

***Renaissance 'classics' for SATB:  
rediscovered or invented in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century polyphonic revival?***

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From amongst the wealth of renaissance music for the Roman rite which began to appear in print from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup> – the result of work by scholars like Pietro Alfieri in the 1840s, Karl Proske and Franz Xaver Haberl in the 1850s and '60s, Franz Espagne in the 1870s and Felipe Pedrell in the early 1900s – a small number of motets achieved a particular currency and durability at ordinary parish church level and beyond, by virtue of their relative simplicity, brevity, memorability, and practical SATB scoring. These popular staples of Catholic choirs during the 20<sup>th</sup> century are now, thanks to modern publishing, part of the general sacred repertory – even regarded as ‘classics’ – through editors like Anthony Petti for Chester, and John Rutter and Clifford Bartlett for OUP’s 1996 *European Sacred Music* volume (*ESM*).

This corpus is bound together by two curious aspects: firstly, it is highly unlikely that any of these pieces is actually by the composer they were traditionally attributed to; secondly, all of them seemed to have appeared only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They include the *Jesu dulcis memoria* attributed to Victoria, *Alma Redemptoris mater* by ‘Palestrina’, *Crux fidelis* by ‘King John IV of Portugal’, ‘Arcadelt’s’ *Ave Maria*, *Christus factus est* by ‘Felice Anerio’, and ‘Victoria’s’ four-voice *Ave Maria*. Were they rediscoveries of authentic renaissance works, or were they pastiches (analogous to Fritz Kreisler’s ‘baroque’ inventions for violin, ascribed to Pugnani)? We now know of sources from the renaissance era for just one of them (the ‘Victoria’ *Ave Maria*), but as for the rest – whether invented, adapted or doubtfully attributed – they are still part of the history of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century polyphonic revival and of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Catholic liturgical practice. Each piece has its own specific history that often raises questions as to how (and to what extent) the modern editor (and modern performers) should respect the transmitted musical text, and, in some cases, raising aspects of liturgical context which seem to have escaped the 19<sup>th</sup>-century editors, and subsequent ones too. New editions of each of these pieces, resulting from fresh assessments of the sources and, where appropriate, of liturgical context, have been prepared to accompany this paper, and are available on the [‘Music Downloads’](#) page of the Church Music Society website.

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<sup>1</sup> For a clear and concise overview of renaissance music publishing in the 19<sup>th</sup> century see Leeman L. Perkins, ‘Published editions and anthologies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: Music of the Renaissance or Renaissance Music’ in *La Renaissance et sa musique au XIXe siècle*, ed. Philippe Vendrix, Tours, 2004, pp. 92-128.

### **‘Victoria’s’ *Jesu dulcis memoria***

The earliest significant printed enterprises in the polyphonic revival were from the 1840s, the most important being collections published by the Roman priest Pietro Alfieri (1801-1863). He produced a massive seven-volume collection, mainly of Palestrina – masses, motets, Holy Week music etc. At the same period, in 1840, he produced a small collection of just 13 motets – *Raccolta di motetti* – by Palestrina, Victoria and Felice Anerio. We can see the beginnings of modern ideals of scholarship here – original pitches, note-values, and clefs, plus no editorial suggestions for ‘interpretation’ – and the beginnings of the making of a popular pragmatic polyphonic repertoire, with the inclusion of pieces like Palestrina’s *Sicut cervus* and *Dies sanctificationis* and Victoria’s *O quam gloriosum*, *Vere languores* and *O vos omnes* – the earliest published revival of these motets since their composers’ day.

Alfieri’s texts for the genuine Palestrina and Victoria motets are pretty good, but there are examples by all three composers represented in the volume for which Alfieri’s sources are unknown. Where did he get them? (In one case, ‘Anerio’s’ *Christus factus est*, there are sources from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, but that is part of a story for later on.) While Alfieri’s publication of *Jesu dulcis memoria* was the first to be evidently influential,<sup>2</sup> the piece also appeared about the same time in the second volume (undated) of the annotated historical anthology, *Sammlung vorzügliche Gesangstücke*, produced by the critic and musical antiquarian, Johann Friedrich Rochlitz (1769-1842), and published by Schott.<sup>3</sup> Judging from early 19<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript sources, which appear to be the earliest extant, the piece was well-circulated in German areas, and particularly in Munich, prior to 1840.<sup>4</sup>

Rochlitz and Alfieri both present almost identical musical texts, including some shared inelegant details and one spectacular grammatical howler – idiosyncratic features also faithfully reproduced by later 19<sup>th</sup>-century copyists evidently working from the published material. Nonetheless, it is an exquisite little piece – beautifully shaped, with delicate harmonic colourings handled with great care both as regards the verbal text and the musical structure. But, except for the intertwined handling of

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<sup>2</sup> The *Raccolta* was copied *in extenso* by enthusiasts, one example being Berkeley Ms. 342 (University of California) dated 1846, copied by Leopold Ermetes in Naples.

<sup>3</sup> The preface of the first volume is dated 1835, but none of the three volumes has a publication date. The British Library lists the three volumes as ‘1835-1840?’. RISM speculates 1838 for volume 2.

<sup>4</sup> The manuscript US-NH LM 66 in the Lowell Mason Papers at Yale University, is potentially very interesting, both for its provenance and for its dating – 1701-1800 – if that is to be trusted. Mason (1792-1872) acquired it from the Darmstadt-based organist and pedagogue, Johann Christian Heinrich Rinck (1774-1846).

the two inner voices over the final tonic pedal in the last two bars, it is unlike any authenticated Victoria. The harmony and dissonance treatment, though carefully controlled, is in places too free for Victoria and his immediate disciples, but could point to a composer of the succeeding generation during the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Here is Alfieri's edition in his *Raccolta di motetti* (Rome, 1840):

*Soprano*  
Je su dul cis me mo ri a dans

*Alto*  
Je su dul cis me mo ri a

*Tenore*  
me mo ri a

*Basso*  
Je su dul cis me mo ri a dans

ve ra cor di ve ra cor di

dans ve ra cor di cor di

dans ve ra cor di gau

ve ra cor di gau di a ve

gau dia gau di a sed super mel et

gau di a gau di a sed su per mel et

di a cor di gaudi a sed su per mel et

ra cor di gau di a sed super mel et om

om ni a super mel et om ni

om ni a su per mel et om ni

om ni a su per mel et om ni

ni a et om ni

a e jus dul cis prae sen ti

a e jus dul cis prae sen ti

a e jus dul cis prae sen ti

a e jus dul cis prae

a dul cis prae sen ti a.

a dul cis

a dul cis prae senti a.

sen ti a.

This text is adopted more or less intact by most modern editors, including Felipe Pedrell in the last of his 8-volume *Victoria Omnia opera* (1902-1913), and by Rutter and Bartlett in *ESM*. However, it is clearly problematic, the worst aspect being b. 12 with its parallel fifths between alto and tenor at ‘sed super mel’ (highlighted above). Then there are examples of unlikely underlay, including the disjunct melisma in the soprano b. 10, which must surely be syllabic, tenor in bb. 15-16, and soprano and tenor in bb. 17-21. Finally, the 5-beat bass A in the last two bars is implausible – at least if by a composer of the Roman or Spanish early- to mid-17<sup>th</sup> century: Rochlitz has a better version of this.

Some 19<sup>th</sup>-century musicians realised that the parallel fifths in b. 12 could not stand. The *Chorübungen der Münchener Chorschule* – the choir school of the Royal Chapel of the King of

Bavaria, which first performed Rheinberger's wonderful *Cantus Missae* in E flat in 1879 – is a fascinating volume, probably published in the 1880s (no date given), containing technical exercises for both choral ensemble training and conducting technique, combined with a basic repertoire of mainly renaissance motets, mass movements, and madrigals. The intelligent compilers of this volume corrected the solecism of the consecutives by delaying the entry of the tenor by one beat:

The image shows a musical score for three voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor) and Bass. The lyrics are: (gau) - di - a: Sed su - per mel et o - - - mni - a, (gau) - di - a: Sed su - per mel et o - - - mni - a, su - (gau) - di - a: Sed su - per mel et o - - - mni - a, su - (gau) - di - a: Sed su - per mel et o - - - mni - a, su -

but they still missed the compositional device which would have led to the complete solution. The composer has set up two sets of paired motifs two beats apart, the second motif of each pair a beat after the first motif – bass/alto and then soprano/tenor: the tenor should therefore come in **two** beats later. Immediately, not only the musical structure comes into focus, but the text-setting for the tenor is elegantly improved too:

The image shows a musical score for three voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor) and Bass, showing a correction to the tenor's entry. The lyrics are: (gau) - di - a: Sed su - per mel et o - - - mni - a, (gau) - di - a: Sed su - per mel et o - - - mni - a, su - (gau) - di - a: Sed su - per mel et o - - - mni - a, su - (gau) - di - a: Sed su - per mel et o - - - mni - a, su -

This provides proof positive that the work, as published by Alfieri and Rochlitz, is not some sort of pastiche, but must be by a skilled earlier composer, but transmitted (for whatever reason) in a faulty reading.

The [new edition](#) presented with this paper takes a thorough look at the whole of Alfieri's and Rochlitz's musical text, not just at the parallel fifths, but also at the points of underlay mentioned above, intervening to an extent which might not be justified were the available source more obviously reliable.

### **‘Palestrina’s’ *Alma Redemptoris mater***

Another unauthenticated attribution is the four-voice Marian antiphon for Advent and Christmastide, *Alma Redemptoris mater* (with directions for distribution between two choirs), published by Alfieri in his multi-volume Palestrina collection of 1841-1846, from a manuscript in the Collegio Romano. Sadly, many of the manuscripts in the Collegio, including that of this piece, were mistakenly or wilfully lost, destroyed, or dispersed when the college moved premises in the 1870s, but two early 19<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript copies by Fortunato Santini (1777-1861), which he noted as copied from the Collegio Romano (D-MÜs SANT Hs 2947 and 2955), and now in the diocesan library in Münster, still exist, as does a copy dated 1800-10 (I-Rc, Mss 2852) once owned by Palestrina’s hagiographer, Giuseppe Baini (1775-1844). After Alfieri the work was also published in volume 7 of the Palestrina *Omnia opera* in 1876, edited by Franz Espagne. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was published by Chester, edited by H. B. Collins in the 1930s, and again in 1977 in Anthony Petti’s *Chester Book of Italian Four-Part Motets*.

This setting is a paraphrase of the solemn Gregorian melody, not the very different simple melody.<sup>5</sup> However, the six-note simple intonation (or sometimes even just the first four notes) is given in manuscripts (if given at all) and in all published editions. The distinction between the two intonations is frequently not observed in other renaissance Roman settings paraphrasing the solemn *Alma* melody, possibly for pragmatic reasons, but also perhaps reflecting the melodic simplification of the chant prevalent in late 16<sup>th</sup>-century Rome, and not all of it codified in the chant editions of Francesco Soriano, Felice Anerio, and older colleagues. Obviously, there is no reason why the beautiful melismatic solemn intonation should not be primarily associated with this setting in practical liturgical context, at least for major feasts, as provided in the [new edition](#) accompanying this paper. For lesser occasions the simple tone may of course be used, and that also is provided.

The relative simplicity of the setting should not distract from appreciation of the skill of the composer: the fluid contours of the chant melody are elegantly distilled to an outline suitable for largely syllabic harmonic treatment; the balance between homophony and enlivening imitation is finely judged; and the use of the melodic flattened seventh is reserved for a perfectly timed expressive final cadence. There is no other similar setting in Palestrina’s authenticated output which could help reduce the doubt surrounding attribution to him. However, the work does show some stylistic kinship with short Marian antiphon settings by Palestrina disciples, such as Felice Anerio and Soriano.

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<sup>5</sup> Petti, in his commentary end-notes, unfortunately maintains, incorrectly, that the simple melody is paraphrased.

### ‘King John IV of Portugal’s’ *Crux fidelis*

Another important area of activity in the popular rediscovery of renaissance sacred music in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was in France, where, almost certainly, a close eye was being kept on Alfieri’s publishing activities. A series of publications, in tandem with concerts, appeared under the title *Recueil des morceaux de musique ancienne executés aux concerts de la Société de musique vocale religieuse et Classique*. This society was founded in Paris in 1843 under the direction of Monsieur le Prince de la Moskowa, Joseph Napoléon Ney (1803-1857). Ney, the second *prince de la Moskowa*, was son of Napoleon's celebrated Marshal Ney (‘le brave des braves’) and apparently was a composer of some ability. He organised the society together with Adolphe Adam (of ‘O Holy Night’ fame) and published no less than 11 sizeable volumes of the music performed in the concerts between 1843 and 1845. They contain a very high proportion of authentic and significant works of the polyphonic period – somewhat influenced perhaps by Alfieri’s selection – but curiosities also, such as a ‘*Tantum ergo de Bach*’, as well as the second modern appearances of ‘Palestrina’s’ brief four-voice *O bone Jesu* (now usually ascribed to Ingegneri), ‘Arcadelt’s’ *Ave Maria* and ‘Victoria’s’ *Jesu dulcis memoria*, and the first appearance of *Crux fidelis* by ‘Dom Juan IV, Roi de Portugal 1615’ (which would have made the composer only 11 years old!).

The image shows a musical score for a four-voice setting of 'Crux fidelis'. The title is 'CRUX FIDELIS' by 'Par DOM JUAN IV, ROI DE PORTUGAL 1615'. The score is numbered 'N° 74' and marked 'sotto voce.' The four voices are Soprano, Alto, Tenore, and Basso. The lyrics are 'Crux fi - de - - - lis in - - ter om - nes ar - bor'. The score is written in C major and common time (C). The lyrics are: 'Crux fi - de - - - lis in - - ter om - nes ar - bor'.

The sparse evidence would seem to indicate that the Portuguese king, João IV (1604-1656), father of Catherine of Breganza, queen of Charles II of England, was in fact an able practitioner of the late renaissance polyphonic techniques which continued well into the Iberian 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> He had long-standing contact with the Portuguese masters, Manuel Cardoso and João Lourenço Rebelo and also with the Spanish royal *maestro di capilla*, Carlos Patiño. Two six-voice motets by the King

<sup>6</sup> See Michael Ryan, ‘King John IV of Portugal: king and musician: an anniversary assessment’, *Musical Times*, Summer, 2004, pp.58-62

were bound into later print-runs of Rebelo's *Psalmi* published in Rome in 1657, but sadly only two part-books survive, though one of these motets was used by Cardoso as the model for his four-voice parody *Missa Anima mea turbata est*, which does survive. This fragmentary compositional evidence and the King's views expressed in his 1649 treatise, *Defensa de la musica moderna*, effectively undermine any claim for the authenticity of John IV's best-known work, *Crux fidelis*.

On various stylistic grounds – harmonic most of all – *Crux fidelis* must be an invention of a later, maybe even a 19<sup>th</sup>-century composer, but one not only seemingly aware of earlier *durezza e ligature* traditions, but also (unlike the source and subsequent editions including *ESM*), perhaps aware of the text's proper liturgical function as a bi-fold antiphon alternating with the noble Gregorian hymn *Pange lingua gloriosi, praelium certaminis* sung during the processional Veneration of the Cross at the Good Friday Afternoon Liturgy. It may, or may not be coincidence, but if so, it is a felicitous one, that in tonality (especially in its leaning toward the flatward side), structure, and concise length – and unlike other settings such as Felice Anerio's – this setting of the antiphon works neatly in tandem with the chant verses, allowing liturgically correct *in alternatim* use. In addition to presenting the polyphony with the chant for liturgical use, the [new edition](#) here is faithful to all the coloured harmonic detail in the source, in particular, restoring the alto c<sup>1</sup> sharp in b. 14, invariably excised in modern editions, which helps to locate the harmony even more firmly in the stylistic *terra incognita* from which the work would seem to emanate.

### **'Arcadelt's' *Ave Maria***

Another famous 'invention' which Ney helped circulate was 'Arcadelt's' *Ave Maria*. This had already been published in 1842 by Pierre-Louis Dietsch (1808-1865), so Ney's reprinting in his *Receuil* within two or three years indicates clearly it was an immediate 'hit'. That only one voice of this arrangement owes anything to Arcadelt is well-known: Dietsch took the original cantus part of Arcadelt's three-voice chanson *Nous voyons que les hommes* – see Alessandro Simonetto's edition on [IMSLP here](#) – and turned it into a four-voice *Ave Maria*, adapting the melody and composing his own ATB parts to produce a pretty concoction indebted only melodically to Arcadelt. The typically Francophone approach to Latin accentuation in places, familiar from Josquin to Poulenc, is often ironed out in modern editions, so [Dietsch's original](#) is offered here and [down one tone](#). The image (below) is as it appears in Ney's *Receuil*.

One has to give credit to Dietsch for spotting the adaptability of the charming chanson original to the ‘Ave Maria’ text. But equally, it is possible – and entirely consonant with 16<sup>th</sup>-century compositional practice of course – to make a direct *Ave Maria* contrafactum of Arcadelt’s original chanson. It is a straight-forward task, which does not appear to have been done until now, and which yields a limpid and transparent setting of the familiar text. Rhythms need only occasional altering to accommodate the Latin words, together with one small alteration to the verbal text itself to preserve Arcadelt’s original notes: ‘sanctissima’ rather than ‘sancta’ – maybe the Virgin would forgive the superlative being applied to her. The pitches are unaltered, except for the addition of a minim c<sup>1</sup> in the tenor on the third beat of bb. 14 and 19, and of a simple editorial ‘Amen’. This new contrafactum is offered at Arcadelt’s [original pitch](#) and [down one tone](#).

AVE MARIA .  
PAR ARCADELT .  
*Maitre de Chapelle du Cardinal de Lorraine 1540.*

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Fig. 15 .

SOPRANO.  
A - ve Ma - ri - a gra - ti - a ple -

CONTRALTO.  
A - ve Ma - ri - a gra - ti - a ple -

TENORE.  
A - ve Ma - ri - a gra - ti - a ple -

BASSO.  
A - ve Ma - ri - a gra - ti - a ple -

na Do - mi - nus te - cum a - ve Ma - ri -  
na Do - mi - nus te - cum a - ve Ma - ri -  
na Do - mi - nus te - cum a - ve Ma - ri -  
na Do - mi - nus te - cum a - ve Ma - ri -

c. 15

### ‘Felice Anerio’s’ *Christus factus est*.

This famous piece also has a murky back-story – much murkier than that outlined in the commentary for *ESM*. Adding to confusion are two other (but much less distinctive) settings of the same text, one attributed to Felice, the other variously ascribed to Felice’s brother, Giovanni Francesco, and sometimes to Palestrina, as well as to Felice himself. Like the ‘Victoria’ *Jesu dulcis memoria*, ‘Felice Anerio’s’ *Christus factus est* was published both by Rochlitz in his *Sammlung* around 1840 and by Alfieri in his *Raccolta* of 1840. Unlike the ‘Victoria’ *Jesu dulcis*, Rochlitz’s ‘Anerio’ text looks less convincing than that of Alfieri, from whom, for a long time, all subsequent editions (including that in *ESM*) were derived. Only relatively recently have various earlier manuscripts come to light in Rome, which conclusively establish its true composer.

Two aspects arise relevant to this particular setting. Firstly, its clear sectional construction makes it ideal for liturgical use at Tenebrae of Holy Week, where the totality of the piece is gradually revealed over the three days – first, section 1 for Maundy Thursday (‘Christus factus est pro nobis,

obediens usque ad mortem’), then, sections 1 and 2 for Good Friday (adding ‘mortem autem crucis’), and finally, all three sections for Holy Saturday (concluding ‘Propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum, et dedit illi nomen, quod est super omne nomen’). ‘Anerio’s’ setting is much better suited for this purpose than the example by Pitoni that Karl Proske provided in *Musica Divina*, his comprehensive and immensely influential multi-volume polyphonic provision for the Latin liturgy, published in Regensburg between 1853 and 1863.

Secondly, it might seem strange that Proske did not include the ‘Anerio’ setting in *Musica Divina*. Maybe two reasons worried him: its provenance must have seemed dubious to an editor as scrupulous as Proske was; and a number of chromatic details seem to indicate a baroque working-over of a late renaissance original. Here is Alfieri’s edition in his 1840 *Raccolta di motetti*:

The image shows a musical score for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenore, and Basso. The music is in G minor (one flat) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: Chri stus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem usque ad mortem.

The score is divided into three systems. The first system shows the Soprano and Alto parts with the lyrics 'Chri stus' and the Basso part with 'Chri stus factus est pro'. The second system shows the Soprano and Alto parts with 'us que ad mor' and the Basso part with 'no bis o be di ens us que ad mor'. The third system shows the Soprano and Alto parts with 'tem: us que ad mor' and the Basso part with 'tem: us que ad mor tem:'. The lyrics are: Chri stus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem usque ad mortem.

mor - tem au - tem cru - cis.  
 mor - tem au - tem cru - cis.  
 mor - tem au - tem cru - cis.  
 mor - tem au - tem cru - cis.

et De - us e - xal -  
 et De - us e - xal - ta - vit  
 quod e - xal - ta - vit  
 Propter quod et De - us e - xal -

ta - vit et -  
 e - xal - ta - vit il - lum  
 e - xal - ta - vit il - lum et -  
 ta - vit il - lum et

quod est su - per  
 quod est  
 quod est su - per om -  
 de - dit il - li no - men, quod est su - per

om - ne no - men, quod est su - per om - ne no - men.  
 quod est su - per om - ne no - men.  
 ne no - men, quod est su - per om - ne no - men.  
 om - ne no - men, quod est su - per om - ne no - men.

Is Alfieri's text therefore a later creative variant of an earlier 'purer' original? Certainly the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century editors of the Munich Choir School *Chorübungen* thought so. They presented a thorough editorial makeover. For example, at the opening, all the f<sup>1</sup> sharps in the first bars are

removed, the suspensions in bb. 8-9 are lusciously extended, and there are similar interventions elsewhere:

The image displays a page of a musical score titled "Nº 39. Christus factus est." by F. Anerio. The score is arranged in three systems, each with four staves. The top staff of each system is for the vocal line, and the bottom three staves are for the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Christus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem, usque ad mortem, usque ad mortem." The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, time signatures, and dynamic markings like *p*, *pp*, and *mp*. The lyrics are written below the vocal staff, with some words split across lines.

I confess that before I had seen the Munich *Chorgesangbuch* version, I too had thought that Alfieri's text was a baroque corruption, producing my own well-intentioned 'renaissance' version for liturgical use at the London Oratory, and even recording it on CD (Herald HAVPCD 327).

But in this case, history seems to have laid a trap for stylistic puritans. The earliest sources include two manuscripts in the library of the Sistine Chapel, one unattributed (Capp. Sist. 484-7) and the other attributing it to 'Bal: Sar 1705' (Capp. Sist. 354), which later Roman 18<sup>th</sup>-century sources for the piece clarify as Baldassare Sartori (fl. 1689-1716). The two Sistine Chapel sources both add

and subtract chromaticisms compared to the reading given by Alfieri (reproduced exactly in *ESM*). So an edition that attempts to play fair by Sartori is clearly in order. However, one Girolamo Chiti, scribe of another Roman source (Accademia Lincei e Corsiniana, Musica P 25) copied 1747-1754, notes, perhaps somewhat whimsically, that though the piece is by Sartori, it was ‘baptised by Palestrina, but [is] rather like Felice Anerio, his student’:

‘... del Sig. Baldassar.ro Sartori [...] Battezzato del Palestrina ma di Felice Anerio suo scolaro anzi.’

So, is this not so much an exercise in *prima prattica* composition (common enough in the 18<sup>th</sup> century), but rather an attempt at specific pastiche? Does the stylistic ambiguity of the piece, added to the differences between the Sistine sources, present an unstable basis for an editor (or performer) to establish an ‘authentic’ musical text for the piece?

Given these complexities regarding source materials and reception history, maybe there is a case for the modern editor/performer/director to insert themselves into the evolving reception of the piece by producing an edition based on their own preferences – a practice which would be readily recognised by 18<sup>th</sup> century copyists, and which modern notational software conveniently assists. The three editions offered in conjunction with this paper enable this DIY possibility. The first is a new edition based on the Sistine Chapel manuscripts (Capp. Sist. 354 and 484-7), ostensibly the earliest sources, and the closest we can currently get to representing [Sartori’s original](#). The other two are Alfieri’s 1840 edition (above) and my own bowdlerised version (see Appendix below). I was intrigued to find, on eventually seeing the Munich version, that like its editors, I had not been able to resist extending, though to a lesser degree, the suspension sequence in bb. 8-9, and had taken b<sup>1</sup> flat (rather than c<sup>2</sup>) for the soprano last beat of b. 35 (an emendation also adopted by Rutter and Bartlett in *ESM*).

### **‘Victoria’s’ four-voice *Ave Maria***

Finally, we come full circle to another work which, like *Jesu dulcis memoria*, had laboured until early in this century under misattribution to Victoria, though with no stylistic justification. It first appeared in print in the last volume of Proske’s *Musica Divina* in 1863. Proske died before this final volume was published, and, significantly, the *Ave Maria* is the only piece in the whole volume for which Franz Haberl, Proske’s editorial successor, did not quote a source. The commentary in *ESM* wonders if the work was ‘a pious invention of Proske’s own’. However, we now know the motet appears in three manuscripts from the polyphonic era, all from German-speaking lands. The

two oldest, in Graz and Munich, both from the second half of the 16th century, give conflicting attributions, Graz crediting Jacob Handl (Gallus), and Munich crediting one Valentinus Judex (possibly a Latinisation of Valentin Richter). An authentic work of the polyphonic period it therefore certainly is, and attribution to Victoria is no longer sustainable. Haberl's edition - later faithfully adopted both by Felipe Pedrell in his complete Victoria edition and Rutter and Bartlett in *ESM* - is clearly based on neither of the two 16<sup>th</sup>-century sources, nor on a c.1670 Munich manuscript (D-Mbs 2 Mus.pr. 23#Beibd.1)<sup>7</sup> which is a fourth lower.



Cantus voice-part of Handl (attrib.) *Ave Maria* in Graz, University Library (A-Gu 0008)

[A new edition](#) from the handsome Graz manuscript, which may be the earliest of the two 16<sup>th</sup>-century sources, is a companion to this paper. Attractive variant readings compared to the familiar Haberl-Pedrell-Rutter-Bartlett version include: the opening intonation; b. 5, where the alto e<sup>1</sup> flat is carefully signed; b. 8, where the syncopation is much more subtly handled; b. 13, cadential tierce de picardie; bb. 17-19, where the more usual text 'fructus ventris tui, Jesus' is used without the

<sup>7</sup> The Polyphony Database (unlike RISM) has links to images of all three manuscripts mentioned here at: <https://www.polyphonydatabase.com/?title=ave+maria&composers>

addition of 'Christus'; b. 30, where the varied repeat of 'ora pro nobis' is carefully marked; and the very end, where the cantus is allowed to breathe with the other voices before the final 'Amen'.

Whatever variant source readings may be adopted by performers, the work shares so many of the qualities appealing to enthusiastic amateur parish choirs and their congregations, that it is not surprising that it became, and has endured, as a permanent part of the classic, popular polyphonic repertoire, together with the other works discussed here, for all that they may have rather more uncertain provenance and dubious stylistic credentials.

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The London Oratory SW7

16 March 2026

## APPENDIX

bawdlerised version  
of Alfieri's edition

# Christus factus est

*Christ was made obedient even unto death, death on the cross.  
Therefore God exalted him and gave him a name which above all names.*

Baldassare Sartori

(fl. 1689-1716)

formerly attributed Felice Anerio

(c1560-1614)

note-values halved in C, quartered in 3  
original pitch retained

Cantus (C1)  
Altus (C3)  
Tenor (C4)  
Bassus (F4)

Chri - - - (1) - stus fa - ctus est pro no - bis o - be - di -

7

ens us - que ad mor - tem, us - que ad mor -

13

- tem, mor - - tem au - tem cru - cis.

(1) # suppressed

(2) b. 8-9, S,

20

Pro-pter quod et De - us ex - al - ta - vit il - lum, et de - dit il - li no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men.

27

lum, et de - dit il - li no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men.

33

o - mne no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men, quod est su - per o - mne no - men.

This edition of this famous motet is based on its earliest influential publication in Pietro Alfieri's *Raccolta di motteti...*, Rome, 1840, as until recently were most editions. This 2006 edition attempted to exorcise various supposed stylistic incongruities in Alfieri's text on the presumption that the piece, though not by Felice Anerio, may have been of early 17th century *stile antico* provenance. However, it is now established that the work is in fact by Baldassare Sartori (fl. 1689-1716) and two early 18th century manuscripts (one dated 1705) provide readings that both add, and subtract, chromaticisms compared to Alfieri's edition. All deviations from Alfieri are noted.

(1)  $\text{A}^{\flat}$  (2) F (3)  $\text{C}^{\sharp}$  (4)  $\text{B}^{\flat}$  (5) C (6)  $\text{A}^{\flat}$