of «marked» and «unmarked» semiotic signs has recently been developed at length in Robert S. Hatten, *Musical meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, correlation, and interpretation*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1994; see especially Chapter 2. For an earlier use of the «markedness» concept in a different musical context, see my «Modal representation in polyphonic Offertories», in: *Early Music History* II, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1982, pp. 73-77 (on modes 7 and 8 and their tonal types in Palestrina.)

25 Brandenburg's study of the sketches shows us the order in which the two *topoi* came into Beethoven's mind. The slow movement was in chorale style from the outset, and in an F tonality, as might well be expected for a tonal piece by Beethoven in A minor; in the early sketches the F tonality was ordinary F Major, however, with even a turn to F minor evidently contemplated at one point (see Brandenburg's Example 2). More than that, Beethoven's verbalization of a prayerful affect — «Dankgebeth» — appears in the sketch pages while they still show F Major (see Brandenburg's Example 4). Only thereafter do the harmonizations begin to eliminate the scale degree *b-flat*, so that the chorale melody finally received what Beethoven believed to be a harmonization «in der lydischen Tonart».

26 Brandenburg, «The historical background to the «Heiliger Dankgesang»», loc. cit.

His words «no example in ancient music» are entirely correct, and in the largest sense: in the compositional practice of European multi-part music there never really was a tonality that might be described simply as a major scale with a raised fourth degree.

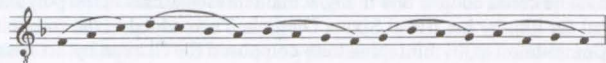
But Heinrich Glarean, from whose dodecachordal modal system Beethoven's «lydische Tonart» originated, believed that there was, or at least there had been, such a tonality. He also admitted a significant anomaly, however, an anomaly also recognized in the Gregorian chant theory of which his dodecachordal scheme was an extension.

Glarean's Lydian mode is the fifth of his set of twelve, as it is the fifth in the set of eight modes of Gregorian chant theory. The name «Lydian», for mode 5 of the Gregorian system, was grafted onto the system from Hellenistic writings on music, along with the other pseudo-Greek names of the system. To my mind, the most musical exposition of fully developed chant modal theory was given in the early 14th-century *Lucidarium* of Marchetto of Padua; part of his discussion of mode 5 — i.e. the Lydian mode — follows below.²⁷

The fifth mode is formed in its ascent from the third species of the fifth [below], and the third species of the fourth above, as here:



In descent it is formed from the same species of the fourth [above], and the fourth [species] of the fifth [below], as here:



After giving three arguments for regarding *b*-natural as the proper version of *b-fa/b-mi* for mode 5, Marchetto goes on:

It should be sung with *b*-flat also, that is, in its descent, so that when it wishes to bring itself from the fifth [degree] above down to the final, it may be able to avoid the harshness of the tritone [*c b^b a g f* in the natural hexachord instead of *c¹ b a g f* across two hexachords].

And we would like to show how its ascent may be understood as sung with *b*-natural, and its descent, above all where we say that, when there are notes of the fifth mode around upper *c* not descending below upper *a*, we ought to sing with *b*-natural, as here.



Marchetto continues with a number of specific examples of phrases from Responsories, arguing the case for *b*-flat or *b*-natural each time according to the musical context.

The eight modes of chant theory or the twelve of Glarean's expansion of the system became the normal modes for discussing the tonalities of 16th-century polyphonic music (and earlier polyphony as well), and have remained so in one form or another to this day. But I've argued elsewhere that 16th-century music is not modal in the way that 18th-century music is tonal.²⁸ In the first place, for none of the great masters — Rore, Palestrina, Lasso — are Glarean's twelve modes relevant. Sometimes of course these masters might represent one or another of the eight modes of the traditional system of chant theory — or all of them in order — in polyphonic composition, but I've also suggested that when they did, it was under ideological stimulus: in Rore's case, Renaissance humanism; in Palestrina's and Lasso's cases, either because the piece was based on a chant melody, or as a manifestation of Counter-Reformation piety.²⁹ In short, for Rore, Palestrina and Lasso, as for Beethoven, «mode» was a *topos*.

In the second place, Glarean himself confirmed the unreality of his modes in compositional practice,

since commonly we have only three in frequent use,³⁰

27 Marchetto of Padua, *Lucidarium* [1318], ed. by Jan W. Herlinger, Chicago 1985: from *Tractatus* 11 («De tonis qui proprie modi dicuntur»), Capitulum 4 («De formatione tonorum per species»), pp. 455-59 («De quinto tono»). The translation is mine, adapted from Herlinger's.

28 «Tonal types and modal categories in Renaissance polyphony», in: *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34 (1981), pp. 428, 466-70; «Monteverdi's model for a multi-modal madrigal», in: *In cantu et in sermone: for Nino Pirrotta on his Eightieth Birthday*, ed. by Franco Piperno and Fabrizio Della Seta, Firenze 1989, pp. 192, 219; «Is mode real? Pietro Aron, the octenary system, and polyphony», in: *Basler Jahrbuch für historische Musikpraxis* 16 (1992, appeared 1993), pp. 14, 18.

29 Art. «Mode», in: *The New Grove* (1980), pp. 397-99; «Tonal types and modal categories», pp. 430-31; «Modal representation in polyphonic offertories», in: *Early Music History* 2, ed. by Iain Fenlon, Cambridge 1982, pp. 44, 83-84.

30 Heinrich Glarean, *Dodecachordon* [Basel 1547], Book II, Chapter 7: «cum vulgò etiam treis duntaxat habeamus in frequentiore usu», p. 77.

and in another place, after mentioning both twelve and eight modes, he named those three modes:

others also claim that three are enough: *ut, re,* and *mi*, as ordinary musicians have it.³¹

Regarding the Ionian mode, one of the four that he had added to the Gregorian system Glarean wrote that

its natural final degree is *C*, but you very rarely find any song placed on it now,

so that, as he had put it a few lines earlier,

in our time it is removed from its proper final degree by a fourth and ends on the final degree of the Lydian, that is, *F*; and moreover no song ever finishes without *b-flat*.³²

As for his Lydian mode with its raised fourth degree, Glarean admitted that

in our time it is not in use among singers; they turn all of its songs into the Ionian, replacing *b-natural* with *b-flat*, so that you rarely find a pure Lydian now.³³

*

Despite the great rarity of «pure Lydian» polyphony Glarean was able to provide illustrations of it for his treatise. Two are chant-based pieces from existing repertory, by Isaac and Senfl.³⁴ Four more are among those compositions made expressly for Glarean by friends and colleagues, to illustrate modes that were part of his theoretical set of twelve for which he could adduce few if any actual representations in the polyphonic repertory. Two of these are duos composed for him by his friend Sixtus Dietrich. Then added to the foregoing are two paraphrase motets on the mode 5 Communion «Qui mihi ministrat» composed for Glarean by his friend Gregor Meyer. One is in Glarean's «pure Lydian» with *F-natural* exclusively; the other is in Glarean's Lydian «turn[ed] into the Ionian [...] replacing *b-natural* with *b-flat*». These two motets may be considered «readings» in music of Glarean's doctrine regarding the problem that polyphonic compositions with tonal focus on *F* posed for his modal theory.

Example 1

«Qui mihi ministrat» lends itself better than most mode 5 chant melodies to being set polyphonically with *b-naturals* everywhere. In Marchetto's words, «when there are notes of the fifth mode around upper *c* not descending below upper *a*, we ought to sing with *b-natural*». That is literally the case for the phrases «qui mihi ministrat» and «et ubi ego sum». The phrase «me sequatur» that follows «qui mihi ministrat», and also «et minister» opening the final phrase, both descend to *f* past *a* without turning back upwards, and *b-natural* is a lower neighbor between two *c*'s. «Meus» in the final phrase might well have had a *b-flat* instead of the *c*¹ between the two *as*, but it doesn't in the version of the melody Glarean knew.³⁵ Only the configuration at the end of the melisma setting «illic» requires a «fictive» *b-flat* between the two *as*, in order to avoid the *f/b* tritone.

31 Glarean, *Dodecachordon*, Book II Chapter I: «alij etiam tres sufficere clamitabant, *ut, re, mi*, quemadmodum ludionum vulgus habet» (p. 65). See now Cristle Collins Judd, «Modal types and *ut, re, mi* tonalities: Tonal coherence in sacred vocal polyphony from about 1500», in: *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 43 (1992), pp. 428-67. esp. pp. 437-41.

32 Glarean, *Dodecachordon*, Book II Chapter 20: «Nativa clavis finalis huius est *C*, sed nunc per raro ullam cantilenam in ea positam reperias» (p. 116). «...nostra aetate sede propria exulans per diatessarum in Lydii finali clavi, hoc est, *F*, non tamen absque *fa* in *b* clavi cantus finit» (p. 115).

33 Glarean, *Dodecachordon*, Book II Chapter 25: «nostra aetate apud Cantores in nullo esse usu, cuius omnis cantus in Ionicum deflectunt pro *mi* in *b* clave *fa* substituunt, ut purum Lydium nunc raro invenias» (p. 130).

34 Isaac's «[Loquebar] de testimoniis» is a setting of a Gregorian mode 5 Introit melody; Senfl's «Deus in adiutorium» is a setting of Psalm 69 that takes off from the recitation for Sunday at Compline.

35 The version of «Qui mihi ministrat» closest to Glarean's reading in modern chant books is the Cistercian, as seen in the *Graduale cisterciensis*, Westmalle 1934, p. 16*.

As usual, formal/melodic articulations in the Communion melody follow syntactic/semantic articulations in the text; the breaks are at clause-ending verbs «ministrat», «sequatur», «sum» and «erit», and also at the close of the long melisma emphasizing «illic». In Meyer's paraphrase motets the Communion melody is maintained primarily in one of the voices — the cantus in the «Lydian» *cantus-durus* setting, the tenor in the «transposed Ionian» *cantus-mollis* setting, as marked in Examples 2-5.

As might be expected the melodic/syntactic articulations of the chant melody are marked by cadences in Meyer's settings, that is, by two-voice successions comprising a consonant preparation, leading to a 7-6 or 2-3 suspension-resolution sequence (or octave extensions thereof, i.e., 14-13 or 9-10), and concluding with arrival at an octave or unison (or octave extension thereof); this is a so-called «perfect» cadence. This preparation-suspension-resolution-cadence (P-S-R-C) formula can be weakened in three common ways: (1) the non-suspending voice at S-R or at R-C can move to another consonance with the resolution of the suspending voice, in an «imperfect» cadence; (2) or it can drop out altogether at the cadence, in an «evaporated» cadence; and (3), if the S-R sequence is in upper voices, a voice below can move not only to the same pitch class as the cadential pitch class in a «full-bass» cadence, but also to some other pitch consonant with it, in a «bass-replacement» cadence.

There is no significant difference between Meyer's «pure Lydian» and «transposed Ionian» settings of «Qui mihi ministrat» in the cadences to Glarean's modal final *f*; they are all perfect, whether of the full-bass or bass-replacement variety. The pitch *c*¹ is of great structural significance for mode 5 in chant theory, and it occurs many times in the Communion melody «Qui mihi ministrat», as it does in Marchetto's concocted samples for mode 5. However great its tonal prominence in the timeless harmonic structure of the Communion melody, though, *c*¹ plays no structural role in the melody's temporal flow; nowhere is it an arrival point. Several cadences with pitch class C occur in Meyer's settings but all are weak in one way or another, since they cannot constitute phrase endings in the context of this particular melody.

Meyer's compositional «readings» of Glarean's polyphonic «pure Lydian» and «transposed Ionian» illustrate the point Glarean was making in several ways — as might be expected, in the «transposed Ionian» setting much is made of the pitch-class B¹, which is substantive in *cantus mollis* — but the distinction appears most subtly in the cadences to the melody's secondary degrees *a* and *g* in the two motets, all of which are perfect cantus-tenor cadences. Examples 2 and 3 show the cadential articulations at the *a* concluding the settings of the word «ministrat» in the first part of the Communion, in Meyer's «pure Lydian» and «transposed Ionian» settings respectively; both are perfect 7-6 cantus-tenor bass-replacement cadences.

The musical score for Example 2 consists of four staves. The top staff is labeled B₂ and contains the lyrics 'mi ni strat'. The second staff is labeled C₁ and contains the lyrics 'mi ni strat'. The third staff is also labeled C₁ and contains the lyrics 'mi ni strat'. The bottom staff is labeled F₃ and contains the lyrics '(mi) ni strat'. The score shows a cadence structure where the upper voices (B₂ and C₁) have a re-cadence, and the lower voices (C₁ and F₃) have a bass-replacement cadence. A tempo marking '♩ = d' is at the top left.

Example 2

Pitch class A in *cantus durus* is normally treated as shown in Example 2, as a *re*-cadence, that is, with B-*mi* descending to A-*re* in one voice and fictive leading-tone G[♯] rising to A-*re* in the other. *Mi*-cadences to A are also possible in *cantus durus*, however, and not uncommon in D-tonality pieces, with G-*re* rising stepwise in one voice and a written-in accidental B-*fa* descending stepwise in the other.

In *cantus-mollis* cadences to pitch class A, a *mi*-cadence is the only one possible, with a substantive B-*fa* descending to an A-*mi* as in Example 3; a *re*-cadence to pitch class A would be impossible since B-*mi* is accidental, not substantive, in *cantus mollis*, and therefore cannot descend but rather must rise to a C-*fa*, as happens often in Meyer's «transposed Ionian» setting of «Qui mihi ministrat». In cadences to pitch class A in *cantus mollis*, moreover, a bass-replacement cadence such as the one shown in Example 3 is unavoidable: any perfect 7-6 upper-voice *mi*-cadence, like the cantus-tenor cadence here, *must* be a bass-replacement cadence: there is no position in the gamut from which the bass could move in the R-C succession to give lower-octave harmonic support with pitch class A to this cadential cantus-tenor *a*¹/*a* in *cantus mollis* without grievous error. At the cadential arrival for «ministrat» in the «pure Lydian» setting shown in Example 2, to the contrary, the bass could

Example 3 is a musical score for four voices: G₂ (Soprano), C₁ (Alto), C₁ (Tenor), and F₃ (Bass). The time signature is common time (C) with a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = d$. The lyrics are "mi ni strat me" for the first system and "mi ni strat" for the second system. The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, notes, rests, and slurs.

Example 3

perfectly well have moved to *a* or *A* to make a full-bass cadence, rather than the *d* to which it actually does move.

The conclusion on *g* of the Communion melody's melisma on «illic» marks off the first segment of the second main division of the melody, and both Meyer's settings have perfect cadences at this point too; they are shown in Examples 4 and 5, showing his treatment of the concluding motive in the melisma. Here the differences between the two F tonalities show up very clearly. The *clavis g* is not a common cadence point for pieces in any F tonality, but in these contexts it works far less well in the tonal type $g_2 - \flat - F$, Glarean's «pure» Lydian, than it does in the tonal type $g_2 - \flat - F$, Glarean's «transposed Ionian».³⁶

Example 4 is a musical score for four voices: G₂ (Soprano), C₁ (Alto), C₁ (Tenor), and F₃ (Bass). The time signature is common time (C) with a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = d$. The lyrics are "ij [il] lic" for both systems. The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, notes, rests, and slurs.

Example 4

36 For my particular use of the term «tonal type» see «Tonal types and modal categories in Renaissance polyphony», in: *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34 (1981), pp. 428-70, passim. The term and the concept «Tonartentypus» originated with Siegfried Hermelink, *Dispositiones modorum: Die Tonarten in der Musik Palestrinas und seiner Zeitgenossen*, Tutzing: Hans Schneider 1960. My shorthand symbols signify as follows.

1. The clef is the clef of the cantus part, which represents the cleffing of the whole — c_1 stands for standard cleffing (SATB) or minimal variant thereof; g_2 stands for the so-called «chiavette» (treble clef, (mezzo-soprano) clef [c-clef on the second line], alto clef, and tenor clef or (baritone) clef [F on the third line]), or minimal variant thereof.
2. A natural sign or a flat sign stand for, respectively, *cantus durus* (no signature in the parts) or *cantus mollis* (a B-flat signature in the parts).
3. The capital letter stands for the pitch class of the lowest voice in the final sonority.

Example 4 shows Meyer's treatment of the last part of the melisma on «illic» in Glarean's «transposed Ionian». His relaxed imitative handling of the chain of perfect cadences on g^1 and g with (fictive) leading tone from below reflects the familiarity any composer of polyphony would have making a cadence to g in the *cantus mollis* of the «Guidonian diatonic», where B-*fa* is substantive.³⁷

The musical score for Example 5 consists of four staves. The top staff is for G₂ (treble clef), the second and third staves are for C₁ (treble clef), and the bottom staff is for F₃ (bass clef). The tempo is marked as ♩ = d. The lyrics are 'il lic' on the G₂ staff, 'il lic' on the first C₁ staff, 'il lic' on the second C₁ staff, and 'ij [illic]' on the F₃ staff. The score includes various musical notations such as accidentals, phrasing slurs, and a '(t...)' marking on the first C₁ staff.

Example 5

It is of course just as easy to make cadences to g in *cantus durus*, i.e. with B-natural as the substantive form of *b-fa/b-mi*, as illustrated in Example 5. The melodic configuration of the last half of the chant-melisma motive concluding «illic», however, taken in conjunction with the proscriptive obligation to demonstrate Glarean's «pure Lydian», has landed the commenting composer on the horns of a genuinely musical dilemma. The span of a fourth between the registral boundaries of the chant motive, filled stepwise, absolutely requires *either* an accidental *b-flat* or an accidental *f-sharp*, in order to evade what would otherwise be the immediate melodic span of the tritone f/b . Since the actual *claves* of the chant melisma are to be used, the motive must be handled either with the third species of the fourth (*ut-re-mi-fa*), within the span f/b^b , as in the *cantus mollis* of the «transposed Ionian» setting, or with the second species of the fourth (*mi-fa-sol-la*), within the span f^{\sharp}/b .³⁸

To avoid the apparent melodic tritone in the chant-melisma motive by using the span f/b^b is ruled out absolutely for the setting in Glarean's «pure Lydian» by the precompositional constraint to eschew pitch class B-flat; unlike F-sharp, B-flat is an *essential* element of the full Guidonian diatonic (*musica recta*) as it had been understood since at least the 13th century. This being so, the span f^{\sharp}/b must necessarily be used, the fictive sharps being supplied in performance in the *cantus*, where the chant melody is primarily located. That in turn being so, fictive sharps must be contingently applied to the pitch class F everywhere else in these measures, except of course at the top of the alto's ascent (which necessarily produces a splendid and unavoidable cross relation in practice).

But so much emphasis on essential B-naturals and fictive F-sharps, however necessary to fulfill the theoretical requirement to avoid B-flats at all costs, is ultimately incompatible with a piece where most phrases have a strong tonal focus on, or a leaning towards, pitch class F. Yet given Glarean's precompositional theoretical constraint, there was no way Meyer could avoid reading the end of the «illic» melisma in some such way as this, despite the resulting long-range structural dissonance. It is a concise musical commentary on the problem the F tonalities had presented theorists from the beginnings of chant theory.

*

Gregor Meyer's two paraphrase motets reverse the relationship of «text» and «music» illustrated by McClary's and Allanbrook's readings of Mozart's music. Their readings treat the «music» as a «text» to be read verbally, Meyer's motets jointly constitute a «reading» in music of a verbal text. Instead of made-up text purporting to explicate the meaning of real music, they are made-up music purporting to illustrate the meaning of Glarean's real theory — like the monophonic music concocted by Marchetto to illustrate his description of mode 5. It is a

37 «Guidonian diatonic» is my term for what Margaret Bent has called «musica recta». See her «Musica recta and musica ficta», in: *Musica disciplina* 26 (1972), pp. 73-100.

38 The chant-melisma motive is intoned in this latter guise, i.e. as a second species of the fourth, in the opening statement of the chant motive in the alto, within the span b/e^{\sharp} ; thus its first appearance is at a position in the *cantus durus* system where no fictive accidental is required.

practice well known in most music-theoretical traditions: if you can't find good illustrations to support your argument, make some up — or better yet, get a friend to do it for you.

3. *Āsāvārī*

I mentioned earlier that neither the eight Gregorian modes nor the twelve modes of Glarean and his successors are universal compositional foundations for the polyphony of Palestrina, Lasso or Rore. But if we can't properly call each and all of their compositions modal in the conventional manner of speaking, then what kind of tonal glue holds this kind of polyphony together? what is the basis for the differing patterns of tonal coherence that we certainly perceive in the music of Palestrina, Lasso, and Rore? or for that matter, in the music of Gregor Meyer? How do we account for the resemblance between the melodic passages concocted by Marchetto to illustrate Gregorian mode 5 (Example 1) and the traditional melody of the Communion «Qui mihi ministrat» (Example 2)? It is certainly more than the mere fact that they share the same scale relative to a common tonic, call it F. These two melodies also have in common similar overall contours; some similar internal configurations; similar emphases on the same notes; and more. Both melodies are members, in fact, of what a scholar of Anglo-American folk music would call the same tune family. They are (tokens) of the same melodic (type).

Renaissance polyphonic tonalities can also be viewed like tune families, not in terms of a rigid and symmetrical system of modes, but rather in terms of a flexible and luxuriant system of types. Not much has yet been done along these lines independently of rehashes of modal theory, but a beginning was made many years ago by the Heidelberg choral conductor and musicologist Siegfried Hermelink.³⁹ The fifth chapter of his *Dispositiones modorum* is entitled «Die Tonarten bei Palestrina». Hermelink constructed a system of 20 tonalities on primarily theoretical grounds; yet though his basic system is as rigid and symmetrical as Glarean's, he went far beyond scale structure, characterizing the tonal types of Palestrina's entire available output in terms of the melodic typology of the cantus parts, the concomitant typology of the other voices being supposedly derivable from them.⁴⁰

In summary descriptions of each of what he believed to be Palestrina's twenty tonalities, Hermelink listed five generalizable features as points of departure:

Zählen wir nun die Punkte auf, die für eine genauere Charakterisierung der einzelnen Tonarten demnach berücksichtigt werden müssen:

- 1) Äußere Kennzeichen (Grundton; Schlüsselung)
- 2) Melodiebildung (konstituierende Töne, Hochton)
- 3) Kadenzen (bevorzugte Stufen)
- 4) Klangverhältnis (wirklicher Klangraum)
- 5) Tonartcharakter (bevorzugte Gebiete, «natura»)⁴¹

The first item in Hermelink's list of features merely identifies what I call the «minimal markers» of a Renaissance tonality — a «tonal type», to use Hermelink's term, introduced earlier in the discussion of Gregor Meyer's polyphonic paraphrases of «Qui mihi ministrat». The next three items are musically more restrictive, for each specifies characteristic musical features of the tonal type in question. The fifth item, the *ethos* of the tonality, is subjectively descriptive.

Hermelink adapted Glarean's familiar names to his empirically demonstrated tonalities, but he explicitly rejected Glarean's dodecachordal modal theory (and *a fortiori* the eight modes of chant theory) as an explanatory model.

Offenkundig tritt hier zutage, dass die traditionelle Tonartenlehre die wirklichen Verhältnisse, welche in der ausgereiften Vokalpolyphonie herrschen, nur mangelhaft zu umgreifen vermag. [...] Zweifellos war schon im 16. Jahrhundert ein gewisses Empfinden rege für das Auseinanderklaffen von Theorie und musikalischer Wirklichkeit in diesem Punkte; darauf deutet das In-Fluss-Geraten der Tonartfragen hin: die Einbeziehung des Aeolischen und Ionischen in den Kreis der Kirchentöne durch Glarean, Zarlino's Schwanken in der Zählung der «Modi», die Spaltung in Anhänger der Acht- und Zwölfertonarten-Lehre, die Unsicherheit in der Beurteilung des Lydischen usw. [...] [D]as Rüstzeug der zeitgenössischen Theorie und Terminologie allein reicht nicht hin, um die historischen Gegebenheiten in ihrer ganzen Tragweite heute zu erfassen und darzustellen.⁴²

The tonal type $\underline{6} - \sharp - F$, Glarean's «pure Lydian», is not included among Hermelink's twenty tonal types, since the «Lydian notation» (to use Hermelink's expression) appears only twice in Palestrina's works.⁴³ So that I may illustrate with particulars, therefore, Hermelink's characterizations of two of his four «Aeolian» varieties have

39 Siegfried Hermelink, *Dispositiones modorum: Die Tonarten in der Musik Palestrinas und seiner Zeitgenossen*, Tutzing: Hans Schneider 1960.

40 An idea of Hermelink's approach may be seen in his discussion of one of the most widely used tonal types, accompanied by the aligned notation of the beginnings of the cantus parts of twelve of Palestrina's motets of that type: *Dispositiones modorum*, pp. 105-111.

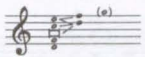

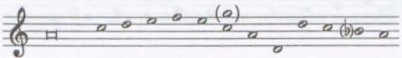
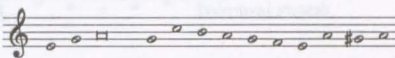
41 Hermelink, *Dispositiones modorum*, p. 105.

42 Hermelink, *Dispositiones modorum*, p. 12-13.

43 Hermelink, *Dispositiones modorum*, p. 124. They are the last two pieces in Palestrina's Book II of (secular) Madrigals a 4 (Venice 1586), nos. 24 «Ogni beltà, madonna» and 25 «Ardo lungi e dappresso», Palestrina, *Werke*, ed. by Franz Xaver Haberl and others, Vol. 28, pp. 126, 129; *Opere*, ed. by R. Casimiri, Vol. 31, pp. 33, 37.

been chosen instead, the two in *cantus durus* (i.e. with no B-flat signature) and Grundton A. Examples 6 and 7 (see appendix) show the two-voice openings of all the motets in Palestrina's motet collection of 1563 that are in one or the other of these «Aeolian» tonalities.⁴⁴

Here is a summary of Hermelink's descriptions of the tonalities embodied in these two sets of motets.⁴⁵

	Fis-Aeolisch [g ₂ - ♯ - A]	A-Aeolisch [c ₁ - ♯ - A]
Äußere Kennzeichen	Hohe Schlüsselung Grundton A, ohne Vorzeichen	Tiefe Schlüsselung Grundton A [ohne Vorzeichen]
Konstituierende Töne ⁴⁶		
Bevorzugte Stufen ⁴⁷	A; D, E; (C, F, G)	E; A; C, G, D
Klangraum ⁴⁸		
Tonartcharakter	sehr ausdrückstark und farbig, hoffnungsvoll und bang zugleich; für alle leidenschaftlichen Empfindungen geeignet.	weich, klagend, innig.

*

Hermelink's group of features characterizing his tonal types for Palestrina have an extraordinary formal resemblance to the kind of feature list one sees in Indian treatises (and nowadays textbooks too) characterizing *rāgas* — melodic types — in Indian classical music. Such a characterization is called a «*rāga-lakṣaṇa*», meaning «the characteristic marks — the *lakṣaṇa* — of a *rāga*». (*Rāga* and *rāga-lakṣaṇa* will be spelled «*raga*» and «*raga-lakṣhana*» henceforth.)

There are many kinds of *raga-lakṣhana*. Those that have come down to us through the Sanskrit theoretical tradition are the only evidence a music historian has that can even hint at how some of the *ragas* we know and love may have acquired the musical characteristics by which we are guided in rendering them today. But the writing of *raga-lakṣhanas* is a continuing tradition, like the oral performance practice of *ragas*. Over the past century, oral teaching of the oral tradition has been ever more supplemented by written material, material intended for the newly devised schools of music that were being created as India came into the modern world. Characteristic of this written teaching material are what we may call «didactic» *raga-lakṣhanas*. Didactic *raga-lakṣhanas* are not definitively prescriptive, they cannot be, but they are meant to help students reify patterns of music that they are internalizing aurally from their teachers.

Here are brief didactic *raga-lakṣhanas* for two North Indian *ragas* from a modern textbook by V.N. Patwardhan. Like Hermelink's two *cantus-durus* «Aeolian» types, the two *ragas* described share the same scale-type — also (so to speak) «Aeolian» — yet also like his, they differ greatly in other respects.

44 After Example 1 of my «Tonal types and modal categories», pp. 454, 455. This is the only Palestrina collection in which these two tonal types appear together.

45 After Hermelink, *Dispositiones modorum*, pp. 138-41.

46 The «konstituierende Töne» bzw «Melodiebildung» for Hermelink's «A-Aeolisch», originally shown in the clef c₁ are written in the treble clef here for ease of comparison and contrast with those for «Fis-Aeolisch», here written as its normal notational level.

47 In the individual descriptions the «bevorzugte Stufen» are listed under the rubric «Kadenzen».

48 The diagram in notation for the «wirklicher Klangraum» in Hermelink's «Fis-Aeolisch» has been rewritten here at its normal notational level. Hermelink's notation a minor third lower of music examples using the «chiavette» is a reflection of his hypothesis that the contrasted standard cleffings of late 16th-century vocal polyphony — normal SATB versus the so-called «chiavette» — were meant to signify a consistent difference in «absolute» pitch level. This improbable hypothesis has obscured the value of the rest of Hermelink's theoretical arguments and analytical approach.

Rāga — Āsāvārī⁴⁹

In this raga [the scale-degrees] 3, 6, and 7 are taken flat [*komala*], all the others natural [*suddha*]. [Scale-degrees] 3 and 7 are omitted in ascent.

genre [*jāti*]: pentatonic-heptatonic
 sonant [*vādī*]: *a'*
 consonant [*samvādī*]: *e*^b
 time [*samaya*]: the second watch of the day

the raga's principal motive [*mukhya anga*]:



ascent [*āroha*]:



descent [*avaroha*]:



Particularities

This is one of the principal ragas [*janaka-rāga*].⁵⁰ The raga's unique form [*svarīpa*] is especially clear in descent, thus:



When holding [slow] discourse [*ālāpa*], go up and hold [scale-degree] 6 in the phrase



But during passage-work [*tāna*], take this kind of passage-work, omitting 6 in ascent



In order to avoid the raga [Darbarī] Kānaḍā, frequent use is made of the succession



49 Rāga-lakṣaṇa for the North Indian raga Āsāvārī, after V.N. Patwardhan, *Rāga-vijñāna* 1, 8. ed., Pune 1962, pp. 135-6; my translation from the Hindi.

50 *Janaka-rāga* literally means «generating raga». In modern jargon the term refers simply to the scale type of the raga, here «Aeolian», by naming it after an important raga using that scale type. It is nonetheless misleading, in that it is all too easy then to assume that a «generated raga» [*janya-rāga*] has more in common with the raga that lends its name to the scale type than in fact it does. See the discussion below of the raga Darbarī-Kanada.

Raga — Darbārī-Kānaḍā⁵¹

In this raga [the scale-degrees] 3, 6, and 7 are taken flat [*komala*], and the other degrees [*svara*] natural [*śuddha*].

genre [*jāti*]: complete [heptatonic]
 sonant [*vādī*]: *d*
 consonant [*samvādī*]: *g*
 time [*samaya*]: the second watch of the night

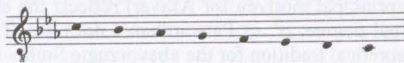
the raga's principal motive [*mukhya anga*]:  in the original

ascent [*āroha*]: 

descent [*avaroha*]: 

Particularities

This is a raga of the *Āsāvārī* scale-type [*anga*].⁵² The raga's nature [*prakṛti*] is serious. Its particular expansion is in the low and middle registers. On [scale degrees] 3 and 6 there is a particular shake [*āṇḍolana*]; through it the seriousness and sweetness of the raga are increased. In order to avoid *Āsāvārī* and similar ragas, this kind of direct descent



is not taken; the descent is crooked [*vakra*], like this:



When making straight [fast] passage-work [*tāna*] a shadow [*chāyā*] of *Sāraṅ* raga comes in [...] like this



Resemblances between Hermelink's contrasted characters for the «Fis-Aeolisch» and «A-Aeolisch» pair of tonal types and Patwardhan's contrasted characters for the pair of ragas *Asavari* and *Darbari-Kanada* are patent as to both format and content. (Names of ragas will be written without diacriticals except in direct quotation.) At the most abstract level, Hermelink's Äußere Kennzeichen correspond to Patwardhan's scale type and *jāti*. His next three — Konstituierende Töne, Bevorzugte Stufen, and Klangraum — with their more specific musical configurations and choices correspond with Patwardhan's *āroha* and *avaroha*, *vādī* and *samvādī*, and *mukhya anga* respectively, in that order. As for Tonartcharakter, Hermelink's listings are more specific than Patwardhan's

51 Rāga-lakṣaṇa for the North Indian raga Darbārī-Kānaḍā, after Patwardhan, *Rāga-vijñāna* I, p. 15; my translation from the Hindi.

52 The protean word *anga* can mean «part, limb, member, branch, genre, section» and more. As «part» or «limb» of a raga it can mean either a registral segment [*pūrvā anga* and *uttarā anga* meaning lower and upper parts of the central octave respectively], or a motivic type, as in *mukhya anga*, «principal motive». These are its more common uses; the expression «*Āsāvārī anga*» would normally signify a *mukhya anga*, a motivic type that would make the melodic type *Asavari* instantly recognizable. Here, however (and elsewhere in Patwardhan's textbook series), the name of a raga coupled with «*anga*» designates one of a small number of scale types named for a principal raga using a particular collection of pitch classes that is shared by that raga and a number of others. «*Āsāvārī anga*» in this context does not designate a *mukhya anga* that unmistakably marks *Asavari* raga; rather, it designated a «member» of a class, the class being a small group of scale types.

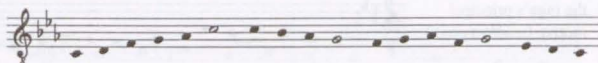
The common present-day term for scale type, however, is *thāt*, generalized by V.N. Bhatkhande from a 19th-century term designating the settings of movable frets on a sitar; there are ten *thāts* in Bhatkhande's scheme, of which «*Āsāvārī thāt*» is one. Patwardhan and other musicians of the Vishnu Digambar tradition do not use the word *thāt*, and some — e.g. Omkar Nath Thakur — see no need for the notion of scale type at all. See my essay «Reinterpretations of traditions: Omkarnath Thakur contra V.N. Bhatkhande on *sāṅgīta-śāstra* and *śāstrīya-sāṅgīta*», in: *The traditional Indian theory and practice of music and dance*, ed. by Jonathan Katz, Leiden 1992, pp. 12-15, 23.

«time of day» — day versus night — but in Patwardhan's brief passages spelling out «particularities» appear one or two further aspects of the «Tonartcharakter» — the ethos — of the ragas.

Raga-lakshanas are meant as descriptive or prescriptive or analytical accounts of a kind of musical entity that itself has no fully determined form. Raga-lakshanas for any given raga vary considerably among themselves. Below is the head list from Omkar Nath Thakur's raga-lakshana for Asavari, also from a textbook series, for comparison with Patwardhan's. (The «particularities» spelled out in Thakur's raga-lakshana are very detailed and complex and are not needed for present purposes.)

Rāga Āsāvārī⁵³

ascent-descent [*āroha-avaroha*]:



genre [*jāti*]: pentatonic-heptatonic

initial [*graha*]: middle *c*

predominant [*amśa*]: *e*^b in the lower/prior segment [*purva anga*];

a^b in the upper/responding segment [*uttara anga*]

final [*nyāsa*]: *g*

secondary final [*vinīyāsa*]: *c*

principal motive [*mukhya anga*]:



time [*samaya*]: second part [of eight] of the day

nature [*prakṛti*]: useful for self-sacrifice [*atma-nivedana*]

evokable sentiment [*rasa*]: gently erotic

The head listing in Thakur's raga-lakshana for Asavari is more specific as to «Tonartcharakter» than Patwardhan's head listing; it also differs from his regarding the most significant purely musical parameter, the *mukhya anga* («Klangraum»). Thakur's «principal motive» for Asavari reflects the emphasis on what both he and Patwardhan take as the raga's principal degree, *a*^b, as Patwardhan's does not. Thakur also regularly uses obsolete terms from the oldest Sanskrit theoretical tradition for the «bevorzugte Stufe» of a raga.⁵⁴

Attributions of *rasa* — «evokable sentiment» — to a raga have become fashionable, and elsewhere Omkar Nath Thakur contrasted the musical features of Darbari-Kanada and Asavari in gendered terms, inspired by the icons of the raga-painting tradition. He described «the full-grown masculine form [*prauḍha puruṣa rūpa*] of the well-known Dārbarī-Kānaḍā», warning that

the teacher should have his students produce it with a copious use of this raga's heavily shaken ornament on degrees 3 and 6, and in a slow tempo, with a deep voice. At the same time, he should show them that the *ālāpārī* [unmeasured melodic exposition] of this raga should confine itself to the low and middle register. Any *tānas* [passage-work] should use ornaments, and there should be no fast *tānas*.

In contrast, Thakur observed that

roughly considered, the form of Asavari *rāgiṇī* shows almost the same flatted degrees 3, 6, and 7. [But] the notes in it [...] are produced at a moderate pace, with light shaking and infrequent slides, and without heavy attacks,

and he concluded, «keep in mind that showing the femininity [*strīṭva*] in this *rāgiṇī* lies in a soft and pleasing production of the notes».⁵⁵

This kind of contrasting characterization for Asavari and Darbari-Kanada is very like the sort of thing one observes in Hermelink's «hoffnungsvoll und bang zugleich» versus «weich, klagend, innig» for Fis-Aeolisch and A-Aeolisch. Raga-lakshanas for Indian ragas, however, differ from Hermelink's feature lists in the crucial aspect, not of what they are — they are very much alike in principle — but of how they relate to actual music. What we might call Hermelink's «lakshanas», as shown in his feature lists for Palestrina's two «Aeolian» tonalities and as manifested musically in Examples 6 and 7, were derived by induction from items in a fixed repertory that has come down to us in the form of notation. Hermelink's twenty tonal types have epistemological reality, in short, but no ontological reality. There is no reason to suppose that Palestrina was cognizant of any

53 Omkar Nath Thakur, *Saṅgītāñjali* III, Banaras 1955, Part 2, p. 82.

54 For a detailed explication of the nature of, and the relationship between, the obsolete terms *graha-amśa-nyāsa* used by Thakur in his raga-lakshanas and the present-day more familiar *vādī-samvādī* used by Patwardhan, of equal antiquity in the theoretical tradition, see «Reinterpretations of traditions», pp. 15-17, 33-36.

55 Omkar Nath Thakur, *Saṅgītāñjali* VI, Varanasi 1962, Part 1, pp. 100-101; the translation from Hindi is mine. The feminine form «*rāgiṇī*» is used in a number of hierarchic, symmetrical, and gendered schemes for classifying ragas that were extremely widespread in North India in the 16th-19th centuries, usually connected with miniature painting. For a detailed conspectus of the genre, see my «Illustrated inventories of Indian ragamala painting», in: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 100 (1980), pp. 473-93.

such congeries of 20 individual tonal types, or that he manipulated reified tonal types in full artistic consciousness of the characteristics Hermelink discovered from his inductive analysis of their composition.

In India, to the contrary, an abstract melodic type, a raga, does have ontological reality, independently of any particular manifestation of it. Each raga has its own proper name, like Asavari and Darbari-Kanada, as befits its identity as an individual entity, and Indian musicians do manipulate ragas in full artistic consciousness of their musical characteristics. In the context of «music as text and text as music», then, a raga is a third kind of musical text, a quasi-Platonic musical Form, an Ideal Reality beyond the reality of any single manifestation of it. Any given rendition of a raga — a raga in the Real World as it were — obviously cannot be read hermeneutically, as though it were a Mozartian instrumental piece as read by McClary or Allanbrook, even though expressive denotations may be attributed to the raga itself and usually are; a raga in performance, however, is not a (work) to be read, only one of an infinity of possible tokens of the type. And while an artist's rendering of a raga may conform to one or another raga-lakshana, in that it won't contradict it, no raga-lakshana can ever cover all the possibilities in a raga, since the (repertory) — all possible renderings of a raga — can never be closed. At any moment a musician may hit upon a new combination that brings out the raga's individuality in a new way that still does not contradict the raga's norms or evoke norms appropriate to some other raga.⁵⁶

Like any Indian raga, Asavari can be rendered in many ways memorized, improvised, and combined. Nowadays any particular rendition of a raga that has been recorded can of course be transcribed into some sort of descriptive notation; but there is no way that prescriptive notation can determine a raga to the extent that prescriptive notation determines a Mozart concerto or sonata, a Beethoven quartet, or a motet by Palestrina or Gregor Meyer. A raga has its being somewhere on a continuum between unordered scale at one end and fixed tune at the other. The raga Asavari leans toward the tune end of the continuum; by way of contrast, the raga called Yaman (or Kalyān) lies nearer the scale end. Its scale type is the major scale with raised fourth degree, Glarean's Lydian; the raga Yaman, however, is a real entity, a «melodic type», while Glarean's Lydian is only a theoretical construct, a «modal category». The scale type of Asavari — *Āsāvarī anga* in Patwardhan's locution for the more familiar *Āsāvarī thāt* — is the «natural minor» scale, the scale type of Hermelink's tonal type Fis-Aeolisch. The melodic type Asavari, the raga, is a real entity, though, while the «natural minor» scale, *Āsāvarī thāt*, is only a scale.

*

The most prestigious form of presentation of a raga is a metrically free improvised rendering called *ālāpa*, literally «discourse». Richard Widdess has cogently characterized *ālāpa* vis-à-vis our notion of «improvisation», as seen in the Indian context.

The term «improvisation» is an unsatisfactory but unavoidable expedient. The extent to which Indian music can be said to be improvised has been questioned [...] but in the absence of a firm definition of improvisation the question cannot be answered. Rather, it seems likely that the term will be re-defined so as to include the processes of spontaneous or partially spontaneous composition that occur in Indian and other musics, when these are better understood. Meanwhile, Indian canonical music theory tends not to distinguish between «composed» and «improvised», or between «fixed» and «variable», but rather between «constrained» (*nibaddha*) and «unconstrained» (*anibaddha*), where *ālāpa* belongs to the latter category and everything else to the former. Among the «constraints» from which *ālāpa* is free are (meaningful) text and cyclical rhythmic organization (*tāla*).⁵⁷

Like an extempore speech on a given theme, an *ālāpa* of a raga is normally presented in what might be called a rhetorically controlled manner.

- (I) In a sort of *exordium* the system tonic is established, motives identifying the raga are presented, and the register below and above the system tonic is explored.
- (II) The elaboration of the central octave up to but not yet establishing the upper octave of the system tonic is like the *narratio* and *explicatio* of classical rhetoric.
- (III) The eventual attainment of the upper octave of the system tonic and the development of the register above and below it constitutes an *amplificatio*, with or without reference to the lower reaches of the central octave.
- (IV) A climax is reached launching a *peroratio* that concludes with a final return back down to the system tonic.⁵⁸

Examples 8 and 9 (see appendix) are transcriptions of *ālāpas* of Asavari written out as demonstrations for students in two modern textbooks.⁵⁹ Example 8 is by V.N. Patwardhan, made up for the textbook from which the

56 See my essay «The structure of musical meaning: a view from Banaras», in: *Perspectives of New Music* 14, No. 2/15, No. 1 (1976, appeared in 1977), pp. 308-34, especially pp. 313-16.

57 Richard Widdess, «Involving the performers in transcription and analysis: a collaborative approach to *Dhrupad*», in: *Ethnomusicology* 38 (1994), pp. 59-79, note 5 on p. 78. For a seminal presentation of the problems surrounding the concepts improvisation, composition, and performance in general, see Bruno Nettl, «Thoughts on improvisation: a comparative approach», in: *Musical Quarterly* 60 (1974), pp. 1-19.

58 The four divisions described here empirically correspond closely with the four divisions for *rāgālāpī* outlined in the 13th-century treatise *Saṅgīta-ratnākara* (III.192-94); see the edition and translation by R.K. Shringy and Prem Lata Sharma, *Saṅgīta Ratnākara of Śaṅgadeva*, Volume II, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal 1989, pp. 198-201.

raga-lakshana quoted earlier was taken.⁶⁰ Example 9 is by Omkar Nath Thakur, for his own textbook.⁶¹ The enumeration of seven successive stages of these two «discourses» on Āsavārī raga in the two examples follow their sources (that there happen to be seven stages in both is only a heuristically convenient coincidence).

The comparable contents of Patwardhan's and Thakur's sample *ālāpas* are aligned below according to the four procedural phases listed outlined above. And just as the «particularities» (not shown above) of Thakur's raga-lakshana are much more elaborate than Patwardhan's, so too his sample *ālāpa* is much more extended than Patwardhan's within each stage. Indeed, it has all the earmarks of Thakur's personal style and may well have been taken down from dictation.

Phase	Patwardhan (Example 8)	Thakur (Example 9)
I:	1	1-2-3
II:	2-3	3-4-5
III:	4-5-6	5-6
IV:	7	7

*

A raga has a real existence even though it can never have a definitive form, written or oral. It is a kind of musical hypertext, a known, recognizable, unique, individual musical entity that is nonetheless different every time it is rendered. A particular rendition of a raga is not merely a reading of its lakshana, as the Meyer motets constitute a reading of Glarean's theory.

By the same token, though a raga-lakshana is a verbal text, it is more than merely analytical and descriptive, unlike a Hermelink feature list: more often than not a raga-lakshana is regarded as having prescriptive and restrictive force as well. Yet any particular raga-lakshana has its own definitive verbal text regardless of content — it can be written down, copied and recopied — while the raga that it describes, the melodic type as such, cannot. Consequently, conflicts between written theoretical tradition and oral practical tradition are endemic in Indian music and Indic musicology, and they are central to any attempt to deal with Indian music in music-historical terms.

With raga and raga-lakshana, then, we have yet a third angle on «music as text and text as music». There is a relationship between music and words, but there is neither a single musical text to be interpreted verbally, as in McClary or Allanbrook on some Mozart work, nor yet a single theoretical text that can be exemplified musically, as in Gregor Meyer on Glarean's «pure Lydian» and «transposed Ionian». It is a relationship in which one kind of entity, a raga, is a musical hypertext with an infinity of possible renditions: a raga as such cannot be written down definitively, by its very nature, but it is always uniquely itself. The other kind of entity is a verbal text of the ordinary sort: any raga-lakshana can be written down, copied or (nowadays) printed, handed on without change — but there can be any number of such texts dealing with a given raga, and they may legitimately differ in their views of some aspects of the nonetheless single and unique raga they purport to characterize. And no representative of either kind of entity can determine the other.

I wonder if such creative and interpretive ambiguities would be translatable into other musical languages, or into other languages about music. Probably they would not: analogies are as often dangerous as they are sometimes useful.

(Princeton University)

59 At the «Musik als Text» Congress in Freiburg I illustrated Āsavārī by singing two short improvised *alāpas* myself, replaced here by notated samples of *alāpa* made up by two noted musicians for their textbooks.

60 Patwardhan, *Rāga-vijñāna* Ist, Pune 1962, pp. 137-38.

61 Omkar Nath Thakur, *Saṅgītañjalī* III, Varanasi 1955, Part 2, pp. 83-85.

Appendix

Example 6

15. $p > o$

31.

34.

* entrance of another voice

Example 7

17.

fa mi re mi fa mi re

25.

36.

* entrance of another voice

Example 8


Example 8 consists of seven numbered staves of music, each containing a melodic line. The notation includes various note values (quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes), rests, and slurs. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The staves are arranged vertically, with each staff numbered from 1 to 7. The music is written in a single system on a five-line staff. The notation is clear and legible, showing a variety of rhythmic patterns and melodic contours.


Example 9


The musical score for Example 9 is presented in four systems, each consisting of two staves. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The notation includes a variety of rhythmic values and articulations:

- System 1:** Features a sequence of eighth notes with slurs and ties, followed by a series of sixteenth notes.
- System 2:** Includes eighth notes with slurs, followed by groups of sixteenth notes marked with wavy lines (trills or ornaments).
- System 3:** Shows a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes with slurs, and groups of sixteenth notes with wavy lines.
- System 4:** Contains eighth notes with slurs, groups of sixteenth notes with wavy lines, and a final group of sixteenth notes with a wavy line.

Powers Ex. 9 (Fortsetzung)

5. 

6. 

7. 

* printed an octave higher