WORTH A LISTEN:
INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUES
BETWEEN PERFORMERS AND
PERFORMANCES OF TUDOR CHORAL
MUSIC

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THIS THESIS IS PRESENTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA,
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This thesis investigates the way performance practices have changed over the twentieth century within the field of Tudor choral music, particularly among English performers. The hypothesis was that any change in performing style could be attributed to a change in emphasis in performance practice values, which would be evident when looking at the way people described the music. The research was carried out through a direct comparison between the performance styles of the 1920s and styles today. This was achieved in two distinct stages. The first research stage employed sources from the former period to ascertain the characteristics of the performing style. This was achieved both through the analysis of four recordings from the 1920s, and evaluation of the reception of the recordings conveyed in contemporaneous reviews. The second research stage involved interviews with leading English performers of early choral music as a means of generating comparisons between the early twentieth century performing style and that of today. The interviews were designed to elicit responses from the interviewees when played the recordings from the 1920s. The interviewees were then read excerpts from reviews contemporary with the recorded material, asked to what extent they identified with the terms used by the reviewers, and asked to reflect on whether the reviews changed their initial assessment of the early performances. In this way, an intergenerational dialogue was established.

The main finding of this study has been the extent to which the interviewees recognised elements of the 1920s recordings as having integrity and coherence in their performing intentions, bearing many elements in common with performing styles today. The original hypothesis was not upheld by these findings, as all the interviewees could recognise the musical descriptions in the 1920s reviews, though they would not have immediately applied them to the recorded performances as they heard them. The study has additional implications for any musical field which relies on written descriptions to describe an otherwise unknown musical style, particularly the field of Early Music, as it shows that: 1) the same words can be applied to very different musical outcomes; and 2) the same musical outcomes can be interpreted very differently even by people working within the same musical milieu. It is therefore important, where possible, to favour the use of recordings over written descriptions when documenting or researching a musical style.
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1 INTRODUCTION

Choral music is an enigma. Millions of people around the world experience its beauty, be it through choirs based at educational institutions, choirs as part of community and religious organizations, or choirs on concert hall stages. All these choirs touch people’s lives. Yet, despite the seeming universality of the experience, there is no universal agreement as to its definition. What defines a choir? What constitutes choral music?

Many authors (Anhalt; Chase and Emmons; Clayton; Dunsby; Garnett; Potter; Reimers and Wallner; Robinson and Winold; Strimple) have investigated elements of choral music within the canon of Western musicology.¹ However, a review of this literature reveals that the question as to what constitutes choral music often goes not only unanswered but also unasked.

Garnett, adopting a largely anthropological stance, is one of the few authors to approach the issue of choral definition. She observes that the “…discourse of choral practice constitutes choral singing as an apparently coherent and self-evident category…”² A common definition for choral music given by practitioners is “…people singing together…”³ However, this broad definition covers many ensemble possibilities which most commentators would, in practice, exclude from membership of the choral genre in comparison with more traditional choral forms. A hundred people singing in unison; three people singing different melodies simultaneously; ten untrained voices with piano accompaniment; and six operatically trained singers performing an opera ensemble, are all, strictly speaking, people singing together. Garnett notes that when practitioners use this broad definition they often qualify the statement with examples of choral groups. Types of ensemble singing not given as examples become conspicuous in their absence. Barbershop ensembles are a form of communal singing that are sometimes marginalized within, and even from, the genre, due to a difference in vocal

² Garnett, Choral Conducting and the Construction of Meaning: Gesture, Voice and Identity at 63.
³ ibid., p65.
tone production and a greater emphasis on individual expression than other ensembles.\footnote{Ibid., p65.}

Garnett proceeds to provide a means of grouping elements within the choral domain according to choral competition categories. These are taxonomies of type (age, size, social spaces, gender, repertoire);\footnote{Ibid., pp66-9.} craft (vocal production, performance style, diction);\footnote{Ibid., pp69-72.} and style (repertoire, a group’s stylistic flexibility).\footnote{Ibid., pp72-4.} It is interesting to note the importance of differences in vocal production. The difference between popular music vocal technique and Western Art music vocal techniques might seem an obvious point of categorization, however this opposition also exists between trained and untrained vocal production. This is the case in German Singkreis choirs (singing circles)\footnote{Russell A Hammar, ‘West German Music Study Is Rooted in Tradition and Community Interest’, \textit{Music Educators Journal}, 58/6 (1972), p62.} that cease to be included as Singkreis if they employ too trained a technique. Other Singkreis choirs deem that ensembles with advanced technical ability are too professional, such that they have left the sub-genre, rather than interpreting the change as a development or improvement within Singkreis.\footnote{Ibid., p62.} Garnett’s work provides at least an acknowledgement of practical differences within the larger choral genre, a consideration ignored in many other works. However, questions as to how these differences have developed historically, and their greater implications for recruitment, method and cultural status, remain unanswered.

In contrast to Garnett, and more representative of the majority of writings on this subject, Strimple’s \textit{Choral Music in the Twentieth Century} completely avoids the issue of choral definition, assuming a shared understanding between readers of what constitutes choral music. Some texts within the choral literature use such an assumption of shared definition as a means of excluding works/ensembles from the choral genre. This is true of Hinds’s article ‘New Music for Chorus with Overtone Singing’, which states that, while Karlheinz Stockhausen’s \textit{Stimmung} is the first piece of Western music to use sung overtones, it is simply “...not a choral work...”,\footnote{Stuart Hinds, ‘New Music for Chorus with Overtone Singing’, \textit{The Choral Journal}, 47/10 (2007), p21.} thereby excluding it from the choral repertoire without any further justification. In contrast with Hinds, Strimple’s definitional assumption operates in an inclusive fashion. He gives no justification for his selection of repertoire within the text, and thereby proceeds to treat both Randall Thompson’s \textit{Alleluia}\footnote{Randall Thompson \textit{Alleluia} (1940) for unaccompanied Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass (SATB) choir. Strimple, \textit{Choral Music in the Twentieth Century}, p226.} and Luciano Berio’s \textit{Sinfonia}\footnote{Luciano Berio \textit{Sinfonia} (1968) for eight solo voices and orchestra, traditionally performed by vocal consorts such as The Swingle Singers. Ibid., p189.} on the same footing. Such vastly different works are treated equally despite the fact that, as pointed out by Garnett...
and exemplified by Hinds, performers of these different works view themselves and their relationship to each other differently. In fact, Strimple seems to implicitly state that the works by Berio and Thompson are equally choral, an assumption which strips from them their identity as pieces written for different types of ensemble under the choral banner, a large amateur choir in the case of Thompson, and a professional one-per-part consort for the piece by Berio. Strimple’s text divides the choral repertoire into geographical regions, and within each region by significant composer, chronologically. He also provides an appendix that lists works by the required voice type. However, there is no listing made according to the suitable size or style of ensemble involved, as Strimple completely ignores the issue of what constitutes a choral ensemble.

Most people would agree that when a composition written for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices (SATB) is performed by 100 singers it constitutes a choral performance. However, does that definition hold true if 30 voices perform the same work? What if 16 voices perform, or perhaps only four voices? Is it still a choral performance?

A fascination with smaller vocal ensembles operating at the miniature end of the choral spectrum first brought me to the current topic. Being a singer myself, and having performed in a variety of ensembles (jazz and barbershop ensembles at high school, large 100+ voice choirs in early university, chamber choirs of around 30 voices in later university, and eventually consorts of as few as 3 singers), I was fascinated by the impression my experience gave me that as the size of a vocal ensemble decreases, the repertoire it performs seems to polarize. Whereas larger choirs seemed to sing a relatively mainstream repertoire of oratorios from the Classical and Romantic periods, it was in smaller chamber choirs and consorts that I was given the opportunity to perform both early music (from the Baroque and earlier) and modern classical music (from the more avant-garde works of the early twentieth century to music by contemporary composers). In particular, I performed in one concert for small vocal consort where Thomas Tomkins and György Ligeti sat as equals in the programme. These experiences sparked my interest in the type of ensemble that affords such variety.

I first started to explore the possibilities of such miniature choral ensembles in my honours thesis, in which I looked at the ensembles from the point of view of modern classical music written in the twentieth century, comparing works written by Schoenberg, Stockhausen and Xenakis. As part of that research I compiled a list of small vocal ensembles active in Europe in the first half of the twentieth century and was intrigued to find that many of these choirs
performed equal amounts of avant-garde and early music. In line with my own experience singing in small vocal ensembles, my honours research found that small choirs/consorts in the first half of the twentieth century, such as Hugue Holle’s Holle Madrgial Society and Nadia Boulanger’s Ensemble Vocale, were performing modern music alongside early music, giving both world premieres and modern premieres in the same concert (see Appendix A).

In commencing this study, I sought to explore these same small vocal ensembles from the opposite end of the repertoire spectrum, starting from their place as performers of early music in the first half of the twentieth century. English performers were particularly emphasised, with a view to not only look at how they operated in the early twentieth century, but to also see how they related to the activities of current day English choral performers. The first undertaking was a broad review of the literature on early music choirs in order to examine the current state of research in this field, before establishing a focus on the precise questions this study would address.

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13 Some of these early twentieth century small vocal ensembles also included arrangements of popular songs in their repertoire, though I am yet to follow that line of research.
The field of investigation for this study requires consideration of three areas of the existing literature (literature being taken to mean writings about music rather than musical scores themselves). These three categories are: (1) literature about the historic early music movement; (2) literature on changing musical tastes; and (3) philosophical literature of the mature early music movement. These literatures do not proceed in a clear progression from one to the other. Categories 1 and 2 overlap, as some writers have addressed the history of the same period using different methods. Category 1 also relates to category 3, as both focus on the activities of performers/scholars within the movement, as opposed to category 2’s focus on the listener. Figure 1 represents these relationships. To emphasise the thematic link between performer/scholar-focused writings and listener-focused writings, the categories will be introduced in the order 1, 3, 2, while the full discussion of each category given below will proceed in numeric order.

1. Literature about the Historic Early Music Movement

2. Literature on Changing Musical Tastes

3. Philosophical Literature of the Mature Early Music Movement

Figure 1. Relationship between the three literature categories.

The first category comprises sources that consider the early music movement as an historic entity, focusing on its development over time. This includes writings that deliberately set out to trace the development of the movement as a whole\(^\text{14}\) (explicit histories), as well as others that concentrate on the development of a particular repertoire within the movement,\(^\text{15}\) or the role/impact of an individual performer/scholar.\(^\text{16}\)


\(^{15}\) Sources which trace the performance practice of a particular repertoire within the early music movement include Suzanne Cole, *Thomas Tallis and His Music in Victorian England*, eds Rachel Cowgill and Peter Holman (Music in Britain, 1600 - 1900 Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2008), and Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, *The Modern Invention of Medieval Music: Scholarship, Ideology, Performance*, eds John Butt
Leaving specific writings for discussion below, an initial reflection reveals that this body of literature features a substantial coverage of instrumental rather than vocal music, particularly as regards the movement during the first half of the twentieth century. The three explicit histories written to date follow a Whig history structure, emphasising the role of individual characters in progressing the movement, rather than more postmodern, thematically driven histories. As a result, they provide little analysis of the underlying motivations behind different stages of the movement, and imply a progression towards a goal of authenticity that was to emerge in the later twentieth century.

As both the first and third categories share a focus on the activities of scholars/performers within the early music movement, discussion will move to the third category, before returning to the second category below. The third body of literature is the philosophical literature of the mature early music movement. Whereas the first category contains writers looking back on the development of the movement, and its advances in performance practice and scholarship, this third category includes writers who consider the philosophy of the movement in the present day, particularly as regards the issue of authenticity. The founding of the movement’s flagship journal, Oxford University Press’s Early Music, in 1973, dates the emergence of this literature. This watershed year is used by both Mayer Brown and Haskell to mark a turning point in the early music movement, when it was recognized that the early music movement was no longer a minority interest, but a multifaceted popular genre in its own right. As such, it marks maturity in the movement. In 1973 the movement gained the prestige of an edited journal, providing a forum in which to concentrate on both performance practice scholarship and to voice questions as to the philosophy and purpose of the movement. During the 1970s and 1980s authenticity became a buzzword guaranteed of selling

and Laurence Dreyfus (Musical Performance and Reception; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).


Whig history has been described as “... a story, a continuity, a development and, by implication, a progress towards a free liberal, enlightened present...” See Roger Spalding and Christopher Parker, Historiography: An Introduction (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), p13.


recordings, with an accusation of ‘inauthentic’ doomng interpretations to commercial failure. The philosophical literature reflects this as it queries the roles of scholar (keeper of historical accuracy) and performer (filled with creative instincts) in creating modern performances of early music. With this debate also comes a realisation of the amount of ‘modern’ musical style and taste embedded within historically informed performances. Of particular interest in this category is the underlying assumption that authenticity has always been a constant goal of the movement. The historical literature does not seem to ask whether authenticity was a driving force from the beginnings of the movement in the early twentieth century. It is therefore important to consider both the first and the third body of literature, the historical and the philosophical, when approaching the field of investigation for the present study.

In contrast to the first and third categories discussed above, concentrating on the work of scholar/performers, the second body of literature focuses on the way audiences receive performances, i.e. their reception at the time of performance. This second area covers the emerging field of changing musical tastes. In an added dimension, this field uses recordings to explore the difference between how a performance was received at the time it was originally made, and how audiences today receive the same performance. Such a dual perspective allows the literature to ask questions of style and taste as entities changing over time. This category of literature has only materialised since the 1990s as researchers have turned to recorded archives as an exact representation of what previous generations considered stylistically appropriate musical performance. To date, literature in this area has focused on instrumental performance and solo vocal performance. The present study seeks to complement the existing literature by using recordings to focus on a cappella choral music.

When considering these three different sets of literature, each embracing a different chronological viewpoint, and each making their own contribution in approaching the field of investigation for this study, it becomes increasingly important to have a firm grasp of the overall chronology of the movement under investigation. Such a chronology is summarised in Figure 2. Different authors attribute the starting date of the early music movement to very different times, even to different centuries. The present study states that the modern early music movement emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century. This era was marked by

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the publication of Arnold Dometsch’s *The Interpretation of the Music of the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries* in 1915, but earlier characterised in instrumental music by Wanda Landowska’s first harpsichord concert in 1903, and in choral music with the appointment of Richard Runciman Terry to the then to be completed Westminster Cathedral in 1901. These dates are chosen as significant because they mark not only an interest in early repertoires, but also in performing them in a manner reflecting a degree of desire to emulate the mode of first performance, i.e. with a sense of historicity.

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Figure 2. Chronological outline of the early music movement.

Two other turning points in the movement are important in understanding the position of the three categories of literature under review in relation to the movement itself. A second forging period can be seen immediately after the Second World War, with a flourish of new choral performing groups including Noah Greenberg’s New York Pro Music Antiqua, Alfred Deller’s Deller Consort, Michael Morrow’s Musica Reservata and Thomas Binkley’s Studio der Frühen Musik. The period is further marked by the publication of Thurston Dart’s *The Interpretation of Music* in 1954 and, a student of Dolmetsch, Robert Donington’s *The Interpretation of Early Music* in 1963 which, while restating many of the same points made by Dolmetsch in 1915, moved early music performance practice to the forefront of the classical music psyche. The third milestone date, as previously mentioned, is the founding of the journal *Early Music* by Oxford University Press in 1973, which can mark the movement’s maturity. The journal itself stated that it endeavoured to be “…a link between the finest scholarship of our day and the amateur and professional listener and performer…” This was an important change in attitude as until that time a large portion of the movement had adopted Alfred Deller’s view, as quoted in Haskell, that “…musicology and the performance of music are two worlds best kept apart

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from one another...”29 This perhaps stimulated greater reflection on the intertwining roles of scholars and performers in the development of the movement, as the overwhelming majority of the sources to be considered below in each of the three categories were written during this third stage.

Livingston posits that the movement has now entered a fourth stage, as of the 1990s. She characterises this development as the loss of the “...oppositional, anti-establishment...” side of the movement, as the mainstream of classical production and consumption subsumes early music.30 At present this stage is not recognised in the current study, which instead interprets the publication of Bruce Haynes The End of Early Music in 200731 as an extension of the authenticity debates that featured in the third phase of the movement.

2.1 LITERATURE ABOUT THE HISTORIC EARLY MUSIC MOVEMENT

Considering the mere hundred year span of the early music movement, as defined for this study, it is not surprising that only three explicit histories have been written of it, each from authors writing during the movement’s mature stage. The term explicit history here refers to authors whose clear intention was to trace the history of the movement as a whole, as opposed to tracing the development of a single repertoire within the movement or tracing the role of a specific character who contributed to the movement. The three works, cited throughout the early music literature, are the books by Cohen and Snitzer,32 and Haskell33 and the influential article by Mayer Brown.34 Each of these works has in common a structure based around a chronological narrative of the movement, featuring key figures, with only limited critical analysis and thematic grouping. This is largely due to the fact that the books by Haskell, and Cohen and Snitzer, are not by historians or musicologists but by journalists, and the article by Mayer Brown, while critical in its approach, is very brief.

29 ibid., p163.
34 Mayer Brown, ‘Pedantry or Liberation? A Sketch of the Historical Performance Movement’.

9
2.1.1 REPRISE: THE EXTRAORDINARY REVIVAL OF EARLY MUSIC (1985)

The first history of the movement published was Cohen and Snitzer’s *Reprise: The Extraordinary Revival of Early Music*. From the outset this book was viewed by critics as lacking depth, with the Galpin Society reviewer, John P Dick, summarising it as containing “...much of relevance and interest at the anecdotal level but the reader looking for discussion of fundamentals will be disappointed.” It is included in this discussion by virtue of it being the first work to be published which addressed the historical development of the early music movement. It remains oft-cited in the literature due to the fact that it is one of only three sources available devoted purely to that subject, and thereby still exerts an influence over subsequent studies in early music. Richard Taruskin encapsulates the combination of a lack of academic rigour despite relative importance within the literature in his review for the Music Library Association, in which he both dismisses the book as “...inane fan-coverage...” while citing its very presence as evidence that the early music movement has “…arrive[d] for real...”

Cohen and Snitzer’s book combines a written account of the revival with a pictorial study, documenting performers in both Europe and America. The introduction to their version of events begins very early, with mention made of the 1726 foundation of the London Academy of Vocal Music, later renamed the Academy of Ancient Music, the 1776 foundation of the Concert of Antient Music, the 1741 foundation of the Madrigal Society, and the 1802 publication of Forkel’s biography of J.S. Bach. However, the authors portray these events as mere augurs of the movement proper, as the majority of the book represents the movement as a twentieth century phenomenon. They turn directly from Forkel’s Bach biography to the twentieth century foundation of the Leipzig Collegium Musicum in 1908. This skips a number of 19th century developments in early music, similar in import to those cited by Cohen and Snitzer from the 18th century. These would include the contributions of Otto Nicolai, Louis Spohr, Richard Wagner and Johannes Brahms to the German Palestrina revival, and in Brahms’s case to editions of Schütz and Handel, events omitted without any explanation.

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Cohen and Snitzer provide, as in a report, a chronological outline of key figures in the movement, mentioning major European figures, such as Arnold Dolmetsch, Wanda Landowska, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Frans Brüggen, and Gustav Leonhardt, while maintaining at its core the movement in America, marked by a large section devoted to the work of Noah Greenberg. Just looking at the key European figures mentioned reveals a preference for instrumental music over vocal. Only later in the book is discussion of vocal music covered, prefaced with an extensive quote from George Bernard Shaw bemoaning the perceived incongruity between contemporary vocal technique and period instrumental technique present in the first half of the twentieth century.\(^{41}\) There is only a brief discussion of the work of countertenor Alfred Deller, contrasted with a long chapter on the achievements of vocalists Andrea von Ramm, Nigel Rogers and the “...new English early music style...” of Emma Kirkby\(^ {42}\) in the second half of the twentieth century. This implies a clear preference for late twentieth century vocal performance practice and dismissal of any forerunners thereof. In terms of choral music, large sections are devoted to the ensembles from the second half of the century, such as Noah Greenberg’s New York Pro Musica and Thomas Binkley’s Studio der Frühen Musik, with only slight mention made of the work of Richard Runciman Terry and Safford Cape\(^ {43}\) in the first half of century. Again, the book implies that the only significant achievements made in choral music occurred in the second half of the century.

Apart from this disproportionate focus on instrumental music, overlooking any achievements in vocal and/or choral music during the first half of the twentieth century, Cohen and Snitzer also present some interesting philosophies of the early music movement. They position themselves as authors situated very much within the ‘early music is modern music’ philosophy (a strand present in category (3) literature of the mature movement, to be discussed below). They quote Nikolaus Harnoncourt saying “...We make music in the present, totally, and as living, breathing people of our own time...”\(^ {44}\) adding to it their own comment that early music “...is a way of approaching the past, but it is not the past itself...”\(^ {45}\) (their italics). The explanation for the contemporaneous nature of early music style is twofold. They first state that early music provides a means to react against mainstream music without having to resort to the atonal strains of new music\(^ {46}\). They then claim that early music, when it was originally written, was written for amateurs and that its revival now fills the gap left by modern

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\(^{42}\) Ibid., p81.
\(^{43}\) American musicologist who founded the Pro Musica Antiqua of Brussels. Ibid., p27.
\(^{44}\) Ibid., p10.
\(^{45}\) Ibid., pxii.
\(^{46}\) Ibid., p8.
composers who choose not to write accessible music for the amateur market. These two arguments seem to contradict each other, as the former is based on the educated professional who wishes to make a rebellious statement in his choice of performance style, while the latter is based on the uneducated amateur who fails to grasp the complexities of new music written in the twentieth century: yet both arguments are used to back up Cohen and Snitzer’s ‘early music is modern music’ philosophy.

Elsewhere they state, “…the specialness of early music owes as much, as we shall see, to its modern-day human context and to its contemporary attitudes as it does to its repertoire…” While this comment supports their ‘early music is modern music’ stance, it also seems to show an awareness that the contemporary attitudes of the period under investigation must be considered when assessing the quality of a performance. However, this attitude fails to permeate the text. In their introduction they mention, but do not discuss, the consequences of the key distinction in attitude towards early music between the 1726 and 1776 early music academies. The former academy considered music to be early if composed before the end of the 16th century, whereas the latter considered anything more than 20 years old as early.

Cohen and Snitzer proceed, in their discussion of twentieth century early music vocal performance, to ignore early twentieth century practices in preference to those later in the century. There is no sense that they are taking into account that their preference is itself based on current performance attitudes and values, which may be different to those at the beginning of the century. As in much of the literature generated during the movement’s mature stage (i.e. post 1973), there is a lack of awareness as to the historically constructed nature of the philosophies underlying the movement, the same as the facts of the movement itself.

Alongside this ‘early music is modern music’ construct, Cohen and Snitzer also support the idea of the movement as a revival. They argue that the twentieth century early music movement represented the restoration of a style of performance whose performance tradition had been irrecoverably broken. One could propose an important distinction between static performance traditions (performance of early repertoire in an attempt to recover an original mode of performance) and evolutionary performance traditions (performing early repertoire as part of a living tradition that has incorporated new ideas of performance over the years). While this difference becomes important when attempting to define what ‘the early music movement’ means, the type of clear-cut distinction described by Cohen and Snitzer is unrealistic. In order to make this belief consistent with events, they deliberately state that there is no living

48 Ibid., pxi.
49 Ibid., pp12-3.
performance tradition for Palestrina and Pergolesi.\textsuperscript{50} This is despite the fact that there was an unbroken tradition of performing Palestrina in the Vatican papal chapel, passed from Giuseppe Baini (choirmaster of the papal chapel from 1817)\textsuperscript{51} to Otto Nicolai, who used it as the basis for his Palestrina performances at the Berlin Singakademie.\textsuperscript{52} From this line of development one could argue that the entire German Palestrina tradition, the Cecilian movement it spawned, and all other areas of Catholic musical renewal, including the work of Richard Runciman Terry at Westminster Cathedral, constituted an evolutionary performance tradition. This interpretation is consistent with Cohen and Snitzer’s treatment of the early choral performance practice of Richard Runciman Terry, which is almost ignored in their book. This could be viewed as a result of Cohen and Snitzer’s prerequisite of a broken performance tradition as a condition in order for meriting inclusion in their account of the early music movement.

2.1.2 THE EARLY MUSIC REVIVAL: A HISTORY (1988)

Haskell’s book, \textit{The Early Music Revival: A History},\textsuperscript{53} is more substantial and more widely cited than that by Cohen and Snitzer. As the second book-length publication published on the history of the early music movement, it received mixed reviews. While Robert Donington’s review for The Musical Times praised it, mostly for its emphasis on the role of Donington’s teacher, Arnold Dolmetsch,\textsuperscript{54} reviews by Elizabeth Roche and Denis Stevens found it lacking in detail and analysis. Stenzl and Zedlacher dismissed the work as a “...progress narrative...” with little to no engagement with issues of historicism, revival, or stylistic restoration.\textsuperscript{55} Roche commented that the book failed to distinguish between a revival of early repertoire and the application of ‘historically informed performance’ to more recent compositions,\textsuperscript{56} whereas Stevens noted the lack of consistency in choosing examples with many significant performers inexplicably missing from the text.\textsuperscript{57} Despite these criticisms, Haskell’s book remains the most substantial work written on the history of the early music movement as a whole (such a

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., pxii.
\textsuperscript{53} Haskell, \textit{The Early Music Revival: A History}.
\textsuperscript{56} Elizabeth Roche, ‘Review [Untitled]', \textit{Music & Letters}, 70/3 (1989), 382-84, p382.
“...monumental task...” that Roche deems it impossible to achieve thoroughly\(^{58}\) and, despite its faults, as discussed below, it is frequently cited by other early music literature.

Haskell tracks the development of the movement starting from Mendelssohn’s 1829 performance of the Bach St Matthew Passion up to the 1980s. Chapters are devoted to Arnold Dolmetsch; the Schola Cantorum of Paris, and of Basle; the different early twentieth century approaches to Bach, including the Stokowski orchestral transcriptions; the establishment of the movement in America; the role of mass media and recordings in spreading the revival; the revival of Baroque opera; developments in the movement during the post-war period; the notion of authentic performance (which Haskell contrasts with previous Romanticised performances of early works);\(^{59}\) and finally a chapter looking at the impact of the movement on the music industry in general and the application of principles of authenticity to later repertoire.

The same preference for instrumental music rather than vocal or choral evident in Cohen and Snitzer is also apparent in Haskell. The first half of Haskell’s book subtly demonstrates this. A small mention is made of choral director Richard Runciman Terry within the chapter on Arnold Dolmetsch. Dolmetsch was developing and publishing theories of instrumental performance practice based on original baroque treatises at the same time as Richard Runciman Terry was developing and publishing in the field of Renaissance and Tudor choral music. However, all mentions of Terry are by reference to Dolmetsch, as he is relegated to “...Dolmetsch’s counterpart in the choral field...”,\(^{60}\) and only receiving two pages of discussion amidst a whole chapter on Dolmetsch. This reveals a hierarchy in which instrumental research has more prestige than vocal research within the first half of the twentieth century.

In his preface, Haskell acknowledges several larger issues encountered when investigating the history of the early music movement. He states that these issues are essential in approaching the task, yet Haskell rarely considers them during the main narrative of his work. Haskell, within both the book’s preface and its final chapter, situates himself directly within the 1980s authenticity debates, and admits the trap of assuming that these debates were just as important within the founding days of the movement as in its mature period. He states “...The historian of the early music revival must, therefore, concern himself with attitudes and perceptions at least as much as with the music itself...”\(^{61}\) However, he does not actually do this

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\(^{58}\) Roche, ‘Review [Untitled]’, p382.
\(^{60}\) ibid., p36.
\(^{61}\) ibid., p9.
within his text, instead choosing to provide a chronological narrative without delving into the motivations and philosophies behind the movement.

Like Cohen and Snitzer, Haskell, in his title and preface, asks the question of whether the early music movement constitutes a revival. However, he is less definitive in his answer than Cohen and Snitzer, preferring to offer up multiple viewpoints. He acknowledges the “…continuous interpretative tradition…” of Gregorian chant and Palestrina, while giving the same claim of tradition to Bach and Handel. On the other hand he cites Jerome and Elizabeth Roche, who only consider performances of Monteverdi and earlier composers to be early music. Haskell cites Andreas Holschneider’s prerequisite “…interrupted interpretative tradition…” before inclusion in the early music movement. While Haskell does not explicitly state his opinion on the issue, his treatment of Terry within the main text, a mere gloss, just as side-lined as it was by Cohen and Snitzer, reveals the same disposition that a broken tradition is needed in order to be included within the revival.

2.1.3 “PEDANTRY OR LIBERATION?
A SKETCH OF THE HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE MOVEMENT” (1988)

The third oft-cited work that attempts an overview of the course of the early music movement is the chapter by Howard Mayer Brown, “Pedantry or Liberation? A Sketch of the Historical Performance Movement”, published in Nicholas Kenyon’s Authenticity and Early Music: A Symposium. Mayer Brown starts his discussion of what constitutes early music at the earliest date of the three histories, mentioning the fact that the repertoire of the Sistine Chapel during the 16th century included many earlier compositions. He uses this fact as a means to discount repertoire selection as the major criterion for the movement, instead considering the emphasis on authenticity in performance intention to be the defining feature (as one would expect considering the publication of his article within a symposium on authenticity). This makes Mayer Brown the first historian considered to explicitly define his criteria for inclusion in his history of the movement, a feature that accounts for why reviews praised his article as being more successful than Haskell in characterising the history of the movement over the twentieth century. Having established these criteria, Mayer Brown discounts the 1829 Mendelssohn St Matthew Passion as a starting point for the movement, due to its lack of concern for authenticity of performance practice, and instead jumps to Arnold Dolmetsch and

66 Ibid., p34.
67 Stevens, 'Review: [Untitled]', p416.
Wanda Landowska in the early twentieth century (which is interesting, considering Landowska’s often controversial comments regarding the perceived importance of being true to Bach). 68

Mayer Brown, in contrast to the other two histories, divides the chronology of the twentieth century early music movement into three groupings based on his perception of the role of sets of performers in establishing the movement, as opposed to a straightforward sequential account. 69 The first group is of performers active in the 1930s that began to experiment with degrees of authenticity over a varied repertoire. He refers to this period as the “...era of the urtext...”, 70 yet includes both Nadia Boulanger, whom he describes as making “...no attempt to be authentic...”, 71 and Curt Sachs, who was so interested in authenticity as to consult his musicologist father-in-law, Charles van den Borren, before making the Anthologie Sonore recordings with the Pro Musica Antiqua of Brussels. 72 The next grouping is of performers from 1945 onwards whose main purpose, Mayer Brown considered, was to popularise the movement, while being decidedly pro-authenticity. 73 Included under this banner are David Munrow, Thomas Binkley and Noah Greenberg. Mayer Brown characterises these musicians as operating across a much broader repertoire than musicians in the third period. This final group of performers is from the 1970s onwards, concurrent with the foundation of the journal Early Music in 1973, 74 and perform an increasingly specialised repertoire, 75 focusing on particular decades of composition or only a few specific composers, a trend exemplified by the ensemble Gothic Voices. Mayer Brown depicts authenticity, characterised by the use of early instruments, as the forging attitude of the twentieth century early music movement, separating it from the unbroken traditions of early repertoire, such as the performance of Renaissance music in the Papal chapel.

Some overarching attitudes can be discerned across these three works on the history of the early music movement. There is a clear preference for a style of character driven historiography, as opposed to a narrative of repertoire or performance philosophy. This is evident in each of the writings, especially in those by Cohen and Snitzer, and Haskell, where entire chapters are devoted to particular figures, such as Noah Greenberg in the former and Arnold Dolmetsch in the latter. Even in Mayer Brown’s work, key figures to characterise the

69 Ibid., p41.
70 Ibid., p42.
71 Ibid., p44.
72 Ibid., p45.
73 Ibid., p48.
74 Ibid., p52.
75 Ibid., p53.
themes, instead of a purely theoretical or philosophical categorisation. This approach results in little analysis of the larger philosophical swings of the movement. The personalities recorded in each of these histories may be notable in their contributions to the movement, but structuring the writing around key figures rather than broader trends can lead to false implied meanings. For example, Mayer Brown may not be suggesting that the 1930s was a time when early music was only performed for educational reasons, yet the selection of Boulangner and Sachs as characteristic of that era (the former most famous as a teacher at the Paris Conservatoire who, when interviewed during the 1930s, described her interest in early music as firstly a pedagogical aide; and the latter who recorded the standard listening resource for many music education institutions) could imply that meaning.

2.1.4 BIOGRAPHIES

In the explicit histories discussed above, there is a focus on instrumental music, followed by solo vocal performance, with choral music barely mentioned. Though the above histories make some mention of choral developments post 1950, the hierarchy of subject matter is further emphasised when the field of research is restricted to the first half of the century. As a result of this gap in the literature among the explicit histories, this researcher has consulted the few available biographies of key choral conductors/researchers from the first half of the twentieth century to gain a fuller perspective on their activities.

Hilda Andrews’s *Westminster Retrospect* is the most complete biography of Richard Runciman Terry available, tracing his musical career as a Cambridge University Choral Scholar under Dr A.H. Mann, through to his work at the Benedictine School at Downside, and then as inaugural Director of Music at Westminster Cathedral. The work is useful as it provides examples of repertoire from his time at Downside as well as during the early days of the Cathedral, alongside a complete list of Terry’s publications and some contemporary concert reviews. However, there is little insight given as to his motivations for choral research and his role within the larger early music movement.

Timothy Day’s “Sir Richard Terry and 16th Century Polyphony” adds to Andrews’s account. Day, who has worked for the National Sound Archive at the British Library, provides

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78 Ibid., p49.
79 Ibid., pp179-82.
information about the recordings made by Terry, including the Anerio Te Deum and the Palestrina Missa Aeternum Christi Munera recorded for the Gramophon Company.  

James Gollin’s Pied Piper: The Many Lives of Noah Greenberg is perhaps more successful in analysing motivations in its discussion of the American conductor of the New York Pro Musica. It also provides an insider account as to the running of an early music ensemble in the mid-twentieth century, including the difficulties of finding appropriately skilled singers and instrumentalists (leading to the adoption of a “...farm system...” of smaller ensembles to train performers so that they would be ready to join the main ensemble) and maintaining its economic viability (via applications to the Ford Foundation) and political status (with discussions of the implications of an American ensemble touring to politically volatile Russia and South America). This biography also manages to give a sense of the impression made by European choral research on American performers and audiences. The biographic literature goes some way to fill the gap in the historic literature as to early twentieth century choral music developments, but there is more work needed in order to integrate that repertoire into the history of the movement as a whole.

2.2 LITERATURE ON CHANGING MUSICAL TASTES

It would make sense now to discuss the third category of literature, concerned with the philosophies of the movement, particularly the issue of authenticity, which emerged after the watershed foundation of the journal Early Music in 1973. The discussion of the literature of the historic early music movement has already identified some of the issues pertinent to this third strand. However, there is also a clear overlap between the first category of historic literature and the second category, literature on changing musical tastes. Writers setting out to investigate the development of the history of the movement have begun to broaden their evidence base to include recorded archives, and have thereby ventured into issues of changing musical styles. Discussion of research that falls into this second category will now follow.

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81 Ibid., p304.
82 Gollin, Reprise.
83 Ibid., p308.
84 Ibid., p315.
85 Ibid., p304.
86 Ibid., pp348-61.
87 Ibid., pp371-2.
The literature on changing musical tastes is a young branch of musicology, in which a few exploratory works were published during the 1990s, with the new discipline manifesting itself fully in the 2000s with a spectrum of further publications and the establishment of the Research Centre for the History and Analysis of Record Music (CHARM) in 2004 at Royal Holloway, University of London (in partnership with King’s College, London and the University of Sheffield). The new sub-discipline arising fuses together performance history, reception history, and analysis of recorded archives to attempt to explain broad changes in musical tastes. Issues under consideration include changing preferences for interpretations of tempo and dynamics, as well as changes to playing technique, such as the presence of portamento and vibrato. These are macro issues of musical interpretation which can be traced and averaged over extended periods to describe broad trends, as opposed to the subtle nuances of an individual’s performance style that tend to represent the focus of more standard performance practice studies. This type of study is only possible as a result of thorough recorded archives, such as those held at the British Library.

A complementary literature has developed on the history of these archives themselves as well as discographies of their early, and therefore haphazardly categorised, holdings. Timothy Day’s *A Century of Recorded Music: Listening to Musical History* traces the scope of the recording industry from the first classical music recordings made by Thomas Edison in 1887 of pianist Josef Hofmann, up to the most recent CDs, with chapters on the choice of what was to be recorded and the development of the recorded archives. His article “The National Sound Archive: The First Fifty Years” provides a more specific account of the role of Patrick Saul in recognising the possible academic value of recorded items and establishing the archive now housed at the British Library. Alongside his historic writings, Day has also published *A Discography of Tudor Church Music* providing detailed lists of the holdings of the British Library.

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88 The first major work in the field was Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style: Changing Tastes in Instrumental Performance, 1900-1950*.
Library in this area, thereby making these materials more accessible for academic study. Such discographies, published just before the first publications in this second body of literature, have acted as catalysts for the academic study of recorded music. As the field of study of changing musical tastes has emerged, it has begun to overlap with some elements of the literature on the historic early music movement, as writers such as Dorottya Fabian\textsuperscript{94} and Daniel Leech-Wilkinson\textsuperscript{95} have begun to apply techniques using recorded archives to their writings on early music.

\section*{2.2.1 EARLY RECORDINGS AND MUSICAL STYLE: CHANGING TASTES IN INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMANCE, 1900 – 1950 (1992)}

The first major work in the field of changing musical tastes was Robert Philip’s \textit{Early Recordings and Musical Style: Changing Tastes in Instrumental Performance, 1900-1950}.\textsuperscript{96} His was one of the first works to use the legacy of recorded sound from the early part of the twentieth century as a means to investigate changes to performance practice. The structure of Philip’s book focuses around three major areas of stylistic changes over the period: rhythm (including tempo, rubato and the treatment of long and short notes); vibrato (in strings and woodwinds); and portamento (in solo and orchestral performance). Each chapter presents a range of orchestral, and some solo instrumental, recordings from the period before discussing the changes in style evident in those recordings. Within this he draws a picture of two contrasting styles in the early twentieth century: a style which valued the interpretation of a conductor, particularly in determining the tempo and dynamics; and a clean modern style of conducting, which gave precedence to the score and the metronome over the conductor’s musical instincts. Changes within the playing technique of instrumentalists are also noted. This is particularly the case with the introduction of vibrato and the decline of portamento as general playing techniques used across the orchestra. Here the change was more mixed and at times more drawn out, as individual players within an orchestra would have their own point of view on the appropriate frequency and manner of portamento and vibrato when playing their instrument.

Philip concludes his book with two chapters that situate his findings within a broader musicological context. He first uses his early twentieth century recordings combined with nineteenth century written sources to illustrate what performance practice in the nineteenth century may have been, by eliminating those effects that can be identified as purely early

\begin{itemize}
  \item Fabian, \textit{Bach Performance Practice, 1945-1975: A Comprehensive Review of Sound Recordings and Literature}.
  \item Leech-Wilkinson, \textit{The Modern Invention of Medieval Music: Scholarship, Ideology, Performance}.
  \item Philip, \textit{Early Recordings and Musical Style: Changing Tastes in Instrumental Performance, 1900-1950}.
\end{itemize}
twentieth century inventions, such as constant vibrato and stricter observation of tempo. Finally, he comments on the prospect of using recorded archives to aid the early music movement (otherwise known as the ‘historical performance practice movement’) in its desire for authenticity. He muses as to what will happen when the quest for authenticity reaches composers such as Elgar and Stravinsky, who are well represented in the recorded archives, but who in their own recorded performances often over-ride what they notated in the score, as well as what they earlier recorded.

Robert Philip’s book is cited throughout the literature on changing musical tastes, which has come to be commonly structured according to his method, with an explicitly stated stylistic element under investigation, and lists of archival material presented in chronological order to represent how the performance practice has changed over time.

### 2.2.2 THE MODERN INVENTION OF MEDIEVAL MUSIC: SCHOLARSHIP, IDEOLOGY, PERFORMANCE (2002)

Daniel Leech-Wilkinson’s *The Modern Invention of Medieval Music: Scholarship, Ideology, Performance*\(^97\) discusses the development of medieval repertoire performance practice throughout the twentieth century, tracking the alternation between the voices-with-instruments and the all-vocal a cappella performance styles. Other histories of early music, such as Suzanne Cole’s *Thomas Tallis and his Music in Victorian England*,\(^98\) have also maintained a similar focus on just one subset of the repertoire. What makes Leech-Wilkinson’s book unique is his use of the recorded archives to supplement his argument. In his earlier article “*Using Recordings to Study Musical Performances*”\(^99\) he explored the possibilities available in recorded archives to study music from the performer’s point of view. In the article he also noted the implications, as did Philip, for the performance of Elgar and Rachmaninoff, in light of the composer’s own recordings. In a sense, Leech-Wilkinson’s book is the bridge between (1) literature on the historic early music movement and (2) literature on the study of changing musical tastes, employing some of the techniques he anticipated in his earlier article.

Firstly, Leech-Wilkinson’s book is a history of the movement with particular reference to medieval music, moving chronologically through key performers. He starts with an 1895 performance of Dufay organized by John Stainer for the Musical Association, performed entirely on instruments (reportedly due to the lack of singers fluent in old French, not due to

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\(^99\) Leech-Wilkinson, ‘*Using Recordings to Study Musical Performances*’.
tuning difficulties),

following the trail of performers up to the a cappella Gothic Voices in the 1980s. Leech-Wilkinson does more than write a character-driven history of key performers, because he also cites an existing literature embracing discussion about how the works under discussion should be performed, and if it were even possible to perform them. These debates are traced from the work of François-Joseph Fétis in 1827 on how best to perform Adam de la Halle, to Hugo Leichtentritt’s 1903 work supporting purely instrumental performance based on pictorial evidence, and ending with the 1980s writings of Christopher Page in explaining the all-vocal approach taken by his ensemble Gothic Voices. The development of these debates can be characterised as a shift towards the later twentieth century all-vocal a cappella style of performing medieval music of this kind, as a result of the advent of improved vocal precision.

Further to his history of key performers and key figures in the academic debates on medieval music, Leech-Wilkinson also ventures into selected recordings, beginning with the 1930 plainchant recording by the choir of Amédée Gastoué with the Schola Cantorum of Paris. A number of early recordings are mentioned including the Anthologie Sonore recordings of Curt Sachs starting in 1933, the all-vocal Dufay recording from Westminster Cathedral under Richard Runciman Terry also from 1930, and the 1938 L’Oiseau Lyre recordings of a cappella music of the fifteenth century from Chorale Yvonne Gouverné. Leech-Wilkinson then continues to comment on recordings right up to those of Andrew Parrot’s Taverner Consort and Christopher Page’s Gothic Voices in the 1980s.

However, while Leech-Wilkinson seems to cover all bases in his investigation of changing performing styles of medieval music through the twentieth century, following both the performance, academic and recorded histories of the repertoire, he shares with Haskell and others the tendency to overlook or dismiss vocal work carried out in the first half of the century. He states that:

...it is tempting to go on to say that the ensemble singing in these recordings, whether from the 1930s or the 1950s, is so execrable in imprecision of pitch and timing that it is hardly surprising that unaccompanied performance was not taken seriously as a general medieval practice; but to say that is to beg so many questions of period style and taste as to be almost worthless as an argument... 101

But that is exactly what he had said a few pages beforehand when he said of the Anthologie Sonore recordings that:

101 Ibid., p89.
...the pitching is often so insecure and the vibrato so wide that the lack of interest in all-vocal performances during this whole period is easy to understand...¹⁰²

And again of the Gastoué plainchant recording:

...fast vibrato, portamento leading up to the initial notes of each phrase and across any interval of more than a second, strong crescendo and diminuendi matched to the rising and falling melody. The instruments must have gone some way to stabilise and focus the pitches, but it is not hard to see why singing Notre Dame polyphony would have seemed impossibly hard: the sound was simply not stable enough to make sense of rapid step-wise oscillations in several voices at once...¹⁰³

Despite Leech-Wilkinson’s realisation that such comments are made from the point of view of our taste rather than the taste of the period, dismissive remarks directed towards attempts at a cappella performance from the first half of the twentieth century continue throughout the text. The effect of these comments would have been mitigated if they were generated through the use of an impartial computer aided analysis, as mentioned in Leech-Wilkinson’s earlier paper, but no electronic aid appears to have been employed. These comments are combined with the fact that the discussion of how best to perform this music is only an academic discussion, as Leech-Wilkinson excludes any reference to popular reviews of the recordings from contemporary reviewers. While he provides a brilliant example in applying the new paradigm of using recorded archives to investigate changing style, the lack of contemporary lay-style reviews of these early a cappella attempts reveal his criticisms of the recordings as highly subjective. Fortunately, other writings within this category of literature redress this overemphasis of the current academic perspective by making reference to the lay review contemporary with earlier recordings, as well as venturing into the world of computer assisted analysis.

2.2.3 BACH PERFORMANCE PRACTICE 1945 – 1975:
A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF SOUND RECORDINGS AND LITERATURE (2003)

Dorottya Fabian’s Bach Performance Practice 1945-1975: A Comprehensive Review of Sound Recordings and Literature¹⁰⁴ is a source which combines a discussion of the philosophy of

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¹⁰² Ibid., p84.
¹⁰³ Ibid., p49.
authenticity and its changing emphasis and role within the early music movement with an objective description of changing performance style as reflected in the recorded archives over a concentrated thirty year period. She does this by balancing the evidence of academic writers, lay reviewers, and archived recordings, which are analysed employing objective quantitative methods.

She begins her study by situating herself as a writer from the mature period of the movement, i.e. post 1973, well aware of the authenticity debates. She shows that those debates in many ways recovered ideas already put forward by earlier performers/researchers such as Wanda Landowska and Arnold Dolmestch, though their exact ideas were not widely taken up by others in their own time. Fabian then enters into a chronological history of major developments in the twentieth century early music movement, starting with Wanda Landowska’s 1903 recital and 1904 book La Musique Ancienne. Developments are then traced through to the debates generated by Joshua Rifkin in the 1980s as to the relative sizes of Bach’s choir and orchestra, based on his reinterpretation of the Entwurff document.105 As is now becoming a familiar pattern in our experience of histories of the early music movement, Fabian also dismisses work in choral and vocal music carried out in the first half of the twentieth century. She explicitly states that historically informed performance practice for the voice has only been investigated since the 1980s106 (in the writing of Reidemeister,107 Butt108 and Rifkin).109 This is attributed by Fabian to the lack of availability of historic vocal tutors until the end of the 1960s allowing British singers only in the 1970s to experiment with voix blanche and raised larynx vocal techniques110 (equivalent to Cohen and Snitzer’s “…new English early music style…” of the 1970s).111 With that statement, she effectively dismisses the achievements of performers including Richard Runciman Terry, Curt Sachs, Noah Greenberg and all others who worked prior to her watershed date of 1980. After this introductory history of the movement, Fabian moves on to address the recorded archives.


In this book, Fabian decides to focus on performances of J.S. Bach’s Brandenburg Concertos and Passions covering the period 1945 to 1975, comparing and contrasting an analysis of contemporaneous scholarly discourse, with that of more popular performance reviews, and, finally, analysis of the recordings themselves. Following a structure similar to Philip, the discussion of the recordings is divided into analysis of differences in tempo and dynamics; ornamentation; rhythm, including notes inégales and overall flexibility; and articulation, including phrasing and accentuation. Each area is discussed first in terms of the contemporary scholarly literature on the subject, the lay literature and reviews, and then the recordings themselves. In this way, changes in musical tastes can be tracked across the academic and popular arenas and into performances.

In terms of tempo and dynamics,112 Fabian found that the belief that performances on recordings have become faster over the century is not actually true. Metronome checks revealed that overall there were just as many fast-paced recordings throughout her period, but that the impression of speed was being given by other factors, including articulation, instrumentation and rhythmic treatment. She also found that throughout the period fast tempi also featured loud playing, whereas slow tempi employed more dynamic shading.

For ornamentation,113 Fabian found that a free and flexible approach to ornamenting only appeared in recordings from the late 1960s onwards. However this was not so important to creating a historically informed sound, compared to the use of rhythm and articulation. The majority of recordings in her study exhibited the “sewing-machine” approach to Baroque rhythm,114 whereas Fabian considered flexibility of rhythm to be of the utmost importance: a quality she found in Harnoncourt’s recordings, and more frequently and successfully towards the end of the period.

Finally, with articulation,115 flexibility was again the key, and something only found in recordings using period playing techniques or period instruments. These broad conclusions were drawn largely from Fabian’s personal point of view in listening to the recordings, though a greater use of quantitative analysis was made (compared to Leech-Wilkinson’s study) in the checking of precise speeds rather than relying on a possibly misleading aural impression.

Fabian’s study provides a model for the research design to be adopted in the present study in its combined use of contemporary reviews with recorded material. Yet, Fabian’s work still

113 Ibid., pp135-68.
114 Ibid., pp169-204.
115 Ibid., pp205-42.
includes the biases identified in the literature of the historic early music movement, notably
the preference for instrumental music over vocal, and the overlooking of achievements in the
fields of vocal and choral music prior to the first half of the twentieth century. By contrast, the
present thesis sets out to redress this perceived imbalance by applying elements of Fabian’s
method to the field of English a cappella choral music.

2.2.4 CHANGING STYLE IN SOLO VOCAL PERFORMANCE

While Fabian’s work provides a useful model for this study in combining questions of changing
tastes and performance practice within the early music movement, other studies have delved
into the area of changing performance style in a variety of repertoire. John Potter’s article
“Beggar at the Door: The Rise and Fall of Portamento in Singing”\textsuperscript{116} begins by noting that,
despite the fact that there is both written and recorded evidence that portamenti featured
heavily in singing at least back into the nineteenth century, if not before, this aspect of
historically cited performance practice is ignored by the early music movement because it
doesn’t fit our idea of what early music should sound like. He then traces the references to
portamento technique in the vocal literature from Pier Francesco Tosi’s \textit{Opinion de cantor
antichi e moderni} of 1723 through to Dame Nellie Melba’s Method, published in 1926. This
background in changing vocal pedagogy leads into discussion of the change in performance of
portamenti as evident in the recorded archives of the twentieth century.

Focusing on the use of portamento in solo vocal performance (though, as in Philip’s discussion
of orchestral portamenti, it can also be heard in ensemble performance), Potter analysed 97
recordings of Schubert’s \textit{Ständchen} covering the period 1900 to 2002. He found that
portamenti could be heard throughout the recordings across all genders and ages of
performers, though there was a marked drop in the number of portamenti heard after 1980.
Singers were more individual in their use of the technique at the beginning of the period than
at the end, and, perhaps surprisingly, examples of “clean” or portamento-free recordings could
be found throughout the entire period, not just among the more recent examples. Potter
suggested that a gradual decline in portamento from the war years onwards could be due to
the association of the technique with popular styles such as crooning, which employed a
consistent scooping of the notes onto the desired pitch. This observation is similar to that
made by Philip that clarinet technique failed to adopt the same vibrato as other orchestral
woodwind instruments due to the association of vibrato with jazz clarinet styles.

\textsuperscript{116} Potter, ‘Beggar at the Door: The Rise and Fall of Portamento in Singing’. 

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Potter did not use any computer assistance for his analysis, instead identifying all counts of portamento by ear. This means that no quantitative data was collected as to the length of an individual portamento in terms of either duration or pitch covered, such as would allow a detailed tracking of the changing technique over the century. This is an area open to objective analysis through the utilisation of ever improving software, able to determine exact pitches being sung.

In a similar vein to Potter’s study, Renee Timmers’ article, “Vocal Expression in Recorded Performances of Schubert Songs” analysed the use of portamento, rubato, tempo and vibrato in recordings of different Schubert lieder covering the period 1907 to 1977. Timmers used PRAAT software to analyse the recordings, software which has difficulties working with polyphonic recordings, but is suitable for early recordings (pre-1960) where the balance between piano and voice is often so unequal that the voice can be analysed as a monophonic line. Due to the limitations of the software, it was used to study vibrato rate by limiting its study to a single prominent (long duration and high pitch) note per bar, that note being identified by ear. It could not be used to analyse portamenti/pitch glides, which were entirely identified by ear, as in the Potter study. Timmers found that variation in bar length (flexible rhythm), variation in amplitude/dynamic, and variation in vibrato rate (not presence of vibrato) decrease over the period. The extent of vibrato increased over the period but the rate of vibrato became more uniform within a single performance. Portamenti were most commonly used in the middle of the century, decreasing in frequency toward the end of the period. The studies of both Potter and Timmers have emerged from the Research Centre for the History and Analysis of Recorded Music (CHARM) (of which Timmers and Leech-Wilkinson are a part).

The work discussed here under the category of literature of changing musical tastes, by Philip, Leech-Wilkinson, Fabian, Potter, and Timmers, show a distinct line of development within the emerging discipline, though biases that seem to have become established in the literature of the history of the early music movement remain evident. Since Philip’s book, a standard model has emerged which prioritises the musical elements under analysis, using them as a means of structuring corresponding analyses of academic and lay discourses contemporaneous with the period. There has also been a growth in the use of computer-assisted techniques in reaching a more objective account of the recorded archives. However, just as was evident in the

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117 Timmers, 'Vocal Expression in Recorded Performances of Schubert Songs'.
118 Schubert songs have become a standard for this style of research. In another article, Leech-Wilkinson uses a 1911 recording of Schubert’s An Die Musik to spur on his discussion. Leech-Wilkinson, 'Listening and Responding to the Evidence of Early Twentieth Century Performance'.
literature on the historic early music movement, research to date has demonstrated a bias towards either instrumental or solo vocal research.

2.3 PHILOSOPHICAL LITERATURE OF THE MATURE EARLY MUSIC MOVEMENT

As has been mentioned above, the third body of literature to be discussed addresses the philosophies underpinning the mature early music movement. This category of literature emerged after the creation of the journal Early Music in 1973, focusing on the philosophy of the movement from the point of view of the performer/scholar, particularly the issue of authenticity. This literature needs to be distinguished from the many performance practice manuals that have been developed over the years to summarise the period treatises that affect the way early music is performed. Instead this category refers to the philosophical writings of the movement, as it became more self-aware and considered its goals and its place within the broader musical life of the twentieth century. Central to these writings have been the authenticity debates of the 1970s and 1980s, which implied belief in a continuity of philosophy within the movement. The implication that authenticity has always been the defining characteristic of the movement, when considered alongside the history of the movement’s development, must be questioned.

A range of authors commented on the issue of authenticity during the 1970s and 1980s, including Richard Taruskin, Nicholas Kenyon, Michael O’Loghlin, Gary Tomlinson, Laurence Dreyfus, Will Crutchfield, Robert Morgan and Daniel Leech-Wilkinson and, continuing into the next millennium, Bruce Haynes. Their various contributions to the

120 What Denis Stevens referred to as the “...do-it-yourself musicology kit....” Quoted in Haskell, The Early Music Revival: A History, p177.
123 O’Loghlin, ‘A Brief Polemic About the Early Music Movement’.
debate can be sorted into two main camps. The first of these is concerned with the effect of authenticity on the creative prerogative of the artist, as the role of the scholar encroaches on the role of the performer of early music. A second theme can be identified in those who recognise the early music style to actually be a purely modern, twentieth century phenomenon, having more in common with new music performance than with the actual facts of historical performance as represented in period sources. Underlying both these strands is the assumption that these are defining debates within the early music movement from its conception;¹³⁰ and that it is the presence of an emphasis on authenticity that defines the origins of the movement.

2.3.1 AUTHENTICITY AS AFFECTING THE CREATIVE PREROGATIVE OF THE ARTIST

The first thread within the authenticity debates is centred on the way the goal of historical accuracy can manifest itself in the abdication of responsibility for a creative product (performance or recording) from the performer to the scholar. Grout encapsulated the tension surrounding the need for authenticity as “...Historical Musicology, like Original Sin, has given everyone a bad conscience...”¹³¹ As a result of this change in responsibility, demonstrating the scholarly foundations of their performance practice became paramount to performers. Creative expression was no longer a sufficient explanation for a musical element within a movement that prized reference to period sources above all else. Many reviews of concerts or recordings include reference to “...letting the music speak for itself...”, a call which undermined the input of a performer to provide his own musical interpretation, in favour of the perceived objectivity of the scholar.¹³² Opera director Frank Cosaro characterised such marginalisation of the performer within the creative process with the exclamation, on being disallowed certain creative ideas on the basis of a lack of historical precedent, “We got gesellschafted.”¹³³

This development within the early music movement has been attributed by some authors to the marketing of recordings, ever more focused on the gimmick of authentic performances as a means of generating sales, particularly as regards the use of old instruments.¹³⁴ While early instruments can aid the interpretation of a work, some authors bemoan the fact that their presence is perceived as the sum total of musical interpretation. This results in the criticism of non-original instrument performances and the perceived elevation of sub-standard

¹³⁰ An assumption made explicit in O’Loghlin, ’A Brief Polemic About the Early Music Movement’, p49.
¹³¹ Taruskin, ’The Pastness of the Present and the Presence of the Past’, p144.
¹³⁴ Such blame is levelled at the recording industry in Richard Taruskin, ’The Pastness of the Present and the Presence of the Past’, p137.
performances merely by virtue of their instrumentation. Dreyfus refers to a moral superiority given to such obvious gestures towards authenticity.\footnote{Dreyfus, 'Early Music Defended against Its Devotees: A Theory of Historical Performance in the Twentieth Century', p298.} Taruskin summarises the issue by stating that “...the establishment of a work as authentic can take the place of authentic critical judgment of it....”\footnote{Taruskin, 'The Authenticity Movement Can Become a Positivistic Purgatory, Literalistic and Dehumanizing', p4.} While this concept is discussed by other authors,\footnote{Tomlinson, 'The Historian, the Performer, and Authentic Meaning in Music', p115, and Will Crutchfield, 'Fashion, Conviction, and Performance Style in an Age of Revivals', p20.} it is perhaps best characterised in the anecdote used by Taruskin as part of Nicholas Kenyon’s symposium on the subject.\footnote{Richard Taruskin, 'The Pastness of the Present and the Presence of the Past', p150.} Here he recalls a New York critic who has already judged a recital before it takes place, simply in light of the advertised instrumentation. Taruskin refers to this as an “...obnoxious fallacy: taking the instrument for the player...”\footnote{Ibid., p151.}

Underlying the issue of precedence between performer and scholar is another fallacy. Elevating the position of the scholar implies that historical research can actually answer every musical question posed in preparing a performance. Yet this is not the case. The issue then becomes whether a performer should invent a musical idea where there is a lack of precedent in the available scholarly evidence, or whether such a gap should be interpreted as a prohibition of all other practices. Taruskin reflects on this issue as regards the instrumentation of medieval music. He cites the recordings of Thomas Binkley, who adopted the Mediterranean style of medieval performance despite its lack of firm historical evidence, as still producing a convincing performance by filling the scholarly gap with creative inspiration.\footnote{Ibid., p142.}

Alternatively, Peter Phillips, director of The Tallis Scholars, has questioned whether or not a performer should be able to improve on the performance practices documented in the historic records.\footnote{Issue also raised in Gary Tomlinson, 'The Historian, the Performer, and Authentic Meaning in Music', p116, Leech-Wilkinson, 'What We Are Doing with Early Music Is Genuinely Authentic to Such a Small Degree That the Word Loses Most of Its Intended Meaning', p16, and Taruskin, 'On Letting the Music Speak for Itself: Some Reflections on Musicology and Performance', p344.} He states that “…we can guess at the type of sound produced by sixteenth-century choirs, and the evidence suggests that imitation of them would be highly undesirable...”, leading to the possibility that perhaps a performer’s intuition should be allowed to override the facts of historic performance conditions. A similar standpoint is taken by pianist Jorge Bolet who suggested that he had a right to alter Chopin as Chopin had only spent a few

\footnote{Quoted in Taruskin, 'The Pastness of the Present and the Presence of the Past', p143.}
months composing his pieces, whereas Bolet had spent years performing the pieces and gaining ever deeper insights into the possibilities of their performance.\textsuperscript{143}

\subsection*{2.3.2 Authentic Style as Modern Style}

Alongside the above discussions, weighing up the roles of the performer and scholar, a second element of the authenticity debates is the attempt to achieve full disclosure as to how authentic performances within the early music movement actually are. There are many surface level anachronisms inherent to the movement, including the continued use of a conductor (particularly in choral music),\textsuperscript{144} the lack of truly improvised ornamentation,\textsuperscript{145} and the very advent of recordings, which have resulted in pieces designed to be heard only once in the sixteenth century being heard multiple times in exactly the same version in the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{146} The effect of such anachronisms on the integrity of an early music movement with a supposed goal of authenticity was summarised in 1978 by Michael Morrow who stated it’s “…only authentic if it’s actually the real thing, but it’s not…”\textsuperscript{147}

If the early music movement is not truly “authentic”, the question must be asked: from where has its style of performance evolved? An answer to this may be found in the expectations of its audience. Burkholder observes that it is the same kind of audience in the twentieth century that patronises both new-music and early-music, as both repertoires require a historically trained audience to fully appreciate them, an audience looking for something different to the mainstream.\textsuperscript{148} This statement rings true, despite calls by authors such as Cohen and Snitzer that the authenticity movement is a reaction of the amateur market (as noted above). The early music audience needs to be informed and historically aware, able to provide the required philosophical framework, as authenticity is only recognisable when the past is no longer seen as linked to the present but disjunct from it.\textsuperscript{149}

With this audience link between new music and early music, it becomes possible to recognise authentic performance practice as having more to do with modern performance practice than with anything historical. Taruskin states that the sewing–machine style of early music performance has more to do with the precision of Stravinsky than with historical evidence

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{143} Nicholas Kenyon, 'Authenticity and Early Music: Some Issues and Questions’, p15.
\item \textsuperscript{144} O’Loghlin, 'A Brief Polemic About the Early Music Movement’, p51.
\item \textsuperscript{145} Ibid., p49.
\item \textsuperscript{146} Ibid., p50.
\item \textsuperscript{147} Tomlinson, 'The Historian, the Performer, and Authentic Meaning in Music’, p116.
\item \textsuperscript{148} J Peter Burkholder, 'Museum Pieces: The Historicist Mainstream in Music of the Last Hundred Years',\textit{ The Journal of Musicology}, 2/2 (1983), 115-34, p128.
\item \textsuperscript{149} Morgan, 'Tradition, Anxiety, and the Current Musical Scene’, p59.
\end{itemize}
Crutchfield argues that there is more in common between the supposedly authentic Beethoven recordings of Christopher Hogwood and the modernist recordings of Herbert von Karajan than there is between Hogwood and Artur Nikisch, despite the fact that Nikisch, born in 1855, was historically closer to Beethoven himself. Overall, Morgan characterises the situation in stating that: “We have made the past coextensive with the present, thus eliminating any meaningful distinction between the two...”

2.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

Integrating themes arising in the three literatures discussed above provides a clear point of departure for the current study. The literature of category 1, the historic early music movement offers a framework to better situate this research, which addresses only a particular subset of the movement. The works of Cohen and Snitzer, Haskell, and Mayer Brown broke new ground in attempting to tell the complete story of the movement, yet left gaps to be filled by future researchers. More can be done to address the larger philosophical swings within the movement and to firmly set developments within a clear theoretical framework able to embrace a variety of explanatory threads, such as revivalism, continuity of practice, or authenticity of intention. The biographies that supplement these three initial histories work to flesh out the development of choral music in particular, a field largely untouched by the comprehensive accounts.

The second category, covering the emerging literature of changing musical tastes, supplements the historic literature by incorporating the recorded legacy of early performers. While techniques in this discipline are still being refined, the research of Philip, Fabian, Potter, Timmers and Leech-Wilkinson have already shown that the testimony of recorded archives at times contradicts the supposed common knowledge of how style has developed over the century. As such, any consultation of recordings, extending the existing investigation of instrumental and solo voice recordings to choral repertoire, can only allow a deeper understanding of the performance attitudes of people from other times.

The third category, philosophical literature of the mature early music movement, provides an insight into the philosophical questions necessary to the interrogation of the first two categories of literature. Its investigation of the fluctuating responsibilities of scholars and

151 Note that Nikisch’s recording of Beethoven’s 5th Symphony was made in 1913. Will Crutchfield, 'Fashion, Conviction, and Performance Style in an Age of Revivals', p21.
152 Robert P Morgan, 'Tradition, Anxiety, and the Current Musical Scene', p76.
performers, combined with the perhaps controversial possibility that early music performance is actually modern performance, provides possible lines of inquiry when investigating period literature as well as when discussing the approach of current performers. In combination, these three bodies of literature generate the central themes and questions to be addressed in this study.

With this in mind, the prime question is: why is there little critical investigation of the work of choirs performing early music in the first half of the twentieth century? To the extent that this is even addressed in the literature reviewed, the answer would seem to be that performances of early choral repertoire in that period were simply of so poor a standard as to not warrant a mention. The subjective evaluation on which such an answer depends clearly leaves room for an investigation into the recorded legacy of choral music intended to permit an informed examination to be carried out, particularly where research using recordings to study changing musical tastes has yet to delve deeply into the field of choral performance.

Drawing on this perspective, the following hypothesis was formulated: that the performance standard of early choral music during the first half of the twentieth century would indeed be poor compared to current practices, but that those differences in performing standard would be due to the performers valuing, and therefore seeking to achieve, different aesthetic goals.

The testing of this hypothesis involves several lines of enquiry that emerge from the themes revealed by the three phases of the literature review. Principal amongst these are the following:

1. a review and analysis of recordings from the first half of the twentieth century, as the only possible way of objectively knowing how choirs of that period sounded;
2. a means of showing how that performance standard compares with today, in a manner that would not merely rely on the opinion of one researcher, but would take into account the opinion of those performing at the highest standards today;
3. a means of determining what people in the first half of the twentieth century thought about performing early choral music, what elements they valued in its performance;
4. a means of comparing the values of performers in the first half of the twentieth century with those we hold today, in order to test if those values have changed.

The research design that will permit systematic investigation of these themes will inform the overall testing of the main hypothesis.
This chapter outlines the means by which a research design was achieved to address the hypothesis illustrated in Chapter 2. The chronological and aesthetic themes bound up in the hypothesis determined the adoption of a two-pronged approach. This was captured in a research design able to embrace both an investigation of the performance standard of the early recordings of choral repertoire, and a stylistic comparison between the early twentieth century and today. Criticism or evaluation of a musical performance is inevitably subjective, and the research design was planned as a means of meaningfully and systematically interpreting, and thus balancing in a form of intergenerational dialogue, the subjective responses to musical performance available from the viewpoints of two distinct periods.

Drawing on the work of Fabian, Philip, Potter and Timmers, an initial research stage was designed to offer the opportunity to illuminate the performance style of Tudor choral music in the first half of the twentieth century, consulting both written sources of the period alongside the recorded evidence. Recordings of choirs from that period were sourced and analysed. Then, in order to gauge the general reception of those performances, performance criticism from that period was sought. This was carried out through an exhaustive search of journals covering the period 1900–1950, looking for examples of what contemporary writers thought of the performance standards being achieved within early choral repertoire. These took the form of reviews of concerts and recordings. Once this initial research stage had been undertaken, investigating both recorded and written period sources, the data found was incorporated into the second research stage.

The first research stage was contrasted with an original second research stage, in which current performers were asked to engage with the findings of the first. Expert performers, acting as representatives of the current performance standard of the field of early choral music at the end of the twentieth century, were asked to comment on the recordings from the first half of the twentieth century, specifically noting the nature of differences in performance approach. This was carried out through a series of in-depth interviews during which interviewees were played the period recordings. After making an initial comment, interviewees were then read selected excerpts taken from the results of the search and

156 Potter, 'Beggar at the Door: The Rise and Fall of Portamento in Singing'.
157 Timmers, 'Vocal Expression in Recorded Performances of Schubert Songs'.
analysis of journal articles from the period, and asked to consider the comments of their musical forebears. It is this original second stage of the research design that provides the means for intergenerational dialogue, enriching the discussion of changing performance practices in early choral music, without which the two viewpoints on which I argue the resolution of the hypothesis cannot contribute in the balanced manner proposed.

3.1 PERIOD SOURCES: RECORDINGS AND CONTEMPORARY REVIEWS

This initial research stage was similar to the method employed by several other researchers when looking at musical change using recorded evidence. The use of recordings in the work of Fabian,\(^{158}\) Philip,\(^{159}\) Potter\(^ {160}\) and Timmers\(^ {161}\) has been discussed above. However, each of these studies was longitudinal in approach, addressing small incremental changes in performance practice over an extended period of time. In contrast, the present study used a limited number of period recordings covering a tight time frame to contrast with the performing style of today, the comparison with which formed the second stage of the research design. The fact that this was not a longitudinal study had implications for the selection and analysis of the period recordings.

3.1.1 RECORDINGS: SELECTION

In order to source recordings of choirs performing early music from the first half of the twentieth century, an approach was made of the National Sound Archive of the British Library. The holdings of the library relevant to this study are well documented in Timothy Day’s book, \textit{A Discography of Tudor Church Music},\(^ {162}\) which informed the selection of the recorded materials. This book indeed provided a far more detailed list of the Sound Archive’s holdings than their own web catalogue. The Sound Archive offers a transcription service whereby recordings can be copied and sent to a researcher outside of the UK.\(^ {163}\) This service was used for the purpose of this study, and set the first parameter for the selection of a limited number of recordings.

Several criteria were considered in selecting the recordings. This study did not aim to record incremental changes in style over the twentieth century. Instead, it sought to create a dialogue

\(^{159}\) Philip, \textit{Early Recordings and Musical Style: Changing Tastes in Instrumental Performance, 1900-1950}.
\(^{160}\) Potter, ‘Beggar at the Door: The Rise and Fall of Portamento in Singing’.
\(^{161}\) Timmers, ‘Vocal Expression in Recorded Performances of Schubert Songs’.
\(^{162}\) Day, \textit{A Discography of Tudor Church Music}.
\(^{163}\) This service is available for up to a maximum of six recordings per transaction, with fees charged according the time taken to convert the archive holdings into compact disc format.
between two discrete time periods, the first half of the twentieth century and the current day, thereby generating the opportunity to identify large-scale change, as opposed to tracing smaller developments over time. In order to address this goal, an element of relative homogeneity was sought amongst the recordings, a homogeneity that could be reasonably inferred to extend over the period. The first selection criterion was therefore that all the recordings should originate from within the same decade or even half-decade.

Secondly, the recordings needed to represent an approach that one could discern as intentionally associated with the early music movement of the time, as opposed to being simply recordings of early repertoire. This requirement was due to the fact that the period recordings were both subject to analysis in their own right and also the focus of interaction with contemporary performers during the interview stage. The intention in this case was to ensure that current practitioners would identify with the nature of the music selected in the early recordings, and that this would also represent identification with the kinds of performer involved: in certain respects the equivalent in the earlier period of the roles attributable to the present-day performers. This was in some ways a more difficult requirement to meet than chronological homogeneity, as what the study sets out to address is the specific mind-set of the early music performer, and how similarities and differences might be revealed between the two cohorts involved. To address this criterion, certain performers were eliminated from the possible list by virtue of greater recognition of their association with more mainstream music making, as opposed to early music. For example, a recording of Malcolm Sargent conducting Byrd was discounted for this reason.

Deliberately choosing recordings of performers with which current performers could identify, also extended to the repertoire selected. As Day’s book documents the Sound Archive holdings of material stretching right to the present day, it was possible to check that the repertoire represented on the recordings had a consistent recording history throughout the century, and as such could not be dismissed as a mere novelty recording of the early years of the medium.

Again, to ensure a sense of homogeneity in the group of recordings, it was preferable to select multiple recordings of each piece, in order to ascertain if the performance style was consistent at that time, or was particular to a certain ensemble. Looking at the available sources, it was impossible to find six recordings of the same piece created within such a restricted timeframe, unless one looked later in the century. A compromise position was reached by restricting the study to pieces by the same composer.

While selecting materials by the same composer, it was still possible to consciously select works of contrasting compositional style, i.e. homophony vs. polyphony. This was so as to
investigate how performers of the early period coped with the two different styles, each with their different challenges. The assumption governing this decision was that the two contrasting styles might give rise to a variety of responses, one style perhaps more likely than the other to appear more recognisable to modern listeners.

With the preceding criteria in mind (those of chronological homogeneity, recognition of early music both in terms of performers and repertoire, multiple recordings of pieces, and both homophonic and polyphonic compositions) the following recordings were selected and ordered via the transcription service of the British Library National Sound Archive:

- Byrd Ave Verum Corpus 1924, The English Singers
- Byrd This Day Christ Was Born 1924, The English Singers
- Byrd This Day Christ Was Born 1927, York Minster, dir. Edward Bairstow
- Byrd Ave Verum Corpus 1929, Westminster Cathedral Choir, dir. Lancelot Long

3.1.2 RECORDINGS: ANALYSIS

An impressive and growing body of literature has developed that is employing digital technology to study the nuances of performance practices, particularly levels of tuning/intonation, but also tracking slight tempo variations and the timing of articulation\textsuperscript{164}. It was originally planned to subject the period recordings selected for this study to similar methods of computer analysis in order to give as objective an account of their features as possible. The intention was to attempt such a form of analysis to derive objective data with respect to tuning, tempo, vibrato, portamento and rubato, to see how variation in each of these elements embodied the early twentieth century performing style. However, on receipt of the recordings from the British Library National Sound Archive, it was found that such techniques would prove problematic when applied to recordings of this technical standard.

While previous studies have looked at the movement of individual voices within a choral

context, these were either performed with each voice recorded on a separate track, or with very clear recordings from a later period. Attempts to do the same with older recordings proved fruitless.

Such difficulties with the planned employment of computer-aided analysis as outlined above had always represented a potential challenge, and so an alternative method of analysis had also been prepared. This was a purely aural method of analysis, as had been employed by Potter and Timmers in their studies of early solo voice recordings. Each recording was listened to repeatedly while following the notated score. When an unexpected musical event was heard, an indication was placed on the score. An unexpected musical event was something that would not normally be encountered in a performance today, such as a noticeable slur or portamento leading to or away from a note, or an impurely tuned chord, as compared to the standard of just intonation often used in a capella choral singing today, particularly in opening and final chords. Before listening to each playing of a recording, it was determined which of the vocal parts would be the main focus of the analysis. Each recording was therefore subjected to this aural analysis multiple times, not only enough times to cover each vocal part, but enough to allow for multiple focussed listenings of each individual vocal part.

It became apparent during this analysis that it was easy for a researcher to become normalised to the performance practice represented in the period recordings, a normalisation which would result in noticing fewer unexpected features over progressive listenings. In order to prevent such normalisation, a contemporary recording was played between each playing of a period recording, so as to reinforce the contemporary performance standard to which the period recording was being compared. Two recordings were chosen to act in this benchmark role, the first being a recording of Byrd’s Ave Verum Corpus made by The Tallis Scholars directed by Peter Phillips, and the other being a recording of Byrd’s This Day Christ Was Born made by the Clare College Chapel Choir directed by Timothy Brown.

3.1.3 CONTEMPORARY REVIEWS: SELECTION

At the same time as recorded sources from the first half of the twentieth century were being selected and analysed, an effort was also made to investigate the general reception of these

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165 Potter, ‘Beggar at the Door: The Rise and Fall of Portamento in Singing’.
166 Timmers, ‘Vocal Expression in Recorded Performances of Schubert Songs’.
recordings. This was done by sourcing contemporary assessments of the performance standard achieved in the early twentieth century, as documented in writings of the time. Such a perspective was essential in order to assess the second element of the hypothesis: that any differences in perceived performance standard over the c. 50 year timescale would be due to the performers valuing, and therefore seeking to achieve, different aesthetic goals. Such a comparison could only be ascertained by consulting writings contemporary with the early recordings.

Investigating contemporary reviews as a way of gauging the performance practices within a certain period of time has formed the basis of existing studies of early choral music, such as those by Suzanne Cole and Dorottya Fabian. Cole’s work on performances of Thomas Tallis in the nineteenth century made extensive use of contemporary reviews as a means of documenting the style of performance. Of course, Cole had no recordings to supplement such reviews. The present study sought contemporary reviews from a selected number of journals spanning the period 1900 – 1950. An exhaustive search of all articles published in that time frame was planned, subject to the limitations as to which articles were officially catalogued. This was done to provide a clear picture of what proportion of the musical discussion focussed on early choral music, as opposed to other topics, how those relative proportions may have changed over the period in question, and what terms of reference were used when discussing early choral music. An investigation of the terms that were used in these discussions most directly relates to the hypothesis. Were this process to reveal differences in the way people in the early twentieth century thought about early choral performance, compared to the way we conceive of such performances today, those different ways of thinking could be responsible for any change in performance standard.

The first decision to be made in researching sources of review data was which publications should be consulted in pursuit of relevant reviews. Monetary and geographical constraints removed the possibility of spending substantial periods of time looking for reviews in uncatalogued collections, such as programmes collected by private musical societies. Instead, use was made of the large number of journal back catalogues available in electronic databases. It was important that the journals selected had a back catalogue spanning as much of the period 1900 – 1950 as possible.

The journals selected for investigation were *The Musical Times* (first pub. 1844); *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* (first pub. 1874); *Music and Letters* (first pub. 1920); *Tempo – A Quarterly Review of Music* (first pub. 1939); and *Musical Opinion* (first pub. 1877). These could all be accessed via the JSTOR online database. As this corpus represented such a large number of journal articles, whole journal editions covering 1900 – 1950 over the five journals equalling approximately 30,000 articles, access permission was sought directly from JSTOR. According to a legal agreement, JSTOR provided pdf copies of all of these journal articles via a secure download, such that they could then be uploaded into NVivo software for analysis.

### 3.1.4 CONTEMPORARY REVIEWS: ANALYSIS

NVivo software was selected to facilitate easy navigation around the journals as well as providing coding assistance. Once the journal articles were uploaded into NVivo, the process of reviewing them began. The initial approach was to slowly sight each page of the journal, seeking any mention of an event relevant to the performance of early choral music in the first half of the twentieth century. In order to achieve a thorough examination of journal content, pages had to be sighted rather than searched electronically, since many elements on individual pages, such as advertisements or letters to the editor, were not adequately catalogued.

Two levels of coding were applied. On the first level, there was coding throughout journals to indicate the general topics being discussed. This included the coding of key repertoire terms (e.g. romantic, baroque, symphony, opera), and the names of composers (e.g. Brahms, Wagner, Byrd, Mozart). The idea of this general level coding was to create a background picture against which articles directly related to early choral music could be contrasted. This was intended to enable discussion of how the proportion of writing on early choral music versus other classical music topics may have changed over the first half of the twentieth century.

The second level of coding was applied within articles directly found to relate to the performance of early choral music, be they reviews of concerts and recordings or more scholarly discussions reporting the latest research in the field. No distinction was made between the two (performance and research), as they represented the same potential influence on public consciousness of early choral music. In this second level of coding, the focus fell on terms used to describe the music, particularly terms with subjective or emotive implications (e.g. Is hearing early choral music a novel experience? Is it about serious historical study? Is it fun for audiences? Are performances deeply moving?).
Unfortunately, this initial approach to the journal articles proved not only to be very time-consuming, but had revealed very little useful information about early choral music even after several months of work. This was probably due to the sheer volume of material to be sifted. Starting with articles from 1900, it took a substantial period of working time just to reach the years in which more choral performances were being mentioned. Searching the earlier decades turned out to represent a null result: a not unhelpful outcome in view of eventual discoveries. However, since a doctoral degree is carried out under strict time limitations, and as the planned second research stage needed to incorporate information from the journals, an alternate approach had to be developed, to yield more immediate results and permit the planned research sequence to be preserved.

Once the slow burn of the initial approach to the journal articles was abandoned in favour of a more focussed method, it was decided to undertake keyword searches as a means of finding relevant articles within the mass of publications spanning 1900 - 1950. This was a feature provided by the NVivo software, and much less time-consuming than the initial approach. Such a direct approach certainly had its disadvantages, which is why it had not been preferred from the outset. The nature of keyword searches is that they will only call up articles whose existence can already be guessed at by a researcher, as an element of informed judgement is involved in choosing the keywords: such a process cannot, by definition, reveal new material outside of that which can be commonly assumed, as that would require a different set of unknown keywords. Nevertheless, after delays in finding any relevant data using the initial approach, the much faster keyword search represented a welcome and productive change.

It is worth noting that this new approach to the journal articles was only possible after work had been attempted using the initial approach, and the selection of the period recordings made. A close reading of entire journal articles resulted in the present researcher becoming deeply embedded in the writing style of the period and the format of the journal issues. Selecting the period recordings also focussed the research on a particular subset of early choral repertoire and performers. Both steps allowed for the selection of keywords.

Keywords were selected so as to reveal material directly relevant to the period recordings being used. They therefore focussed on the repertoire and performers represented in that sample. The keywords used were: Byrd; Tomkins; Gibbons; a capella/a cappella; choir/choral/chorale; The English Singers; Westminster Cathedral; York Minster; Edward Bairstow; Tudor; Winchester Music Club; St George’s Chapel Windsor Castle; RR Terry/R.R. Terry/R R Terry; Terry; and recording. These words were searched for both as single enquiries and in combination. Combination searches included: Byrd + The English Singers; Byrd + Bairstow; Byrd + Westminster; recording + Westminster; recording + The English Singers;
recording + York Minster; Byrd + York Minster. These keyword searches were undertaken within all journals for the years 1920 to 1929, a time period chosen to again correspond to the period recordings.

The keyword search process identified a number of contemporary reviews potentially suitable for employment in the second research stage, i.e. the interviews. On an academic and theoretical level, these contemporary reviews proved valuable in gauging the responses both of performers and audience members in the first half of the twentieth century. However, the intention was to discover whether these same thoughts resonated with current performers. The possibility was acknowledged that the interviewees might feel the same type of cultural disjunction in response to the reviews that many listeners do to period recordings. With this in mind, the aim was to choose four reviews to be used during the interviews, one corresponding to each of the four period recordings.

Two criteria informed the selection of the reviews. First, a review should describe as closely as possible the recording being played during the interview. A review of the selected recording was the ideal situation, but a review of the same ensemble performing similar repertoire was a further option. The second criterion was that a review should identify specific aesthetic achievements in the performances. Reviews that explicitly mentioned choral techniques, such as tone production, choral blend, or overall expressivity, were the ideal. With these two criteria as a guide, a selection was made, and reviews were prepared for inclusion in the interviews.

3.2 INTERVIEWS

The second stage of the research design was a series of in-depth interviews with notable current performers within the field of early choral music. As outlined above, in order to test the validity of the hypothesis, I needed to compare both the performance levels achieved (as evident in early recordings) and the documented performance values (as represented in contemporary reviews) of the early twentieth century, to those of current performers. The interviews were designed to bring these two time periods together, to confront modern day performers with the sounds and opinions of the early twentieth century, and thereby generate a dynamic discussion of evolving performance practices and changing tastes.

Rather than distribute a general questionnaire amongst a large number of choral performers of varying standard, it seemed potentially more illuminating to conduct a limited number (between 5 and 10) of in-depth interviews with performers of only the highest calibre. The in-depth interview method allowed interviewees to express themselves in greater detail than
would be possible in a questionnaire. Having the researcher present during the interview also gave the opportunity to further clarify the more theoretical concepts with which the study sought to engage. Subjects filling out a questionnaire alone without further guidance may have misunderstood certain concepts. In order to limit any biases within the data, it was imperative that I carry out all interviews myself, with a preference for them to be face-to-face. While the more commonly employed method of in-depth interviewing involves multiple meetings between the interviewer and the interviewee, in order to build rapport,\textsuperscript{170} thereby increasing the quality of the interactions and the effectiveness of the data collection tool, monetary and geographic constraints meant that I would not be able to do so for this study. Therefore, rapport had to be established in other ways, including through email communication prior to the interviews, ensuring I had a high level of familiarity with each interviewee’s performance career, and letting the interviewees know my own experience in singing choral music. Meeting the interviewees at their preferred venue (giving them a ‘home ground advantage’), and allowing time to build familiarity within the pacing of the interview schedule itself were other important methods of building rapport.

A deliberate decision was made to select high calibre interviewees. The intention was that they would be able to identify with the challenges faced by the performers on the period recordings, by virtue of the similarity of their career circumstances. As their position as experts was an explicit part of the methodological design, ethical approval was arranged so that their names would not be made anonymous but would instead be disclosed as part of the study.

Interviewees have only been named in this thesis once they have provided their express permission by means of a signed participant consent form. To safeguard the reputations of individual interviewees, the transcriptions of the interviews were edited prior to their analysis, with any inappropriate or unnecessary comments removed. These edited transcripts were then provided to the interviewees for their approval prior to being included in this study. All other copies of the interviews, including draft transcripts and audio recordings, were destroyed.

\section*{3.2.1 INTERVIEWEE SELECTION}

A list of possible interviewees was compiled, drawing largely on the researcher’s personal contacts and those of her supervisor, as well as the reputations of people within the early choral performance world. Inclusion on this list was determined according to the following selection criteria.

Interviewees were first chosen based on whether there was a commonly held opinion that they had made a significant contribution to the field of early choral music. Industry awards, highly favourable reviews, discography and publishing record, and appointment at leading institutions, all contributed to the decision as to whether a potential interviewee satisfied this requirement. This first criterion was the most important, considering that the interviewees would be presented as speaking for themselves, rather than being concealed by anonymity, and their response to the period recordings would only carry meaningful weight if they could be said to be true experts within the field.

Following this first criterion, it was decided to prioritise conductors/directors of ensembles performing early choral music rather than individual singers. This excluded a number of well known early music vocalists from the list of potential interviewees. This step was taken in recognition of the fact that the ideal respondent would be someone who was engaging with the overall sound world conveyed in a performance, as opposed to someone necessarily concerned with the physical requirements of creating that sound.

Next, the potential interviewee should have direct experience with the English tradition of performing Tudor music, as that was the repertoire to be played to them during the interviews. This ruled out certain figures within English early choral music whose reputations were based more heavily on the performance of Bach or early opera. Again, the ideal respondent was to be a modern day equivalent to the artists represented on the period recordings, and should be interested in the same repertoire as his predecessors.

In order to similarly represent a modern day equivalent to the artists on the period recordings, the ideal cohort of interviewees needed to represent the same spread of different choral types. These included both residential choirs, be they at Universities or Cathedrals, and professional touring choirs independent of any specific institution.

Under these criteria, fifteen potential interviewees were identified. Unfortunately, none of these candidates were female. While some female conductors were identified, they did not have the established reputation required for this study. Female conductors were also more likely to be working in different repertoire. The main contribution of women in this repertoire seemed to be as performers. While it is unfortunate that the present study cannot address the female point of view, it may provide an interesting avenue for future research.

Contact details were then sought for the fifteen candidates, most often relying on the contact information provided on various organisational web pages, including university, cathedral, and performing artist sites. All potential interviewees were contacted by email and provided with a statement covering the following points: the purpose and aim of the research project; a brief
summary of the overall research design; the fact that they had been approached in recognition of their significant contribution to the performance of early choral music; that the proposed interviews would take approximately two hours; that the time and venue for the interviews would be negotiated to suit them; that the interview schedule would include listening to and commenting on recordings from the first half of the twentieth century; that the recordings would be provided in advance of the interviews; that an audio recording and transcription would be made of the interviews; that the names of the interviewees would be published alongside their interview responses; that they would have the right to edit the interview transcript before it was analysed, and once a transcript had been approved all other copies of both the raw transcripts and audio recordings would be destroyed (see Appendix B). Potential interviewees were then asked to reply if they were interested and, that being the case, to sign a consent form agreeing to the conditions expressed above (see Appendix C). These procedures met the requirements of The University of Western Australia Human Research Ethics Board.

The interviewees who agreed to participate in the final publication of this study are: Christopher Page; David Skinner; Edward Wickham; Stephen Layton; Harry Christophers; Robert Hollingworth; John Potter; Peter Phillips; and James O’Donnell. A list of the key qualifications of each interviewee can be found in Appendix D.

3.2.2 INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

As outlined above, the type of interview chosen to fit the research design of this study was an in-depth structured interview with expert interviewees. A detailed interview schedule was devised, a copy of which is included in the Appendix E. The schedule incorporated three discrete stages:

1. Introductory questions, including biographical information and individual approaches to performance;
2. Investigation of the period recordings;
3. Concluding questions in which interviewees were asked to reflect more broadly on the state of early choral music performance over the course of their own careers as well as over the century.

3.2.2.1 INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

The introductory section of the schedule was intended not only to gather basic biographical information about the interviewees, but also to provide the opportunity to establish a rapport with the interviewees. While a large amount of the interviewees’ biographical material is

\footnote{For a definition of the phrase \textit{interview schedule} see ibid., p126.}
freely available on websites or in compact disc booklets, such information was inadequate for the purpose of this study. Much web information is published without a clear statement of authorship, as is often the case with that provided in compact disc booklets or record sleeves. The lack of clear authorship makes it impossible to determine the vested interests held by any parties in the preparation of material of this kind. A necessary starting point for this study was to form an impression of what the interviewees personally deemed important in their musical formation. The fact that an interviewee experienced something that a writer may deem relevant to their later careers does not mean that the interviewee himself regards it as having any relevance. For example, an interviewee may have taken part in choral singing as a young child of primary school age, but they may not actually deem it to be relevant to their musical formation, and instead choose only to mention choral singing during their high school or early university years. To address this, while performing the dual function of easing interviewees into the interview scenario, the first three questions were designed to have them reflect on their past musical experiences.

1.1 How did you first come to be involved in choral music?

1.2 What moved you to be involved in choral direction in particular?

1.3 What was your introduction to early choral music (pre-Baroque, Tudor or earlier)?

The next three questions were given a separate heading in the material provided to interviewees, but were conceptually still part of the collection of introductory questions. Here the focus changed from biographical details to the formation of the interviewees’ individual approach to choral direction. Again, this information could be inferred from recordings/performances or from magazine interviews, yet it was important to know what they would personally choose to report in the context of an academic study.

2.1 Can you identify any specific influences on your approach to directing early choral music?

2.2 What would be your major aesthetic concerns in putting together a performance of early choral music?

2.3 What would be the highest praise you are looking for in a review?

Question 2.1 worked in conjunction with the first three questions of the interview, as an interviewee could quite easily repeat under this heading an event previously mentioned. Alternatively, and perhaps of more use to this study, additional probing may reveal some extra
detail which might not have been presented at first, be it a certain conductor they worked under in their youth, or a recording which had a profound impact upon first hearing.

Questions 2.2 and 2.3 established a line of thinking essential for the remainder of the interview. The present researcher coined the term major aesthetic concerns as a way of grouping together a variety of performance issues relevant to choral performance that may find expression in a limitless variety of different combinations of emphasis. Some of these choral issues could include blend, bringing out individual lines, the importance of text, the benefits of programming unknown repertoire versus standard repertoire, drama, and tuning. All choral practitioners would be aware of these elements, and would, be it consciously or unconsciously, have made choices, both during rehearsals and performances, to privilege or emphasise some of these issues at the expense of others. Major aesthetic concerns was a term for which of these choral elements a director might emphasise in their approach. Asking interviewees in question 2.2 about major aesthetic concerns in relation to their own performing careers provided a framework for them to be asked to identify parallels in the performances of others, particularly when it came to discussing the period recordings.

Question 2.3 was designed as a foil to question 2.2. It was anticipated that interviewees might produce a long list of aesthetic concerns purely because the question and concept had been framed in the academic context. Logic suggests that where a specific aesthetic concern influenced one’s performance decisions, one would then hope that the consequences of those decisions would be noticed by anyone evaluating one’s performance. When question 2.3 was reframed from the point of view of a reviewer, interviewees gave a much more succinct and ‘gut reaction’-style response as to how they wanted their music to be perceived, including how they did not want their music to be perceived. Reviews were the only way of gauging the public reception of performances in the past, with the contemporary reviews of the 1920s being employed later in the interview schedule to elicit historically informed reflections. With that in mind, question 2.3 prepared interviewees for that stage of the interview.

While the employment of reviews and contemporary music criticism occupies a controversial role in musicology, reviews have a peculiar place in the world of early music. Not only do the usual controversies surrounding reviews of contemporary performances exist (Who is the reviewer? What are his qualifications? What is his viewpoint: academic or performer?), but reviews themselves also exist in their period form. That is to say that a review or description of a performance of a piece in the Renaissance has a special role. Where provenance is known, that type of review, contemporary with Renaissance music, may be treated as highly reliable evidence for a particular approach to early music performance. This places the early music performer of today in a position of doubt and distrust towards modern reviews, while at the
same time completely trusting the validity of renaissance reviews in their assessment of a performing style. They have to reconcile themselves to believing one set and not the other. Question 2.3 thereby opened the possibility of discussing this issue at some point during the course of the interview.

3.2.2.2 PERIOD RECORDINGS

The bulk of the interview schedule consisted of questions concerning the period recordings themselves. Before turning to the specific recordings used in this study, two questions were posed to probe for differences in familiarity with old recordings in general between the interviewees.

3.1 What do you think of when I say period recordings? What are your preconceptions?

3.2 Have you listened to old recordings from the first half of the twentieth century before?

It is documented that the common reaction of most people on hearing period recordings of vocal and choral music for the first time is laughter, due to the cultural disjunction between current performance practice and what the performance practice was at the date of the recording. While some interviewees may have been hearing period recordings for the first time, others are well regarded for their study of period recordings. It was therefore necessary for interviewees to self-report on their relative familiarity with period recordings.

A basic outline of questions was established and then repeated for each of the four period recordings.

4.1 Are you familiar with the vocal ensemble ... ?

PLAY RECORDING

4.2 What are your first reactions to that recording?

4.3 How would you assess/review that performance if it were given today?

4.4 What aesthetic values do you perceive as present in this performance?

QUOTE READ OUT

172 Leech-Wilkinson relates an anecdote of this happening when people were presented with old recordings of Mozart’s Queen of the Night aria. See Leech-Wilkinson, The Modern Invention of Medieval Music: Scholarship, Ideology, Performance, p45.
4.5 Are they the types of comments you’d like to be said about your own performances?

4.6 Would you like to listen to the recording again in light of that quotation?

4.7 Knowing that audiences at the time felt this way about performances such as the one you just heard, does that change the way you feel about the performance?

4.8 Do you now perceive any different aesthetic values present in the performance?

4.9 Are there any elements you admire in this performance?

The interviewees were also informed of the composition name, recording date, and performer(s) represented in each period recording. If they answered the first question in the negative (i.e. they were unfamiliar with the vocal ensemble represented), they were then given a brief overview of the make-up of the ensemble, its performing career, and which modern ensembles could be seen as their equivalent.

Question 4.3 deliberately asked interviewees to judge the recordings as if it was a recording of a modern choir, operating alongside modern performance practice standards. This was to elicit as raw a response as possible, lest the interviewees had been polite and held back in their response to question 4.2. They were then asked to imagine themselves in the place of a choral director responsible for the choral performance and to suggest what aesthetic concerns would have driven him to create that performance. Once they had answered questions relating to their unprepared first impression of the recording, they were then read a quotation from a review from the same period in history as the recording. These quotes were the fruit of the keyword searches applied to the journal articles, as discussed above. These quotations had not been provided to the interviewee in advance, and were read aloud by the interviewer. Again, this was to ensure a raw, unprepared, and unstudied response.

After hearing the quotation, interviewees were asked whether these comments would be appreciated today. This directly related to the second proposition within the hypothesis: that differences in performing standard met would be due to the performers valuing, and then seeking to achieve, different aesthetic goals. At its most basic level, question 4.5 was designed to elicit if there was any doubt as to whether the comments in the reviews were positive or negative when interpreted by performers today.

Having reflected on the meaning of the review from their perspective as current performers, interviewees were given the option of listening to the recording again before considering whether the review had changed their perception of the recording. Questions 4.8 and 4.9
returned to possible aesthetic values that could be identified in the recordings, while also speculating as to the worth of the recording itself.

Questions 4.4 and 4.8 were commonly prefaced with the phrase “...putting yourself in the head of Lancelot Long...” or “...putting yourself in the head of Edward Bairstow...” to focus interviewees on the idea that someone like themselves had deliberately made the aesthetic decisions evident in that performance. In the case of The English Singers, who were not known to have had a distinct conductor, the question was prefaced either with “...putting yourself in the head of an imaginary conductor...” or else by referring to the collective mind which produced the performance. As some of the interviewees are very well known for performing in ensembles without a conductor, this was not deemed an obstacle to discussion.

Question 4.1 to 4.9 were repeated as questions 5.1 to 5.9, questions 7.1 to 7.9, and questions 8.1 to 8.9, each time focussing on a different recording. The recordings were presented in the following order:

- **Byrd Ave Verum Corpus** recorded 1924 by The English Singers
- **Byrd This Day Christ Was Born** recorded 1924 by The English Singers
- **Byrd Ave Verum Corpus** recorded 1929 by Westminster Cathedral Choir dir. Lancelot Long
- **Byrd This Day Christ Was Born** recorded in 1927 by York Minster dir. Edward Bairstow

This order was designed to pair two recordings by a professional, non-residential ensemble, followed by two recordings of residential choral foundations. Within each pair, interviewees were first played Byrd’s *Ave Verum*, as the more homophonic composition, followed by Byrd’s *This Day Christ Was Born*, with its arguably more challenging polyphony. To further draw the attention of interviewees to the distinction between professional/non-residential choirs and residential choral foundations, additional questions (6.1 to 6.2) were inserted before the Westminster Cathedral recording, addressing this specific subject.

6.1 Returning to contemporary choirs, do you perceive differences between the performances of choirs resident in a certain place (e.g. The Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge, or York Minster), as opposed to choirs that aren’t tied to a specific venue (e.g. The Sixteen or The Hilliard Ensemble)?

6.2 Would you expect these differences to have been more or less pronounced in the first half of the twentieth century?
The difference between residential and non-residential choirs, as explored in questions 6.1 and 6.2, is an interesting side issue to the present study. In the early twentieth century, the structure of vocal ensembles was in flux. The vocal consort was only just starting to emerge as a distinct one-per-part form. Changes were also occurring in chapel choirs, as directors started to break with nineteenth century traditions to take on the role of conductor in front of the choir, as opposed to conducting from the organ. However, questions arising from these developments are not central to the present study. More important was an investigation of the difference between how early twentieth century ensembles perform homophonic versus polyphonic compositions, especially the performance standard reached by a professional/non-residential ensemble in the first half of the twentieth century. These questions, along with those concerning the latter recordings (from question 6.1 to 8.9), were thereby identified early in the construction process as possible omissions should a shorter interview be requested by interviewees with pressing time constraints. Edward Wickham, Stephen Layton, and James O’Donnell took this option. They did not answer questions relating to the York Minster recording (questions 8.1 to 8.9), instead proceeding directly to the concluding questions.

3.2.2.3 CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

Once the sequence of questions on period recordings had been carried out, ideally with reference to all four recordings, the interview moved to the concluding stage, in which interviewees were asked to reflect more broadly on changes in the performance of early choral music. These questions were asked in relation to their awareness of changes spanning the twentieth century, as well as changes they had experienced over the course of their own performing career.

9.1 Do you think the performing style of Tudor choral music has changed over the century? How so?

9.2 Do you think the performing style of Tudor choral music has changed over your own performing career? How so?

9.3 Have you noticed differences over time in your own approach to the performance of Tudor choral music? What are these differences?

9.4 Do you think the expectations of listeners/reviewers when they come to a performance of this repertoire have changed over the century? How so?

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173 For a memoir of one of the first organists to start conducting his choir while the assistant organist accompanied, see Michael Howard, *Thine Adversaries Roar*... (Herefordshire, Gracewing Publishing, 2001).
9.5 Do you think the expectations of listeners/reviewers when they come to a performance of this repertoire have changed over your own performing career? How so?

9.6 What role do you feel choirs from the first part of the twentieth century have played in the development of the performing style for Tudor choral music?

In the initial formulation of the interview schedule, these questions made reference to early choral music instead of Tudor choral music. That change (together with the addition of question 9.7, discussed further below on p55) was made after trialling the interview schedule on some Western Australian choral conductors.

Questions 9.8 and 9.9 were then deliberately designed as closed binary questions (suggesting only yes/no answers) in order to elicit a clear feeling for or against the period recordings.

9.8 Do you consider this repertoire to be part of early music?

9.9 Do you feel these recordings have a part in the development of early music?

Question 9.8 was a direct response to discussion following a presentation at the 2012 International Musicology Conference hosted by at the University of Western Australia, in which I had outlined some elements of the current research design. Certain audience members at that presentation maintained that the repertoire I had selected was not actually considered to be early music by people who had grown up as part of the system of English choral foundations, due to their seminal place and unbroken performance within that tradition. The audience members postulated that perhaps English choral musicians would instead classify the repertoire as cathedral repertoire as opposed to early choral music. Question 9.8 was designed to investigate that suggestion, particularly in case there was a point of cultural difference between myself as an Australian researcher, and the interviewees as representatives of the English choral tradition.

3.2.2.4 REFINING THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Once this initial version of the interview schedule had been compiled, a number of practice interviews were arranged in order to refine the present researcher’s skills as an interviewer, as well as to test the effectiveness of the interview schedule, prior to departure on the official research trip. Members of the researcher’s own network of choral conductors were approached via email to participate. As these interviews were never intended to form part of the actual data collected for this research, there were no strict selection criteria applied, other than that they were known to have conducted a choir (no restrictions were placed on the size,
repertoire, or professional standing of that choir). Three conductors were able to assist me by taking part in practice interviews. No ethics documents were completed for this stage, as none of their actual responses have been, or were ever intended to be, included in this research. However, they did provide vital feedback on the state of the interview schedule, some of which led to changes in the procedure and wording.

The practice interviews were the first opportunity to test the equipment both for playing the period recordings and creating aural recordings of the interviews. The set-up was altered slightly after the practice interviews, as a need for dual recording devices was identified, so as to ensure that an accurate record of the interview was kept. It also became clear that interviewees would not necessarily want to listen to a period recording in its entirety, either through time constraints or personal preference. An option for an interviewee to stop the recording at any time was therefore built into the interview schedule. As some of the practice interviews were conducted under time restrictions (as would be the case in some of the official interviews), a plan was created and tested as to which questions could be omitted in the event of a time shortage (these were questions 6.1 to 8.9, as explained above).

As mentioned above, questions 9.1 to 9.6 had initially referred to early choral music. However, interviewees in the practice interviews showed a tendency to move beyond the scope of the repertoire represented in the period recordings when given the direction early choral music (i.e. they moved into discussion of non-English choral music, baroque choral music, or even accompanied choral music). A decision was therefore made to specify Tudor choral music, corresponding to the time frame of the period recordings.

The practice interviews identified considerable difficulties in explaining the concept of major aesthetic values to the interviewees (questions 2.2, 4.4, 4.8, 5.4, 5.8, 7.4, 7.8, 8.4, 8.8). As explained above, the present researcher had developed this terminology as way of combining several different concepts within choral direction. These were concepts with which it was anticipated the interviewees would be familiar, though they might not immediately group them together as was being done in this study. In order to overcome this weakness in the interview schedule, a series of examples was built into the interview script for the interviewer to call upon if further explanation was required. More importantly, the fact that the practice interviews alerted the researcher to this possibility meant that there was no added distraction when the issue arose in the official interviews.

The practice interview experience also highlighted the fact that interviewees could waver in their opinion of the period recordings over the duration of the interview. In response to this, it was decided to insert an additional question (question 9.7, as mentioned above) into the
concluding section of the interviews, in order to elicit from the interviewees a clear opinion as to the merit of the period recordings in general. To do so, the following quote was used:

“...it is tempting to go on to say that the ensemble singing in these recordings, whether from the 1930s or the 1950s, is so execrable in imprecision of pitch and timing that it is hardly surprising that unaccompanied performance was not taken seriously as a general medieval practice...”¹⁷⁴

This quote was deliberately chosen for its polarising effect. Interviewees were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the overall sentiment. As the quote was taken out of the context of its author’s thesis, the authorship was not immediately stated in the interview script. However, it was divulged to the interviewees upon enquiry.

3.2.3 DATA COLLECTION

Having been contacted by email, possible interviewees replied expressing whether they were interested in being involved in the study and, that being the case, returned the signed consent form. Once they had agreed to become an interviewee, a time and place was negotiated to suit their timetable, with the aim of holding all interviews as part of a discrete two-week research trip to the United Kingdom.

A week prior to departure on the research trip, the interviewees were again contacted by email to confirm the time and place of their interview, as well as providing them with a copy of the interview schedule and the period recordings. There was no expectation that interviewees would study these materials ahead of the interviews taking place: they were simply given the option. In order to allow for easy electronic access to the period recordings, challenging due to their large file size, the YouSendIt web service was employed.¹⁷⁵ Interviewees were provided with a link to a secure web page from which they could access the files. This link was only valid for a limited time period, expiring once the interviews had been completed. A notification email was sent to the researcher each time an interviewee accessed the file, to give an indication as to who had already heard the recordings prior to the interview.

The interview schedule provided to the interviewees in advance of the actual interviews was an abbreviated version. While it listed all of the question categories as individual questions, the quotes from contemporary reviews were omitted, with interviewees just informed that an unspecified quote would be read at that time. This was to clearly differentiate between the opinions of the interviewees before and after they became aware of this information. The last

¹⁷⁵ YouSendIt has since been rebranded as HighTail and can be accessed at www.hightail.com
Three questions (questions 9.7, 9.8, 9.8) were also omitted, so as not to bias the responses of interviewees to any of the earlier questions.

Interview collection was undertaken during a two-week research trip to the United Kingdom in early June 2013. Times and venues were negotiated to suit the interviewees, resulting in interviews being held in a variety of locations (e.g. university rooms, management offices, hotel restaurants, private residences). While the differences in venue situation were not ideal, an effort was made to ameliorate any dissatisfactory consequences by standardising the equipment on which the period recordings were played to the interviewees. A Bose SoundDock® Portable was supplied to play them the recordings. This worked for all but one of the interviews, during which technical difficulties resulted in recordings being played on a laptop computer. While a two-hour time slot was requested from each interviewee, some were unable to give the full time, and the interviews were shortened accordingly, as noted above.

Two of the fifteen interview subjects had been unable to respond to the initial call for interviewees within the timeframe needed in order to be included in the main research trip. It was therefore arranged to conduct these interviews using alternative communication technologies. One interviewee elected to do a Skype interview, and the other a phone interview. Under these circumstances, the playback quality of the period recordings could not be controlled, as they had to be sent to each interviewee ahead of the interview for them to play at their location. Interviews conducted both in person during the official research trip and via alternative communication technologies in the week following, resulted in twelve hours and eighteen minutes of recordings covering nine different interviewees.

3.2.4 TRANSCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Following collection of the interviews, the interview recordings were given to Transcription Australia\textsuperscript{176} to be transcribed into a MS Word document. Once Transcription Australia delivered the transcribed files, the transcriptions were rechecked and compared with the interview recordings. Particular attention was paid to the names of performers, composers and compositions mentioned in the interviews, as they may have been misinterpreted during the transcription process. A second review of the transcriptions was then made to remove any extraneous material, including social niceties or deviations from the topic not relevant to the research. In accordance with the conditions agreed to by the interviewees when they signed their consent forms, transcriptions were then sent to the interviewees via email. Interviewees

\textsuperscript{176} Transcription Australia is an Australian company which enables clients to upload audio files to their website for transcription. More information can be found at their website \url{www.transcription.net.au}
were given time to review the transcriptions, and either approve, amend or reject the transcriptions prior to their analysis. Once the interviewees approved the transcriptions, all copies of the interview recordings and the un-edited transcriptions were destroyed. This was again according to the ethical conditions agreed upon when the interviewees signed the consent form.

The approved interview transcriptions were then analysed. Using content analysis, interviews were first broken down into responses to individual questions, and then category of question. Reviewing all answers to the same question simultaneously, the researcher attempted to broadly categorise the types of response, looking to see whether they were mostly the same answer with slight variation, or if they differed dramatically. Working under the broad philosophy of phenomenological analysis, every effort was made to preserve the integrity of each individual response. No attempt was made to analyse the overall data statistically in terms of words or themes arising. Instead, direct quotes were loosely grouped together under the category relating to each question. Once this form of analysis had been applied at the level of the individual question, larger themes, initially spanning question-groups and eventually covering the whole interview experience, were identified.

\[^{177}\text{Kumar, Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners, pp240-1.}\]

The findings of the first stage of the research design, and investigation of period recordings and reviews collected from period journals, are presented here. These two forms of primary evidence for the performing style of early choral music in the first half of the twentieth century act as a counterpoint to the intergenerational dialogue posed in the second research stage: the interviews. The relationship between the research stages is represented in Figure 3. Presentation of the analysis of the period recordings will first inform the reader (as it did the researcher) as to the style of performance in the early twentieth century. Readers are encouraged to listen to the recordings provided on the accompanying compact disc while reading the analysis. While the analysis of the recordings is not directly used in the interview stage, the knowledge of that analysis informs the interpretation of interviewee comments to be discussed in Chapter 5. After presenting the analysis of the recordings, the findings of the search of contemporary journal articles are reported. Again, these are best understood having listened to the recorded performances to which they refer. The contemporary reviews of recordings are directly incorporated into the interview schedule, represented by the arrow on Figure 3.

Figure 3. Relationship between the different stages of the research design.

4.1 RECORDINGS

The analysis carried out on each of the recordings is based on my own aural perception of the performances, a feature that was of course to represent the means by which the Interviewees were to engage with the recordings. A score of each of the pieces was acquired from the free sheet music sharing website Choral Public Domain Library (www.cpdl.org). A simple metanotation was then devised to indicate any unexpected, and therefore notable, performing event in each recording. This distinction was achieved through adopting current day recordings as a baseline against which to compare, played alternately with each period recording. The
metanotation was designed as follows. A slur symbol was used to indicate a portamento. This could also show if a note was approached with a portamento from above or below the goal note. Where portamenti occurred between notes, the slur symbol would link the two relevant notes. Notes were circled in the event of tuning variation, with arrows used where possible to indicate if a note would need to be sharpened or flattened in order to meet today’s tuning standards. A question mark was used to show a tuning variation that could not be identified as sharp or flat, but merely perceived as a definite error.

This metanotation was trialled during a seminar presentation entitled “Choral Performances of the Past”, given as part of the University of Western Australia School of Music seminar series on 21st May 2013. During the presentation, audience members were played one of the period recordings, and asked to mark what they heard on a copy of the score using the metanotation. While the audience members noticed fewer portamenti than are recorded in the researcher’s analysis below (an expected result given that they were only given one playing of the recording with which to make an analysis), the exercise did support the ease with which the metanotation could be explained and with which it could be applied by others.

In retrospect, I decided that, rather than refer to tuning errors within the recordings, they should be referred to as tuning variations. This was to reflect the fact that, alongside such variants as the role of tuning as an expressive device, particularly to show pain, there can be other legitimate reasons tuning being altered during a performance in comparison with an assumed fixed value. For example, David Howard’s article “Intonation Drift in A Capella Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass Quartet Singing With Key Modulation” concluded that “…pitch drift is potentially a necessary part of staying in-tune…” for choirs which emphasised just intonation within individual chords as opposed to along the horizontal vocal line. To allow for the possibility that tuning may have been deliberately altered in order to achieve one or other of these reasons, the term tuning variation has been employed.

Comments were also written on the score in the event of noticeable tempo changes. These were then investigated using the iPhone App Steinway Metronome tap function (the researcher was able to tap along to the recording, and after a sufficient number of consistent taps, a metronome marking was produced). Measured in beats per minute, they are abbreviated to bpm throughout this chapter.


\[^{180}\text{Steinway Metronome version 1.1.4, updated 28 September 2011, Steinway Musical Instruments Inc., copyright 2010.}\]
This analysis attempts to give an objective description of the sound presented in the recorded archives. Allowance was therefore not made for the difficulties experienced by the ensembles in making the recordings. The state of recording technology in the early twentieth century is well documented. Some of the difficulties posed by the recording technology itself included the need to overly project into a horn; the need to group an ensemble as close to the horn as possible, thereby disrupting the normal stage set-up and ability to hear across the ensemble; a limited amount of time available on a recorded disc/cylinder; and the inability to edit a recorded track. While these factors do not play a part in the following analysis, they are mentioned by some of the interviewees in Chapter 5.

The following pages show the original analysis of each recording using the metanotation, as well as a table summarising the events described in the graphic representation. Time markers are also given so that the reader may refer to the recordings on the compact disc included in this publication.

Please note that in The English Singers recording of Byrd’s Ave Verum Corpus (track 1), the repeat of the “O Dulcis” section (bars 42 – 56) is omitted. However, this same section is included in the Westminster Cathedral recording (track 3).
