A History of Western Music, 10th Edition, Grout, et al.

I. English Music
    A. Impact of English music on Continental composers, political and artistic roots
        1. Kings of England held territories in northern and southwestern France
            a. English nobility brought musicians with them
            b. English pieces copied into Continental manuscripts
            c. Low Countries and France: pathways for importing English music to the Continent
        2. *Contenance angloise*, "English quality"
            a. term from Martin Le Franc (ca. 1410–1461), French poet
            b. frequent use of harmonic 3rds and 6ths, often parallel motion; few dissonances
            c. simple melodies, regular phrasing, syllabic text-setting, homorhythmic textures
        3. Hundred Years' War: England and France fight for control of France
            a. 1453: defeat of the English, expulsion from France
    B. Polyphony on Latin texts
        1. sacred music on Latin texts, largest surviving repertory of 15th century English music
        2. chant in middle of 3-voice texture
            a. chants from Sarum rite, distinctive chant dialect used in England
            b. chants sometimes lightly embellished
            c. parallel P5s avoided, consonant vertical sonorities
        3. faburden
            a. improvised polyphony
            b. plainchant in middle voice, upper voice P4th above, lower voice mostly parallel 3rds below
            c. system used by monks and clerics unable to read polyphonic notation
        4. cantilena
            a. freely composed
            b. homorhythmic setting, not based on chant
            b. more varied than faburden (NAWM 33)
        5. motet
            a. isorhythmic motet gradually replaced other types by 1400
        6. Mass Ordinary
            a. most common types of English polyphony, end of 14th century
            b. styles from cantilenas to isorhythmic structures
    C. The Carol
        1. polyphonic carol, distinctively English genre
            a. derived from medieval *carole*, monophonic dance-song
        2. 2- or 3-part setting of English or Latin poem
        3. most on religious subject, Christmas season and Virgin Mary
        4. number of strophic stanzas, and a burden (refrain)
        5. many feature contrasts of texture
            a. style example: *Alleluia: A newë work* (NAWM 32), includes 2 burdens for 2 and 3 voices respectively
    D. John Dunstable (ca. 1390–1453)
        1. most highly regarded English composer of the 15th century
            a. composed in all polyphonic genres of the time
            b. greatly influenced contemporaries and successors
            c. birthplace and early training unknown
            d. served a number of royal and noble patrons
            e. spent much of his career in France
            f. works include all principal types of polyphony: isorhythmic motets, Mass Ordinary movements, settings of chant, free setting of liturgical texts and secular songs
        2. Three-voice sacred works
            a. most numerous and historically important works
            b. settings of antiphons, hymns, Mass sections, other liturgical or biblical texts
            c. some have cantus firmus in tenor: structural foundation for upper voices
            d. others use paraphrase technique: chant elaborated in top voice
        3. other works, not based on existing melody
            a. style example: *Quam pulchra es* (NAWM 33), cantilena
            b. 3 voices, similar in character, nearly equal importance
            c. form not predetermined, not structured by repeating rhythmic patterns
            d. naturalistic rhythmic declamation of text
            e. consonant vertical sonorities
    E. Redefining the motet
        1. motet: gradually broadened in meaning
        2. previous definition: works with texted upper voices above a cantus firmus
        3. by 1450 isorhythmic motet disappeared
        4. motet applied to settings of liturgical texts in newer musical styles, whether or not chant melody was used
        5. eventually came to designate almost any polyphonic composition on a Latin text, including settings of texts for Mass Proper and the Office
    F. The English Influence
        1. early 15th century, range of English styles
        2. functional religious music: used only in England
        3. Dunstable, faburden: known on the Continent

4. English sound essential element of international style mid- to late-15th century

II. Music in the Burgundian Lands

A. The Duchy of Burgundy
    1. duke of Burgundy: feudal vassal of the king of France
    2. late 15th century leading composers came from Burgundian courts
    3. Philip the Bold (r. 1363–1404), first duke of Burgundy
        a. established a chapel, 1384
        b. one of Europe's largest and most resplendent
    4. Philip the Good and Charles the Bold
        a. recruited musicians from northern France, Flanders, and the Low Countries
        b. band of minstrels: from France, Italy, Germany, Portugal
    5. 1477, duchy absorbed by the French king

B. Cosmopolitan style
    1. 15th-century courts: visits from foreign musicians
    2. chapel members continually changing
    3. increasing trade across the Continent
    4. prestige of the Burgundian court, influenced other musical centers

C. Genres and texture
    1. principal types of polyphonic composition
        a. secular chansons with French texts
        b. motets
        c. Magnificats
        d. settings of the Mass Ordinary
    2. most pieces, 3 voices
        a. texture resembles 14th-century French chanson or Italian ballata
        b. slightly larger vocal ranges, span 10th or 12th
        c. each line has distinct role
            i. main melody in cantus
            ii. contrapuntal support in tenor
            iii. harmonic filler in contratenor

D. Binchois and Burgundian chansons
    1. Gilles Binchois [Gilles de Bins] (ca. 1400–1460)
        a. one of three most important composers of his generation
        b. joined chapel of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy
        c. at center of musical life, Burgundian court
        d. performed at chapel services, court entertainments
        e. direct contact with English musicians
        f. central figure in creation of Burgundian style
        g. works widely recopied and emulated
        h. major works: 28 mass movements, 6 Magnificats, 29 motets, 51 rondeaux, 7 ballades
    2. 15th century chansons: any polyphonic setting of French secular poem
        a. Binchois: particularly esteemed for his chansons
        b. stylized love poems, courtly tradition of *fine amour*
        c. most followed form of rondeau (ABaAabAB)
    3. style example: *De plus en plus* (NAWM 34) (ca. 1425), rondeau, blend of French and English traits
        a. meter and rhythm
            i. 6/8 meter (3/4 or 6/8 typical of the era)
            ii. occasional cross-rhythms of 3 quarter notes (hemiola)
            iii. varies rhythm measure to measure, dotted figures, subtle syncopations
        b. music and text
            i. cantus declaims text clearly
            ii. mostly syllabic
            iii. longer melismas at important cadences
        c. melody and counterpoint
            i. cantus firmus and tenor: good 2-part counterpoint, mostly 6ths and 3rds
            ii. full consonant harmony; few dissonances, carefully introduced
        d. cadences
            i. decorated in cantus with a Landini cadence: major 6th expanding to octave
            ii. new version: lowest note rises a 4th, sounds like V-I cadence

III. Guillaume Du Fay (ca. 1397–1474)

A. Most famous composer of his time
    1. son of a priest, born near Brussels
    2. trained at the Cathedral of Cambrai, northeastern France
    3. traveled as chapel musician in Italy and Savoy
    4. papal chapel in Rome, 1428–33; 1435–37 in Florence and Bologna
    5. honorary appointment to chapel of Duke Philip the Good
    6. music represents international style of mid-15th century
    7. excelled in every genre: 6 masses, 35 other Mass movements, 4 Magnificats, 60 hymns, 24 motets, 34 plainchant melodies, 60 rondeaux and other secular songs

B. Chansons and the international style
    1. *Resvellies vous* (NAWM 35) (1423), early stage of style synthesis
        a. French characteristics
            i. ballade form (aabC)
            ii. long melismas
            iii. frequent syncopation
            iv. some free dissonance
        b. Italian elements
            i. smooth vocal melodies
            ii. melismas on last accented syllable of each line of text
            iii. meter changes, as in the Italian madrigal
    2. *Se la face ay pale* (NAWM 37a), ballade written 10 years later
        a. blend of 3 national traditions, strong English influence
        b. English: tenor and cantus equally tuneful
        c. Italian and English: cantus and tenor melodies are graceful, mostly stepwise, syllabic setting

d. rhythmic energy of French Ars Nova
           e. consonant harmony throughout: 3rds, 6ths, full triads
           f. freely composed, no longer in fixed form
   C. Motets and chant settings
       1. Dufay: sacred music in variety of styles
           a. 3-voice texture resembling chansons, main melody in cantus
           b. cantus: newly composed or embellished paraphrase of chant
       2. fauxbourdon
           a. inspired by English faburden
           b. only cantus and tenor written out; mostly parallel 6ths, phrases end on octave
           c. 3rd, unwritten voice sang P4th below the cantus; produced stream of 6-3 sonorities
           d. used for settings of simpler Office chants
           e. *Christe, redemptor omnium* (NAWM 36), hymn
       3. isorhythmic motets
           a. written for solemn public ceremonies
           b. *Nuper rosarum flores* dedication of Brunelleschi's dome, Florence, 1436
           c. two isorhythmic tenors, allusion to two vaults to support the dome

IV. The Polyphonic Mass
   A. English and Continental composers wrote polyphonic settings of Mass Ordinary
       1. until 1420, set as separate pieces, occasionally compiler grouped them together
       2. 15th century: standard practice to set Ordinary as coherent whole
       3. development led by English composers Dunstable and Leonel Power (d. 1445)
       4. paired movements
           a. at first only 2 sections linked together
               i. Gloria and Credo, or Sanctus and Agnus Dei
               ii. same arrangement of voices, same modal center, similar musical material
       5. polyphonic mass cycles (mass)
           a. practice broadened to include five movements: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei
           b. dispersed throughout Mass liturgy, chant between them
   B. Musical links in mass cycles
       1. variety of means to link separate pieces musically
       2. stylistic coherence
           a. five parts composed in same general style
       3. plainsong mass
           a. based each movement on an existing chant for that text
           b. not related musically
           c. many written to be sung during a Lady Mass
       4. motto mass
           a. each movement begins with same melodic motive (head motive)
           b. more noticeable connection
   C. Cantus-firmus mass, or tenor mass
       1. same tenor voice cantus firmus in each movement
           a. first written by English composers, adopted on the Continent
           b. principal type of mass by second half of 15th century
           c. tenor written in long notes in isorhythmic pattern
       2. cantus-firmus/imitation mass
           a. tenor of a polyphonic chanson used for cantus firmus
           b. typically borrowed elements from other voices of chanson
           c. mass names derived from borrowed melody
               i. chant melody: rhythm imposed on it
               ii. secular tune: after 1450s, song's original rhythm retained
           d. *L'homme armé* (The armed man), used by most major composers
       3. early cantus-firmus masses, 3 voices
           a. borrowed melody in tenor (lowest voice) following motet tradition
           b. compositional problems: 15th century, lowest voice functioned as harmonic foundation
       4. 4-voice texture
           a. innovation by anonymous English composer, *Missa Caput* (1440s)
           b. cantus firmus in high range, fourth voice added below the tenor
           c. achieved greater control of the harmony
       5. voice names
           a. superius ("highest") or discantus (discant), (soprano)
           b. contratenor altus ("high contratenor"), later altus (alto)
           c. tenor
           d. contratenor bassus ("low contratenor"), later bassus (bass)
       6. Du Fay's *Missa Se la face ay pale* (1450s)
           a. first complete mass to use secular tune for cantus firmus
           b. tenor from his own ballade *Se la face ay pale*
           c. symbolic meaning to choice of song
           d. launched century-long tradition of secular cantus firmus
           e. rhythmic pattern of tenor melody subject to augmentation
           f. movements linked through shared head motive
           g. each voice has a distinctive function and character
       7. Why the cantus-firmus mass?
           a. settings of Mass Ordinary commissioned for specific occasions
           b. cantus firmus could refer to saint, institution, family, individual, or event
       8. cantus firmus mass met multiple needs
           a. service music
           b. conveyor of meaning, musical allusions to source tune and text
           c. work connoisseurs could appreciate

V. An Enduring Musical Language
   A. Polyphonic mass most prestigious genre of 15th century
       1. mass endures to the present day
       2. gradually changed primary role to concert music
   B. Elements of composition remained important through 19th century

1. French: structure, rhythmic interest
2. Italian: emphasis on lyrical melodies
3. English: smooth counterpoint, pervasive consonance

C. 15th century works unperformed and untranscribed for centuries
   1. late-19th-century editions
   2. performances in 20th century

Last modified: Friday, 5 April 2019, 3:57 PM