

CRITICAL COMMENTARY

MOTETS

1. *Quem vidistis pastores?* (a 14, with 'bassus pro organo') (C77)

Principal and Unique Source: *RISM G 87* (1615) (p. 33; attributed only on title-pages; underlaid only in parts I, II, III, VIII, IX and X).

Text: This text is based on: the Fourth and Fifth Responds (without Versets) at Matins in the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ on 25 December (*REG 114*, ff. 57v–58r; *LR*, pp. 58, 61; *SAR*, vol. I, cols. clxxviii, clxxx); the Third and Fourth Responds (without Versets) at Matins in the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ on 25 December (*BR*, pp. 209, 211; *LU*, pp. 377–378, 382); two Responds at Matins in the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ on 25 December (*HOURS*, vol. I, pp. 1160–1161); the Second and Third Responds within the Octave of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ (*REG 114*, ff. 102r–102v). Lines 1–7 are based on: the First Antiphon at Lauds in the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ on 25 December (*AR*, p. 264; *AM*, p. 240; *HOURS*, vol. I, p. 1177; *REG 114*, f. 65v; *SAR*, vol. I, col. clxxxviii).

The label 'Sinfonia' appears at the beginning of all parts in 1615, though only two parts in the present edition reproduce the label. The words 'O, o magnum mysterium' appear (in part or in whole, and sometimes with an 'i' replacing 'y' in the last word) in all instrumental parts except part IV; these words remind the players where they re-enter. The rests and time-signatures in bars 18–87 of the instrumental parts (except for the organ) in 1615 are not written out, but are implied by the indication 'Pause 136'; parts IV and XIII also have 'Pausa comun'. The number of rests indicated by the figure '136' is in error. At an unknown time after printing, the figure was corrected by hand to '140' in several copies of the 1615 print (besides the one used in this edition); the rests and time-signatures are supplied here without any indication of their quasi-editorial status. The 'bassus pro organo' is a *basso seguente* interspersed with *basso continuo* passages, and is here supplied with editorial figures (largely taken from an edition of mine — with score and parts — published by King's Music, no. 154 (1993)).

Music and Underlay:

Decimus: 23 I 4: 1615 reads "re"/ 24 I 1: 1615 reads "bif"/ 40 I *sb*-rest–75 I *sb*-rest: 1615 gives all but four of the *b*-rests required; at an unknown time after printing five (not four as required) *b*-rests were added by hand to those already printed.

Altus: 38 II 1: 1615 omits dot/ 89 II 3: 1615 reads "mi-"/ 99 II 1–101 II 2: 1615 places underlay back by one note and places the underlay repeat sign with 101 II 1/ 115 II *sb*-rest: 1615 omits rest/ 125 II *sb*-rest: 1615 omits rest.

The style of the works in *Symphoniae sacrae* varies considerably, and this fact suggests that Gabrieli composed its pieces over an extended period. A number of works are composed in a conservative style, similar to the motets that Gabrieli published in 1587 and 1597. Indeed, two of the works in the 1615 print, 'Ego dixi Domine' (a 7) (C2) and 'Deus, Deus meus, ad te' (a 10) (C4), were first printed in *Concerti di Andrea, et di Gio: Gabrieli* (Venice, 1587). However, the majority of the works in the 1615 print are written in an enterprising style that clearly identifies them as creations of the seventeenth century. This applies as much to those works with written-out instrumental parts, two of which make extended use of a *basso continuo*, as it does to some of the other works supplied with text underlay in all parts. It is in these late works that one observes how Gabrieli breathed new life into the motet with his striking originality and skill, heralding the development of the cantata.

The 1615 print (unlike the earlier publications of Gabrieli's works in 1587 and 1597) includes a 'bassus pro organo' for each work. In most cases this constitutes a solitary *basso seguente*. However, in 'Quem vidistis pastores?' and 'In ecclesiis' the 'bassus pro organo' is mostly a *basso continuo*; the only other work in the 1615 collection that features a *basso continuo* is the 'Magnificat' (a 17) (C83) in which the organ has an independent bass for no more than one or two bars. Unlike some of his contemporaries, among them Viadana, Gabrieli displays a cautious attitude to the use of the *basso continuo*, providing few figures and revealing a lingering respect for the *basso seguente*.

The number of mistakes in the 'Magnificat' (a 17), where the music is partly corrupt, and in a number of other works in Gabrieli's *Symphoniae sacrae*,⁸ confirms that the latter print was inadequately checked before printing. In this respect it differs from those prints that Gabrieli published himself in 1587 and 1597, where the standard of accuracy is much higher.

The music in Gabrieli's *Symphoniae sacrae* (Venice, 1615) was probably composed for use in the various institutions in Venice where Gabrieli worked and performed: the Basilica of St. Mark (and other Venetian churches in which the musicians from St. Mark's performed from time to time) and the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. As a permanent organist at these two institutions between 1585 and his death in 1612 Gabrieli would have had plenty of opportunities to have his works performed, not least because of the unusual freedom he was accorded as Venice's major composer. We have no information

⁸For example, see 'Sancta et immaculata virginitas' (a 7) (C55) and 'O gloriosa virgo' (a 12) (C68). The relevant omissions from the latter works are rectified on the basis of new evidence in the following editions: *Giovanni Gabrieli: Motet 'Sancta et immaculata virginitas' for Eight Voices*, ed. Richard Charteris, Baroque Music Series nos. 9 and 14 (Albany, California, 1994) and *Giovanni Gabrieli: Motet 'O gloriosa virgo' for Twelve Voices or Voices and Instruments*, ed. Richard Charteris, Baroque Music Series no. 10 (Albany, California, 1994). Also see, Richard Charteris, 'Newly Discovered Manuscript Parts and Annotations in a Copy of Giovanni Gabrieli's *Symphoniae sacrae* (1615)', *Early Music*, 23 (1995), pp. 487–496.

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ROS

Et cho- ~~rus~~ an- - ge- lo-

de vir- gi- ne na- tum, na- tum vi- di- mus.

4. Et chorus angelorum