partbooks are scattered among libraries in

Colton focuses on the common and well-
documented wordplay between angel/angle
(surprisingly never applied in this context),
noting that the true meaning of the phrase
may rest on this common pun, essentially ‘the
contenance of Angles/angels’. This reading,
as well as supporting the more poetic readings
of this text, further enlarges the political and
nationalistic aspect of the concept.

In all, Colton’s book provides a masterful
account of the medieval history of English
music. Two areas in particular, Dunstable and
contenance Angloise, are especially important
to the ongoing study of English music. But
more than this, it offers an important critique of the
way in which we should write this history in
the future.

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Biagio Marini: Madrigali et Symfonie. By Aurelio
Bianco and Sara Dieci. pp. 217. Épitome
Musical. (Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout,

Biagio Marini is widely recognized as one of the
most important composers of the early
seventeenth century. Although his instrumental
works, many of which boast a highly virtuosic
and experimental approach, have received
more attention from scholars and performers
than his vocal works, he was a prolific
composer in a wide range of genres, both vocal
and instrumental. Marini’s surviving oeuvre
includes, among instrumental works, poly-
phonic canzonas, sonatas and canzonas in the
so-called stile moderno, and instrumental dance
pieces; and, among vocal works, strophic can-
zonettas, extended compositions in the stile reci-
tativo, and concerted madrigals of great beauty
and interest. With a career that brought him to
numerous courts, churches, and academies in
Italy and beyond, Marini’s long list of publica-
tions reflects a wide array of influences and
suggests that he was himself highly influential
during his own day.

It is unfortunate that a large portion of
Marini’s compositions are now lost. The new
edition of his Opus 2, the Madrigali e symfonie
(1618), edited by Aurelio Bianco and Sara
Dieci, is thus of great importance. Since the
basso continuo partbook is lost, and the other
partbooks are scattered among libraries in
London (canto I), Bologna (canto II), Kraków (basso), and Berkeley (basso), it has been difficult to assess the volume’s contents, and only a handful of pieces have been issued in modern edition. (Readers may wish to consult those pieces in the edition by Thomas D. Dunn, available freely from the Web Library of Seventeenth-Century Music; see Biagio Marini, *Madrigali e symfonie*, op. 2 (*Selections*), 2nd edn. (January 2005), www.sscm-wlscm.org/main-catalogue/browse-by-composer/34-wlscm-no-3 (accessed 18 June 2017).) Bianco and Dieci make the bold and, in my view, commendable move of reconstructing the basso continuo part so that the entire volume is now accessible to both scholars and performers. They acknowledge that their reconstruction is tentative, and it is clearly labelled at the start of each piece with the editors’ names; however, it is obviously based on an intimate knowledge of early seventeenth-century harmony and practice. For some pieces, the surviving basso line provides a clear model for the creation of a basso seguente part; in others, the editors have had to create a basso continuo part with only a soprano line to guide them (on this distinction see pp. 78–9). In addition to the musical edition, description of sources, poetic texts, and critical notes, the editors provide fully an eighty-one-page guide to the sensibilities of the predominantly Marinist texts that he chooses. Included are selected Marinist texts that he chooses. Included are *canzoni da suonare* (in different instrumental formats), *sinfonie*, and dances in various genres’ (p. 23). Absent are the sacred vocal pieces that one might expect from a composer employed as a *musico* at S. Marco in Venice; however, as Bianco and Dieci note, numerous other composers employed there, including Monteverdi, devoted a significant portion of their output to secular genres. Furthermore, Marini’s interest in secular genres may be connected to his desire to become embedded in the network of academies in Venice and the Veneto; the title page of the *Madrigali e symfonie* identifies him as a member of the Accademia degli Agitati with the title ‘Il Risonante’, and his *Opus 3 Arie, madrigali e corenti* indicates that he was, by 1620, *capo della musica* for the Accademia degli Erranti in Brescia. Even the contents of the *Affetti musicali* apparently emerged from academy-like gatherings, though they were not formalized, as the dedication to that volume indicates. The variety of genres and styles included in his *Madrigali e symfonie* to an official of the Holy Roman Empire suggests that he already had an eye on professional prospects north of the Alps; a few years later he would earn a position in the court of Duke Wolfgang Wilhelm of Neuberg.

The contents of the *Madrigali e symfonie* reward performance and sustained study. Marini’s earliest published essays in vocal genres are interesting and expressive, responding to the sensibilities of the predominantly Marinist texts that he chooses. Included are works for one, two, three, and five voices, some with and some without concerting instruments. Of particular significance is the first madrigal in the collection, ‘Le carte in ch’io primier scissi e mostrai’, a setting of a sonnet by Giambattista Marino. The composer indicates that the piece is written ‘in stile recitativo’;prompted by the madrigal’s overt references to the act of writing on paper to a beloved, past scholars have connected it with the genre of the *lettera amorosa*—a tradition continued (and explicitly designated as such) in Monteverdi’s seventh book of madrigals (Venice, 1619). While shorter and less ambitious than Monteverdi’s...
‘Se i languidi miei guardi’, Marini’s work is significant for its embrace of the aesthetic of immediacy implied by the stile recitativo, notwithstanding the formal structure of the sonnet as a genre. The expressive flourish at the end of this madrigal sets the stage for some demanding passegework in other vocal pieces in the collection, though a number of these are in a light style that is, in general, not overly demanding for the singer. Throughout the vocal pieces, Marini provides interesting responses to the selected texts through the alteration of imitative, homophonic, and monophonic textures. The final madrigal, ‘Chi quella bella bocca’, is among the first to include concerting instruments other than basso continuo; one precedent may be found in Giovanni Valentinii’s Secondo libro de madrigali (Venice, 1616), with Monteverdi’s better-known concerted madrigals appearing, again, in his seventh book of madrigals in 1619.

I would add that ‘Chi quella bella bocca’ is almost canzona-like in its homophonic, declamatory opening, its sectional organization, its alternation of textures including a section for solo tenor with two violins, and its introduction of triple metre in the penultimate section.

Bianco and Dieci provide thorough explanations of the vocal works in the Madrigali e symfonie; they trace the poetic texts in detail and speculate about the sources in which Marini might have encountered those texts. Their presentation of the instrumental pieces is equally thorough, with charts and discussions that situate these pieces within the new instrumental music of the age. Like the pieces in Marini’s Affetti musicali, the instrumental works in this collection are generally short, consisting of canzonas, dance movements, sinfonie, and pairs of works that the editors call ‘suites’. This last title is obviously not Marini’s; he designates three of these pieces as ‘Sinfonia e balletto’ and another ‘Balletto e corrente’. Whether the term ‘suite’ is best applied here is debatable. ‘Il Seccho’, the ‘balletto e corrente’ that closes the volume, seems to me connected to the Renaissance dance-pair, with its alternation of textures including a section for solo tenor with two violins, and its introduction of triple metre in the penultimate section.

‘La Philippi’, a ‘sinfonia e balletto’, is considerably longer, with a more sectional structure that introduces new material at various points and that includes a return of the opening music at the end. Nevertheless, though this is a relatively minor point, it would be my preference to use Marini’s terminology rather than that of other locales and eras, since it suggests connections to later repertory that seem unnecessary. ‘La Philippi’ is one of a number of instrumental works that contain beautifully expressive music similar to some pieces in the Affetti musicali, including ‘La Martinenga’ and ‘La Foscarina’. Of the Madrigali e symfonie, the canzona ‘La Rizza’ and the sinfonia ‘La Finetta’ are especially affecting and show great imagination in the variety of musical material that they present. Marini’s use of the term affetti as a performance instruction in ‘La Finetta’, as well as his (albeit brief) use of notated double-stops in ‘La Malipiera’, apparently the earliest instance of such notation (pp. 69–71), mark these pieces as significant in the history of instrumental publication.

Bianco and Dieci do not present their reconstruction of the basso continuo part as definitive; there are certainly places where I would choose different harmonies, and I imagine others would treat those spots differently still. The first madrigal is surely one of the most difficult puzzles, since the voice part provides few clues. Bianco and Dieci’s offering at the opening of this madrigal is quite static; the use of a 7/4/2 chord on the word ‘scrissi’ in the second bar might provide a bit more interest, as would a more active bass line in bar 10. It is not clear if the editors would call for a raised third at the cadences in bars 22 and 29 (neither is notated); the necessary raised third in bar 28, leading into the cadence in 29, is likewise missing, and the parallel octaves leading to the F-major harmony in bar 30 are a bit problematic. In the final bar, the plagal cadence could easily be replaced with V–I motion in the bass. (For an alternative reading, see Thomas D. Dunn’s edition, cited above.)

Other works in the collection do not present such open-ended questions, and the continuo parts in general are very plausible and elegant. Performers should try to become familiar with the formulae and conventional gestures of the early Seicento repertory; in this edition, cadences in particular are often left unfigured. Other practical problems with the edition include the small typeface of the texts in the vocal works and the small format of the music as a whole relative to other editions, though the creative performer will presumably find a way around these problems. In any case, Aurelio Bianco and Sara Dieci are to be commended for undertaking this project and sharing their own perspectives on this important repertory. This edition represents an important step forward in the attempt to gain as complete a picture as possible of the vocal and instrumen-
tual music of this pivotal moment in Western music history.

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Anyone wanting an insight into the vicissitudes of pursuing certain areas of musicology during the Communist period in Czechoslovakia need look no further than the introduction to Jiří Sehnal’s book on the Czech Baroque composer Adam Václav Michna z Otradovic. As Sehnal relates (pp. 5–6), his edition of Michna’s Missa Sancti Wenceslai came out in the Musica Antiqua Bohemica (MAB) series in 1968, the liberal ‘Dubček year’. But plans for continuing with Michna’s Česká mariánská muzika [Czech Marian music] were scuppered by the ‘normalization’ of the 1970s. Sehnal’s edition, commissioned by Supraphon and delivered in 1971 for publication, was first put on hold and then finally rejected by the publisher as an ‘undesirable title’. A plan for a Supraphon collected edition of the composer, also to be edited by Sehnal, was similarly delayed indefinitely until 1988, when ‘a miracle occurred’: a Soviet astronaut was said to have listened during the space flights to a Czech music station that pleased him enormously. On a visit to Prague he discovered that what he had heard was a group of Michna’s hymns, including the famous carol ‘Chtít, aby spal’ [Wishing to sleep]. This of course was shortly before the fall of the Communist regime, after which there was no stopping Michna getting into print in both popular and scholarly editions.

What the Communists had against Michna was that for all his larger-scale concertato works including six masses and a Requiem, he was generally known only as a composer of hymns, some of the most beautiful and memorable in the Czech repertory. And the sincere Catholic piety that is inscribed in their words (also by Michna, one of the greatest poets of the Czech Baroque), was not the sort of thing to be encouraged.

Following the discovery of Michna’s works in the Liechtenstein musical collection in Kroměříž in 1928 and their publication, mostly in the last thirty years, a fuller picture of the composer has emerged that places him as the most prolific, distinctive, and important composer of the Czech Baroque. It is good to record that Professor Sehnal has lived to see this change in perception, to which he has greatly contributed with editions and studies, and now, at the age of 83, has been able to bring together his vast knowledge of the period and the composer in a substantial monograph.

The publishers have done him proud. Sehnal’s accounts of the music—some three-quarters of the main text—are supported by many substantial music examples. The book concludes with a twenty-page section in colour, illustrating title pages of original prints, manuscripts, and related works, examples of Michna’s handwriting, and thirteen photographs of places associated with Michna in the southern Bohemian town of Jindřichův Hradec where he spent his life. Nineteen of the thirty-three illustrations are attributed to Sehnal himself, clearly almost as accomplished a photographer as a scholar. Chapters conclude with charming vignettes drawn from seventeenth-century Czech Baroque prints, and front and back boards have colour illustrations from the period. The final figure (fig. 34) provides a map showing places connected with Michna’s life and the whereabouts of his surviving Latin compositions. Such careful and lavish presentation of a book on music is today almost unknown in the West. Following recent trends in the publication of Czech musical literature, the book appears in English, in an idiomatic translation by Dr Judith Fiehler. This is not entirely without problems. This ‘first English [sic] revised and explained [sic] edition’ (as the preliminary pages have it) is a puzzling description for a book that has not appeared before in any language and that, worryingly, ‘did not pass the language editing review of the publishing house’. This sounds like failure, but may simply be stating that the firm lacked the necessary expertise in publishing and editing a book in English of this nature, a view supported by typos that a decent proofreading would surely have removed. Although some terms (such as Doppehlaken, Festa chori, and Laeta curia) are carefully defined in the 504 footnotes, a few more such as mutura and principia would have helped at least this reviewer.

An introductory chapter describes the state of music in the Czech lands during Michna’s era (a period of great religious turmoil in the Czech lands culminating in the Thirty Years War) by presenting the contents of local music inventories and summarizing contemporary reports of

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