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John Calvin and music: the rise of protestant psalters in the sixteenth century

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John Calvin, born July 10, 1509 in the small town, Noyon, France, was the son of Gerard Calvin, who was the Apostolic Notary of the ecclesiastical court and the secretary of Bishop de Hangest. Calvin's mother, who died when he was young, was noted for her beauty and piety. As a child he went with her on her pilgrimages to view relics and kiss the bleeding wounds of statues. At the age of twelve he received the tonsure and became a chaplain in the Church.

Because the bishop saw that he had a brilliant mind, he arranged for John to study with his own nephews, Joachim and Ives de Monmor who were of the nobility. Later a small benefice provided for his further studies in Paris at the College de la Marche, or high school, the Colleges of Montaigu and Fortret, where he made a splendid record. Sent by his father to Orleans and Bouges to study law, he met Dr. Melchior Wolmar and other famous scholars who influenced his thinking.

Returning to Paris, he helped write a speech for Nicholas Cop, the newly-elected rector of the universities. Because it expounded Protestant dogma, Dr. Cop had to flee the city. Soon John had to escape the soldiers who came to arrest him.

Wandering around teaching and expounding the truths of the Bible, in 1535 at Basel he published the first edition of his famous Christianae Religionis Institutio (The Institutes of the Christian Religion), which immediately set him

at the forefront of Reformation leaders. This Latin edition was soon followed by a French translation. He worked on the manual all his life, enlarging its six chapters. The Definitive or final edition was published five years prior to his death.

On his way to Strasbourg in July 1536 he found the Campaigne Road blocked with fighting, and was forced to take a long detour by way of Geneva. At Geneva William Farel convinced him that it was God's will he should stay and convert the people who verbally had accepted Protestantism the May before, but whose lives remained unchanged. The people, however, resisted these efforts and in 1538 the preachers were banished from the city.

Going to Strasbourg he taught, preached and organized a church for French refugees. It was during the time spent here, says Reese, that Calvin became acquainted with congregational singing in German.(Re p.683) Matthias Greitter, who was principal singer at the Protestant church, had composed some original melodies for the purpose of congregational participation. Calvin adopted several of Greitter's, and other German melodies, to French psalm texts. Calvin's first Psalter, published at Strasbourg in 1539, contained eighteen psalms (six with texts of his own translation), the song of Simeon (Nunc Dimittis), the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. The remaining twelve psalms used modified versions of texts by Clement Marot, who, besides writing love poems, had since 1533 been supplying metrical psalm

translations into French for the court of Francis I. How Marot's texts came to be included in the Strasbourg Psalter is not clear. However, Calvin's interest in a specific type of music to be used in worship indicates his concern and attitude that the role of music in worship is vital and important enough that the music itself should be of sound basis in both its theological content and musical setting. This I state as the essence of Calvin's philosophy of church music. It will serve in this study as the focal point. I hope to make clear how Calvin arrived at his attitude, set it forth in principle, and how it influenced others.

In Switzerland, where Calvin began and continued his influential ministry, a Protestant foundation had been laid by Ulrich Zwingli, who opposed the Catholic Church on both religious and political grounds and whose fight in opposition cost him his life in 1531. Calvin, a few years later, filled the position of Protestant leader and continued Zwingli's policy of soundly-based opposition. In the area of church music, Zwingli, although an amateur musician himself, had not set down any of his ideas of congregational singing. Calvin, however, was well aware of the power of music and soon stated his ideas "in keeping with the austere simplicity of his religious views."(Re p.358) He referred to St. Paul as his authority in advocating the singing as well as the reciting of the psalms, and he permitted no other texts to be used for this purpose. In keeping with his views that

the psalms should be understood by the congregation, he adopted the use of French translation, in verse. He found no objection to singing these and other psalm adaptations to German melodies borrowed from the Lutherans. His main stipulation in regard to a melody was that it should be the equal of the text in majesty. (Re p.359)

The view of Calvin thus far revealed appears similar to the generally held view of Martin Luther, who has been called the "Father of Protestantism". John Stevens points out that they had two ideas in common: they both attacked late medieval teaching about the Mass; and they both desired to restore the worship of the primitive church, with a simple Communion service in which the laity should not be passive spectators but active participants. (St p.80) But Stevens then points out the differences between the two liturgies: Luther demanded of church song that it should be predominantly (but not exclusively) congregational, that it be in the vernacular, and derived from scripture, so that through the medium of song, the Word of God might remain among the people. Unlike Calvin, Luther had no objection either to the traditional Catholic chant or to contemporary part-music. The Calvinists on the other hand, steadfastly refused to countenance any of the trappings and ceremonies of Romanism.(Sc xvii) They, too, insisted on the uses of the vernacular and, with the same motive, they avoided such musical elaborations as tended to make difficult the understanding of the words being sung, or to distract attention from these

by linking witm with polyphonic settings which openly displayed vocal skill, appreciation of which they regarded as a species of sensual enjoyment.

Summing this up, Pidoux writes that it was difficult for the common worshipper to answer "Amen" to a text he had hardly understood, and since this music was executed by a choir, the worshipper was left entirely passive.(Pi p.66) Calvin felt so strongly that the texts had to be understood, that psalm texts were set for unison singing only.

Calvin wished to begin the innovation of congregational singing by forming the children of the church into choirs and encouraging them to attend singing practice for some hours each week.(Gi p.138)

The choirs thus formed were agents of religious, rather than musical, indoctrination, due to the fact that unison singing of psalms was taught exclusively. As in worship, in music the situation of instruction became merely a tool, though it was still recognized that it added a very definite impact to the text.

Calvin ststes his idea of the role of singing and of the danger of distraction in Book III of the Institutio, (chapter 20, sections 31 and 32) :

"It is fully evident that unless voice and song, if interposed in prayer, spring from deep feeling of heart, neither has any value or profit in the least with God. But they arouse his wrath against us if they come only from the tip of the lips and from the throat, seeing that this is to abuse his most holy name and to hold his majesty in derision.

Yet we do not here condemn speaking and singing but rather strongly commend them, provided they are associated

with the heart's affection. For thus do they exercise the mind in thinking of God and keep it attentive , unstable and variable as it is, readily relaxed and diverted in different directions, unless it be supported by various helps. Moreover, since the glory of God ought, in a measure, to shine in the several parts of our bodies, it is especially fitting that the tongue has been assigned and destined for this task, both through singing and through speaking. For it was peculiarly to tell and proclaim the praise of God. But the chief use of the tongue is in public prayers, which are offered in the assembly of believers, by which it comes about that with one common voice, and as it were, with the same mouth, we all glorify God together, worshipping him with one spirit and the same faith. And we do this openly, that all men mutaully, each one from his brother, may receive the confession of faith and be invited and prompted by his example.

And surely, if the singing be tempered to that gravity which is fitting in the sight of God and the angels, it both lends dignity and grace to sacred actions and has the greatest value in kindling our hearts to a true zeal and eagerness to pray. Yet we should be very careful that our ears be not attentive to the melody than our mϕnds to the spiritual meaning of the words.

Such songs as have been composed only for sweetness and delight of the ear are unbecoming to the majesty of the church and cannot but displease God in the highest degree."(Ca pp.894 and 895)

Calvin's choice of the psalms as his texts is interesting in that he thought of them as models of prayer, and just as the pastor speaks the prayer of invocation, of confession, and supplication in the name of the congregation, the congregation sings the prayers of praise and thanksgiving in the form of the rhymed (metrical) psalms, using the vernacular language to melodies which have "weight and majesty". (Pi p.66)

Since the experience of those who participated in the service of the Roman Church had shown that prayers spoken exclusively by the officiating clergy leave the faithful "cold" or uninspired, says Calvin, the psalm which is prayed

by means of the song will stimulate "the ardor of praying." The importance of the role which psalm-singing should play is shown by the fact that the choice of a psalm for a given occasion was prescribed by a table (often printed in the psalters.) (Pi p.67)

Thus, it is evidenced in the forming of the Strasbourg Psalter that Calvin had thought through his ideas of the value of church music, and had explained in his Institutio the founding of these ideas. As a result of formulating the principle that church music must be textually based on the Psalms and musically equal to the texts in the ability to center one's attention and purpose on praising God in an atmosphere of majesty and sincerity, Calvin began his efforts to realize, through the Strasbourg Psalter, his ideas into a form which could be utilized by his followers.

In 1542 a Genevan edition of the psalter was published that contained no pieces by Calvin but did include fifty psalms by Marot. Charles Garside has called Calvin's Preface to this Psalter "the most important single document for arriving at a proper understanding of Calvin's attitude towards music."(Ga p.56)

In this Preface three fundamentals things are treated: preaching, prayer, and the Sacraments. In speaking of public prayers, Calvin subdivides them into two kinds, prayer by word, and prayer with singing. Having made this distinction he devotes the last part of the Preface to a discussion of the prayers with singing:

"As for public prayers, there are two kinds; the ones with the word alone, the others with singing. And this is not something invented a little time ago. For from the first origin of the Church, this has been so, as appears from the histories. And even St. Paul speaks not only of praying by mouth: but also of singing. And in truth we know by experience that singing has great force and vigor to move and inflame the hearts of men to invoke and praise God with a more vehement and ardent zeal. Care must always be taken that the song be neither light nor frivolous; but that it have weight and majesty, and also, there is a great difference between the music which one makes to entertain men at table and in their houses, and the Psalms which are sung in the Church in the presence of God and His angels. But when anyone wishes to judge correctly of the form which is here presented, we hope that it will be found holy and pure, seeing that it is simply directed to the edification of which we have spoken". (quoted in Ga p.508)

Calvin had earlier stated the three things the church was to observe in worship: preaching of the word, prayers public and private, and administration of the sacraments. Since in Calvin's mind music is associated with prayer, it thus becomes for him one of the three fundamental expressions of formal worship.

As Calvin makes the statement concerning the evident power of music, a vital distinction becomes apparent. Choral music in general is not what he is speaking of, rather choral music in a specifically religious context; for, he continues, music can "move and inflame the hearts of men to invcke and praise God with a more vehement and ardent zeal," though he immediately warns that "care must be taken that the song be neither light nor frivolous....." Finally, the important idea becomes apparent that he is here dealing primarily with the relationship between music and liturgy when he states the there is "a great difference between the music which one makes to entertain men at table and in their

houses, and the Psalms which are sung in the Church in the presence of God and His angels."

This last sentence is very significant, for it shows, through the distinction made between music "at tables" and "in Church", that Calvin meant religious music. What is even more important is the fact that he does not write "music in the church," but "Psalms which are sung in the church," thus clearly defining the vocal music of which he has been speaking as the Psalms of David.

A year later,(1543) Calvin wrote an additional passage to be added to the original Preface. In it he says that the practice of singing may extend into our homes and even to the fields where it might prove an incentive for turning our thoughts from rejoicing in the flesh to the thoughts of rejoicing in God. Because music has the power to give men pleasure and recreate him, man must be careful not to abuse the gift of music which God has given us.

"Moreover, in speaking now of music, I understand two parts; namely the teller or subject and matter; secondly, the song, or the melody. It is true that every bad word (as St. Paul has said) perverts good manners, but when the melody is with it, it pierces the heart much more strongly, and enters into it. We are now to have songs not only honest, but also holy, which will be like spurs to incite us to pray and to praise God, and to meditate upon His words in order to love, fear, honor, and glorify Him."

After this Calvin states that the Psalms are the only appropriate texts for the songs since they are God's own words to His people, and we are not to sing anything except what we have received from Him.

He instructs that the children as well as the men and

women accustom themselves to singing in order that this may be a sort of meditation to associate themselves with the company of angels.

Concluding his Preface Calvin writes:

"But the unique gift of man is to sing knowing that which he sings. After the intelligence must follow the heart and the affection, a thing which is unable to be except if we have the hymn imprinted in our memory, in order never to cease from singing. For these reasons this present book, even for this cause, besides the rest which has been said, ought to be singular recommendation to each one who desires to enjoy himself honestly and according to God, for his own welfare and the profit of his neighbors: and so there is need of all of it being much recommended by me; seeing that it carries its value and its praise. But that the world may be so well advised, that in place of songs in part vain and frivolous, in part stupid and dull, in part foul and vile, and in consequence evil and harmful which it has used up to now, it may accustom itself hereafter to the singing of these divine and celestial hymns with the good king David. Touching the melody, it has seemed best that it be moderated in the manner we have adopted to carry the weight and majesty appropriate to the subject, and even to be proper for singing in the Church, according to that which has been said."(quoted in Ga pp.570and 571)

A possible explanation for this addition lies in the opening words,"and yet the practice of singing may extend more widely; it is even in the homes and in the fields an incentive for us...." In the 1542 text, "singing" appeared to have been restricted to the church, but now Calvin expressly states that "it is even in the homes and in the fields an incentive for us..." Within a year it seems that Calvin's attitude towards the area in which singing may be permitted underwent considerable change. However, his fundamental conception of the uses of music remained the same.(Ga p.512)

Calvin then proceeds through a discussion of the origins of music and the reasons for its existence. It is here that he speaks of music as "either the first, or one of the principal means of spiritual joy, and it is necessary for us to think that it is a gift of God deputed for that use." Garside states concerning this part that this statement is not the extravagant enthusiasm of a musician praising his beloved art, as Luther did so often, but the carefully reasoned and dispassionate statement of a man who was primarily a lawyer, theologian, and philosopher.(Ga p.573)

Calvin instructs one to respect music highly and take care that it not be used for dishonest things and profit. Moving on, then, to the attitude of those who are to sing, he sharply instructs that singing must come from the heart, and be done with intelligence. Here again he defines his reasons for the Psalms being the only approved texts and closes with emphasis given to the combining of the word and text and his previous instruction that the melody equal the text in weight and majesty.

The Preface proves that Calvin had a very definite theory of music and that he had some praises for it. His definite point, I feel, is the dual importance of text and melody. The words are purpose, the melody the vehicle, and in this respect either can enhance or impede the total effect.

The first complete edition of the Metrical Psalms, with 150 psalms, together with their tunes, appeared in 1562

in Geneva. This psalter was descendant of a succession of psalters which had stemmed from Calvin's original work in 1539. John Gerstner states that the story of the complete Genevan Psalter can be told in terms of four men. Calvin championed the principle of the congregational use of the psalms, which he called "singing the words God has put in our mouths." Clement Marot and Theodore Beza provided the poetical versification and Louis Bourgeois supplied the tuneful melodies for the texts.(Ge p.69)

As we have already examined Calvin's attitude of music in relation to the Psalters for worship, our attention turns now to the other three men who contributed to the complete edition of the Psalter of 1562.

Reference has been made earlier to Clement Marot whose psalm texts had been used by Calvin in the Strasbourg Psalter of 1539. It was not until 1543 when Marot was fleeing France to Switzerland that he came into direct contact with Calvin. The relationship of the two is very interesting, since Calvin was such a stern moralist blending all his energy to glorify God, and Marot, at best "a casual Evangelical," as Gerstner has called him, worked without deep attachment to the Reform and remained a light-hearted poet of genius.(Ge p.73) Marot versified twenty more psalms before the restrictions of Geneva became more than his light hearted, somewhat frivolous nature could bear.

When Marot left Geneva, he left many psalms unfinished

and no one to succeed him. But another "refugee Frenchman" Theodore Beza, came to Geneva. There was no comparison between the deep evangelical character of Beza and the cavalier nature of Marot; nor on the other hand between the poetic genius of Marot and the relatively modest gifts of Beza.(Ge p. 74) Reese reports that Beza's texts have been described as paraphrases, tending toward diffusion, and Marot's as translations of the greatest fidelity. (Re p. 359)

The general plan used by both poets in their translations, says Reese, is that of successive stanzas alike in structure. Great diversity of stanza form, however, is apparent throughout the Psalter. The average stanza contains six or eight lines, grouped in couplets, triolets, quatrains, or still longer metrical units.(Re p.359)

The fourth man, Louis Bourgeois, was largely responsible for the melodic settings of the Psalter. By composing, compiling, and editing, he gave final and accepted form to about eighty-five melodies of the Psalter. Bourgeois worked with Calvin as musical editor from about 1541 to 1557. It is not known whether Calvin had anything to do with Bourgeois' coming to Geneva, but he did recognize his presence and abilities.

Where Bourgeois got the melodies other than his own is a matter of speculation. Grove's Dictionary states that: "How far the other tunes adopted by Bourgeois are original it is impossible to say." (Vol I. p.847)

Reese writes that Orentin Douen has traced the origin of almost one half of the melodies of the complete Genevan Psalter.(Re p.360) Thirteen were taken from the Strasbourg Psalter of 1539; thirty-two have been identified as specific chansons and four others appear to be based on chansons that have not been tracked down.(Re p.360) Reese states further that the Genevan Psalter had many lesser counterparts, in two of which--the Flemish Psalter and the French Psalter of Antwerp--popular airs were used without modification; unlike these psalters, that of Geneva contains melodies that frequently borrow only the first phrase of a chanson, then proceed independently. (Re p.360) R.J. Martin writes that since the "line of demarcation between sacred and secular music did not exist in the sixteenth century" it is reasonable to assume that many of the tunes were of secular origin; and that just as the Lutheran choral has preserved for us secular tunes of the moment which have long since died out at their original source, so has the Psalter preserved for us a number of noble tunes which must have been popular in their day, but which now survive only as settings to the Psalms.(Ma p.103)

There was, however, one point of basic difference between Bourgeois and Calvin. Bourgeois favored part-singing. Calvin did not. His opposition not only ultimately dismayed Bourgeois so much that he left Geneva in 1557, but the use

of unaccompanied melodies characterized the Reformed singing of the Psalms, in most places, for centuries. (Ge p.74)

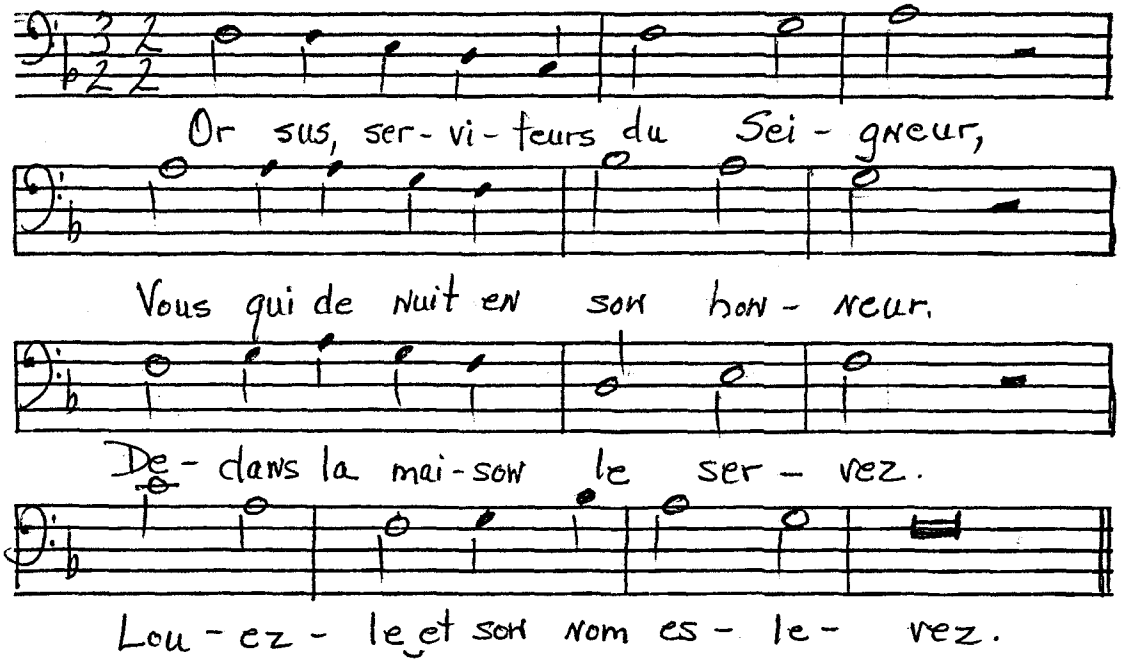
In writing of the lasting contribution of the Psalter, R. J. Martin says that the significant contribution seems to be not the metrical versions of the Psalms by the poets, but the wonderful and majestic tunes compiled and / or composed to versions of Psalms. (Ma p.101)

In spite of Calvin's opposition to harmonization, four-part settings were made by Bourgeois in 1547. His latest known publication (1561) included settings a 4, 5, and 6, described as suitable for instruments as well as voices, of eighty-three of the melodies he had arranged at Geneva. While none of his harmonic versions found permanent acceptance, his melodic settings influenced the harmonization of other composers, especially Goudimel.

The most famous of Goudimel's sacred works are found among his psalm settings. There are some sixty of these in motet style a 3 to a 6. (Re p.502) Pidoux writes that, excepting certain of the grand motets in which the complete text of the psalm is set to music, almost all the polyphonic compositions treat only the first stanza. This stanza is set in such a way that the other stanzas cannot be sung to the music.(Pi p.67) Destined to achieve greater popularity than his motet-like psalms were Goudimel's two collections of strophic settings for four voices of the entire Genevan Psalter, published in 1564 and 1565, by which time Goudimel must have changed faiths, since the ecclesiastical

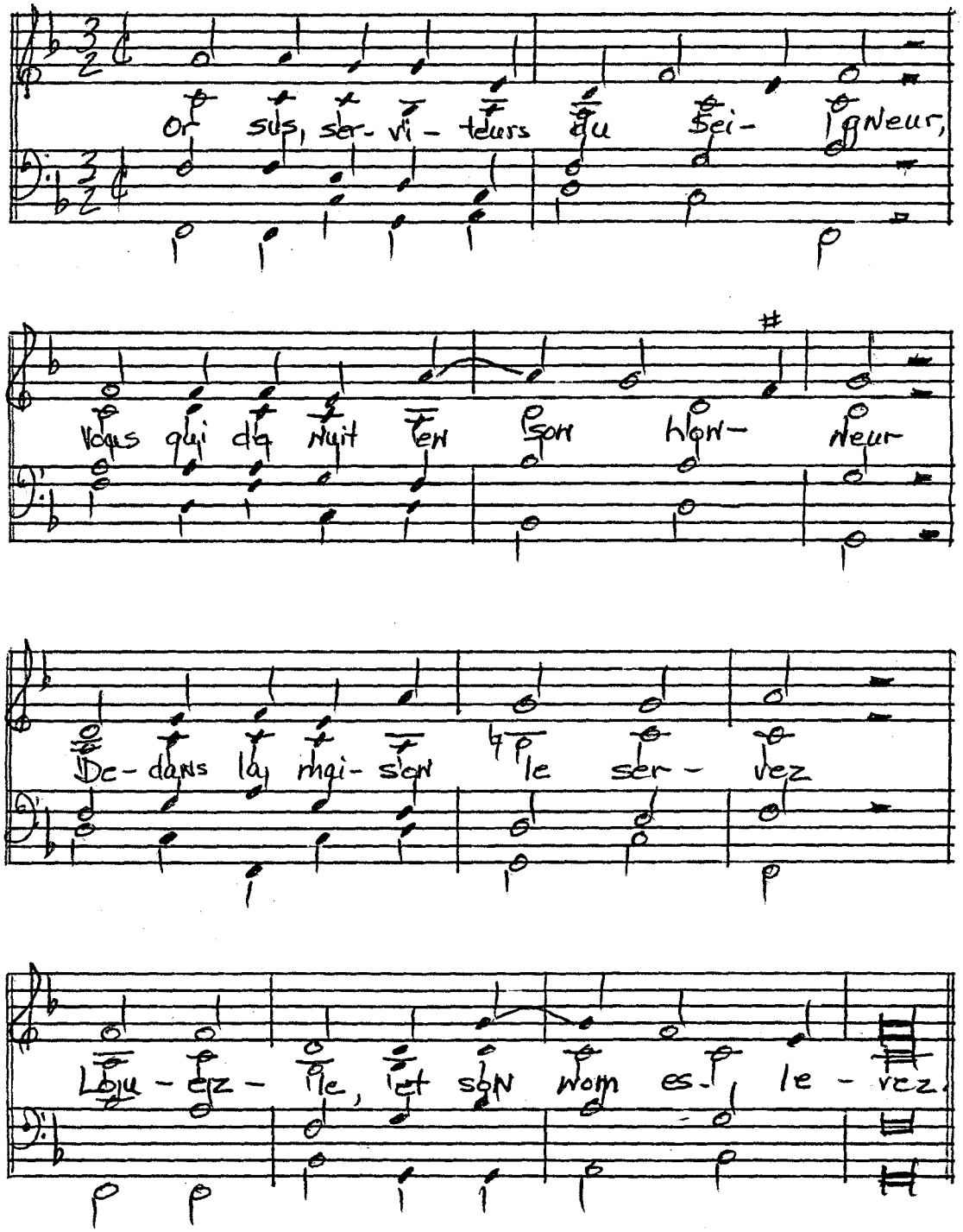
authorities had forbidden Catholics to sing the Genevan melodies. In the preface of Goudimel's 1565 edition, he stresses that it is intended for home use rather than for service, which is important in view of Calvin's insistence that music in church be restricted to monophony. (Re p.502) Goudimel's settings were significant in that they were a link between the Genevan Psalter and the churches who had accepted the Reformed cause, but did not have their own complete translated Psalters.

An interesting example of Goudimel's psalm settings is given below. This is a four-voice setting of the most famous of the Genevan melodies, that for Psalm 134(CXXXIII) (Or sus, serviteurs du Seigneur), familiar throughout the English-speaking world as "Old Hundredth." The example preceding Goudimel's is the monophonic version by Bourgeois.



(Re p.361)

Goudimel's setting:



(This setting, with the melody in the tenor, is from the 1565 collection. RE p. 503)

In 1565, too, the Lausanne Psalter was published. This was the most significant of the lesser contemporaries of the Genevan Psalter. At Lausanne, the early tunes used for Marot's texts were preserved, but the texts of Beza were sung to settings by Guillaume Franc, who had gone there from Geneva. Ultimately the Genevan Psalter was adopted by the church of Lausanne, as well as by the great majority of Reformed churches.(Re p.503)

Within the Huguenot camp during the siege of Paris in 1588 was another musician who helped in the setting of the Psalter in the French language. Claude Le Jeune, who was working on a manuscript of psalm settings, was caught in trying to escape the city, but was saved through a Catholic friend. In 1598, at La Rochelle, Le Jeune's chief work was published: Dodecachorde contenant douze Psaumes de David mis en musique selon les douze modes approuvez des meilleurs auterus anciens et modernes a 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 voix. (Gr Vol. V, p.123)

The Psalms are metrical versions of Marot and Beza set in elaborate motet style, each in several divisions with varying number of voices, and with the Genevan tune of each Psalm as cantus firmus in one or other of the voices.

The significance of this publication, other than the fact that the Genevan material is here again being set, is that it was published at La Rochelle, the headquarters of French Protestantism, and also it was dedicated to the Duc de Bouillon, a patron of the Huguenot cause. Just

how much the Huguenot cause was affected even this late by Calvin's Genevan period cannot be established. What can be established is the fact that within the established Huguenot cause, Calvin's philosophy of church music became established as a definite and continuing influence, and the actual music it engendered became an enduring body of established ecclesiastical melodies.

Another tremendous area of Calvinistic influence is discussed in the introduction to Percy Scholes' book The Puritans and Music:

"Through returning refugees and others the Calvinistic Church order spread from Geneva to many other countries. The state churches of some cantons of Switzerland, of Holland, and of some German states, and the Protestant (Huguenot) Church of France followed this model. The same teaching found much acceptance in England, especially as the Church of England kept in close touch with the Calvinistic Churches in the countries just named. Quite a number of the clergy and laity, without leaving the Anglican English Reformation would soon take a further step, substituting Presbyterial for Episcopal government and abolishing some ceremonies which, they thought, leaned dangerously in the direction of Rome. To this party the name 'Puritan or Precisian' was given and its members are represented later by the Presbyterians" (Sc p.xviii)

The group or party which Scholes refers to actually had a more direct connection with Calvinism in that during the period in which Mary was on the throne in England (1553-1558), Protestants fled England and Scotland for Switzerland and gravitated to Geneva. Because of this direct association with Calvinistic doctrine, there is a direct and strong line of influence and spread evident in the Church of England and the Puritan cause. As Scholes stated, the refugees

brought the ideas of Calvinism with them when they returned. So a tremendous changeover took place in English and Scottish musical worship.

John Stevens, writing of the Reformation in England focusses upon the basic ideas in the influence of Calvinism upon the English Church.

"Reformation in England was many things--an ecclesiastical schism, a piece of economic rationalism, and act of willful rebellion on Henry's part, the expression of widespread moral dissatisfaction. It was also -- part of an intellectual revolution, manifested in and intense concern with words as revealed in the Holy Scriptures."(St p.75)

This "concern with words" is a direct result of the Calvinistic doctrine upon the British Isles, both in music and Theology. As much of the ceremony and formality of the Anglican service was thrown out, so was the elaborate music as it was replaced with English Psalmody.

Within the established Puritan party there was even more marked change, writes Winfred Douglas:

> The antipathy of the Puritan party to everything formal, ceremonial, and artistic in worship was powerfully promoted, if not instigated, by John Calvin, the chief fountain-head of the Puritan doctrine and polity. The extraordinary personal ascendency of Calvin was shown not only in the adoption of his theological system by so large a section of the Protestant world, but also in the fact that his opinions concerning the ideal method of public worship was treated with almost equal reverence, and in many localities have held sway down to the present time." (Do p.358)

In Scotland the same story is true as John Knox, upon

returning home from exile, brought his rules for public worship. Described as the most conspicuous and masterly man among the exiles, it seems John Knox referred to Calvin's judgment in all matters of church policy. Knox had spent much time while in exile preparing a Psalter for use among the English-speaking Protestants, and when he and his fellow-exiles came home, they did so with songs of praise taken from the "pure fountain of the Scriptures" upon their lips. Soon after Knox returned to Scotland, the General Assembly faced the question of Psalm-singing, and sanction was given for the publication of "the whole Psalmes of David in English meter."

The appendices to this Psalter contain besides the Psalms, metrical versions of the canticles, the Commandments, the Athanasian Creed, the "Te Deum," and the Lord's Prayer; a few original English hymns, and an English version of the old Latin hymn "Veni Creator Spiritus." (Gi p.146)

Reese writes concerning the Scottish Psalter:

"Completed in 1564, the Scottish Psalter shared a common development with the English Psalter, during the Anglo-Genevan period. But instead of adopting the English modifications, John Knox, as principal editor of the complete edition, retained eighty-seven psalms of Geneva. Their metrical variety was apparently preferred for it was emulated in twenty-one new texts supplied by two Scots, Craig and Pont. The remaining forty-two psalms needed to complete the collection were chosen from the English Psalter of 1562. The settings in this early Scottish Psalter were all monophonic, a polyphonic version of the collection not being printed until 1635." (Re p. 801)

Gillman also writes concerning the quality of the

psalms which passed from Geneva to Scotland:

"The best psalm tunes which reached us from Geneva through Calvin's English and Scotch followers are, in their simplicity and rugged strength, equal to the best of the chorales. The first English congregation to hear them was that of St. Antholin's, London, in September, 1559, and soon thousands of people gathered together to sing them in St. Paul's churchyard, and in course of time one provincial town after another followed the example of the capital.

Among the tunes included in the Anglo-Genevan Psalter which the refugees brought home with them was "The Old Hundredth," which they had heard the Huguenots singing to Psalm cxxxiv. Problably no tune is so universally sung and loved in this country." (Gi p.289)

Through this paper we have attempted to state clearly the philosophy of Calvin concerning church music, and the rise and spread of a whole hymnody as a result of it. But the idea I wish to call back in closing, is one made by John Stevens as he spoke of interest being given to "the word". Certainly this was the essence of Calvin's philosophy in all his endeavors: that the reason for singing which he considered the words or text be gotten across without distraction.

That God be praised with dignity and sincerity, without the distraction of earthly hindrances, was the sole object of his doctrine, his ministry, the congregation that participated with him in his worship, and of his followers who today pattern their service of worship after his example.

In terms of musical contribution, Calvin's efforts resulted in the collecting of sacred tunes or melodies approved for this purpose. They have proved to be the

source to which composers have referred in their own polyphonic settings and around which they patterned their doctrine of sacred music. The influence of the Psalters is seen as one examines a respectable hymnal of worship today to find the number of melodies and texts in use to be of impressive number and respect of quality as far as both theological and musical standards still apply.

"The unique gift of man is to sing knowing that which he sings. After the intelligence must follow the heart and the affection, a thing which is unable to be excepted if we have the hymn imprinted in our memory, in order never to cease from singing." (quoted in Ga pp.570 and 571)

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