

Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



Colin, Marie-Alexis, ed. French Renaissance Music and Beyond: Studies in Memory of Frank Dobbins

Paul A. Merckley

Volume 43, Number 1, Winter 2020

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1070194ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v43i1.34111>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (print)

2293-7374 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this review

Merckley, P. (2020). Review of [Colin, Marie-Alexis, ed. French Renaissance Music and Beyond: Studies in Memory of Frank Dobbins]. *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 43(1), 227–228.
<https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v43i1.34111>

Colin, Marie-Alexis, ed.

French Renaissance Music and Beyond: Studies in Memory of Frank Dobbins.

Turnhout: Brepols, 2018. Pp. 730, 227 b/w ill., 37 b/w table. ISBN 978-2-503-57960-3 (paperback) €100.

This Festschrift contains valuable contributions, most relating to music of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Iain Fenlon's article on "Jacques Moderne's Choirbooks and the Iberian trade" is well worth studying. He explains the issues that arose while identifying the volumes that Moderne printed, some of which were found in the inventory of the extensive collection of the son of Christopher Columbus, today the Biblioteca Colombina. Moderne sold a large number of volumes to clients in Spain and Portugal. Fenlon argues convincingly that Moderne printed polyphony before Attaignant's first volume, and he notes that the importance of Lyons—prominent in printing perhaps because of its geographical situation—has been underestimated for this period of music history. (The dedicatee of this volume maintained a special interest in the music history of Lyons.) As John Kmetz has found for Petrucci's prints, Fenlon suggests that Moderne's business formula was to sell less expensive, octavo prints at trade fares while waiting for the revenues to come back from the more distant, consignment sales of pricier volumes. The equivalent for Petrucci was to sell locally relevant liturgical prints, which sold quickly and nearby, while waiting for distant sales to come to fruition.

A related article by Jean Duchamp, on Moderne's print of a Passion from Lyons, outlines a group of monophonic, liturgical prints of local usage and supports the idea that Moderne employed the tactic of marketing printed music locally for quick sales. The discussions of the passions and of the mechanical techniques of printing the chant are also worthwhile.

Laurent Guillo and Alice Tacaille contribute a detailed, substantial study of Loys Bourgeois's activities in Lyons, including his writings on music theory and the pamphlet war that unfolded between him and Simon Grolier. Their discussion is very well documented and carefully set out. Olivier Grellety Bosviel describes the transmission of liturgical music in 1568 by printer Nicolas du Chemin in individual bifolios. Fabien Guilloux, following a hunch and a suggestion by Dobbins, explores the musical collection of the royal company of the Pénitents blancs de l'Assomption de Notre-Dame de Confaon, particularly the musical collection and activities of the branch of the confraternity in Lyons.

Martin Ham undertakes a detailed study of the series of nine polyphonic settings of O antiphons printed by Attaignant. He reviews the tradition of the set and makes good stylistic observations, as well as suggestions for historical context. Henri Vanhulst and Alicia Scarcez describe polyphonic music prints of Attaignant recovered recently, and therefore not included in the study of Daniel Heartz. Some of the books are held in the Convent of Fille-Dieu in Romont, a Cistercian institution that enjoyed a relaxation of Cistercian strictures for a time because it was not held directly under that obedience. Apparently, during this time, the sisters sang three- and four-part polyphony from Attaignant's volumes, including motets, chansons, and psalms.

Roger Jacob writes of double-choir composition in eight-voice chansons of the sixteenth century. The double-choir works and the dialogues between them are of historical interest because of the importance of that genre in Venetian music of the early baroque period. In the cases presented, the texts do not demand the musical dialogue settings that they receive. One work by Phinot seems to be a setting of a French translation of the Sappho / Catullus poem, "Da mi basia mille, deinde centum" (Give me one thousand kisses, then one hundred more).

Camilla Cavicchi analyzes the music in a stray folio she recovered from a Ferrarese monastery. The fragment contains music from Binchois's "Chi vullt mesdir" and Dufay's "Mille bonjours." Tess Knighton examines approaches to settings of Castilian devotional texts ca. 1500. The aesthetic context she draws is in some ways the opposite of Augustinian; indeed, this music was thought of as a way to bring the listeners to a devotional state. She discusses the music of Juan del Encina in this light, especially noting that the homophonic textures permit clarity of text (a consideration of the Council of Trent if not exactly Augustinian), important for the detailed juxtapositions of theological meaning that they needed to convey. Her discussion of mode in this repertory is an important contribution to the difficult subject of late-Renaissance polyphonic modality. Grantley McDonald's review of a debate on Calvinist church music held in Montbéliard in 1586 illuminates a corner of the Reformation not often given full consideration. Statements of the debaters were repeated as far away as England.

The value of the individual writings is enhanced by a volume that is amply furnished with illustrations and well produced.