

CORPVS SCRIPTORVM DE MVSICA

14

WALTERI ODINGTON

SVMMA
DE SPECVLATIONE MVSICAE

Edidit

FREDERICK F. HAMMOND



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY

1970

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WALTER ODINGTON

DE SPECULATIONE MUSICAE

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INTRODUCTION

§ 1. THE MANUSCRIPTS

The *Summa de speculatione musicae* of Walter Odington is transmitted complete in one manuscript, a fifteenth-century copy from an original now lost. Portions of the treatise were included in a fourteenth-century compilation which has been severely damaged by fire. These now survive only in an eighteenth-century copy. Another except from the treatise was preserved by inclusion in a manuscript of the late fourteenth-early fifteenth centuries.

C Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS. 410, 15th cent.; membr. ff. 36; cod. papyr. ff. 16, 224 x 150 mm. See M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge*, Cambridge, 1912, II, pp. 295-296.

fol. 1r-36r *Summa fratris Walteri monachi Eveshamie musici de speculatione musicae. Inc.* "Incipit summus (corr. summa) fratris Walteri monachi Eveshamie musici de speculatione musicae. Plura quam digna de musica speculatione et musicae speculatoribus..." *Explic.* "...et non ampliam d[and]o fastidium novam diversitatem superaddicere. Explicit" (CS I 182-250).

fol. 36r *Partitio monochordi. Inc.* "Quia dictum est quod licet monocordum intendere..." *Explic.* "...et insuper eius .iiij. partes ut monstrat hec forma. Explicit" (*figura*) (CS I 250).

fol. 1r-13v *Compilatio secundum Iohannem de Muris. Inc.* "Quilibet in arte practica mensurabilis cantus erudiri mediocriter affectans ea scribat diligenter que sequuntur compilata secundum Iohannem de muris..." *Explic.* "...vel sic ♯ ♦ ◊ ◻ cum tali figura. h vel tali // " (*cf.* CS III 46 *et seq.*)
"In omnibus coloribus albus est dignissimus quia est origo omnium colorum et dicitur quasi sol lux vel dies aurum quasi luna rubius quasi stelle."

fol. 13v-15v *Anonimi tractatus. Inc.* "Here begynnes a schorte tretys of the reule of discant." *Explic.* "...as for to syng iij or iiij" (Manfred Bukofzer, *Geschichte des engl. Diskants und des Fauxbourdons*, Strassburg, 1936, pp. 143-146).

§ 2. THE HISTORY AND CONNECTION OF THE MANUSCRIPTS

This list of the manuscripts of the *Summa de speculatione musicae* suggests the principal problem in editing the work. Unlike the great classics of mediaeval musical theory, Odington's treatise has survived complete in only one manuscript. When lacunae and doubtful readings occur in this, therefore, they cannot usually be resolved simply by the comparison of variant versions. Both the principal text and the occasional variants thus assume an importance which justifies a closer examination.

In its present state, M^S C (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 410) comprises two items originally unrelated: the *Summa* and a monochord partition (fol. 1r-36r) on vellum and two short treatises copied on paper (fol. 1r-15v). The collation of the two manuscripts runs 1^s 2¹⁰ 3^s 4^s 5 (two) // a¹⁶ (16 wanting). The volume is stained along the lower margin, but fortunately the text is still legible.

Odington's treatise is copied in at least two fifteenth-century hands. The change of scribes occurs at fol. 19r, between Parts III and IV of the *Summa*. While both hands are clear and legible, the second is smaller, more elegant in letter-formation, and tends toward more extensive abbreviation. Both hands deteriorate slightly toward the ends of their respective sections of the manuscript. In addition to the principal hands there appears from time to time a cursive hand, perhaps that of the second scribe (identified as *am* - *alia manu* in the critical apparatus.) On fol. 1r there is an attempt to fill in the lacunae reproduced from the defective original, and additions have been made in a similar hand on folios 20v and 35v. *Custodes* appear on folios, 8v, 26v, and 34v. In each case they are placed at the end of a gathering to indicate the first word of the following gathering. The changed form of the F-clef on folios 27r-28r suggests the presence of a second musical scribe. Rubrication appears at chapter headings, explicits, and in some of the diagrams. In general, the scribes write 24 or 34 lines to a page. Throughout the manuscript a space two lines high has been left at the heads of sections for ornamental capital letters. These are indicated by small cursive letters but were never filled in. The treatises on paper, which do not concern us here, are described by M. R. James as being in a later fifteenth-century hand.

§ 3. ODINGTON'S LIFE AND WORKS

Walter Odington, the author of the *Summa de speculatione musicae*, has always been a shadowy figure. The theorist's surname suggests the village of Ottington in northern Oxfordshire as his birthplace.¹ From his customary signature, "Brother Walter, monk of Evesham", we know his religious calling and his residence at the Benedictine abbey of Evesham, some fifteen miles SE. by E. of the cathedral city of Worcester. The occurrence of Odington's name in the records of a Benedictine chapter-general in 1298 proves his membership in the order by that date,² and a calendar for Evesham beginning with 1301, if in fact the work of Odington, suggests his presence there at the beginning of the fourteenth century.³ Finally, a fifteenth-century copy of one of his treatises declares that Master Walter Evesham "made his deliberations at Oxford around 1316 A.D."⁴

The variety of his literary production indicates the wide range of Odington's intellect. Each subject of the quadrivium is represented by a complete treatise: arithmetic by the *Ars metrica* (Cambridge, University Library Ii. i. 13, fol. 51v-55v); geometry by a translation of the fifth book of Euclid's *Elements* "through numbers in place of quantities" (*ibid.*, fol. 55v-56v); music by the *Summa*; and astronomy by an almanac and a treatise on the motion of the eighth sphere (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud MSS Miscell. 674, fol. 75r-77r).

Outside the framework of the quadrivium Odington left two surviving works: a treatise on the multiplication of species in sight (C.U.L. Ii. i. 13, fol. 44v-51r), a subject treated by Grosseteste and his pupil Roger Bacon, and an alchemical treatise, the *Yccedron*. The popularity of the latter treatise,

1. Margaret Gelling, *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire* (English Place-Name Society XXIII-XXIV), Cambridge, 1953 (2 vols.), I, pp. 233-234. Although the manuscript treatises use both "Odynton" (e.g., Oxford, Oriel College MS 23) and "Otyngton" (Oxford, Bodleian Library Digby 119) for the writer, the earliest use of the "Od-" spelling for the town seems to date from the Lincoln Subsidy of 1526. Henry Davey (*History of English Music*, 2nd ed., London, n.d., p. 30) suggests Oddington in Gloucester, while in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (DBN) XX, p. 702 he too suggests Oxfordshire.

2. Cf. *infra*, p. 26.

3. Cf. § 5, no. 7.

4. Cf. § 5, no. 3.

§ 4. ODINGTON'S REPUTATION

The presence of Odington's treatises in several libraries and a tradition of manuscript copies extending over a century and a half indicate that Odington's work had a continuing interest during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. By the sixteenth century, however, Walter had become an antiquarian curiosity. This petrification is signalled by his appearance in the 1559 edition of Bishop Bale's catalogue of illustrious British writers, "from Japhet for 3,618 years, up to this year A.D. 1557".

Bale and Leland,¹ on whose research Bale drew, are responsible for a radical error which has distorted most considerations of Odington and his work. They separate the author of the scientific tracts from the author of the musical treatise, citing the former as "Odendunus" and the latter as "Gualter(i)us Eoveshamensis". Of Odendunus we learn that he was a monk of Evesham and an illustrious philosopher and mathematician, the author of an almanac based on Profatius Judaeus and a treatise *De motibus planetarum*, to which Leland adds the *De mutatione aeris* on the authority of Dr. Bertoletti. He is said to have flourished c. 1280.²

1. On Bale and Leland see the articles in DNB.

2. John Leland, *COMMENTARII/DE/SCRIPTORIBUS/BRITANNICIS*, ed. Antonius Hall, Oxford, 1709 (2 vols.), II, p. 314. John Bale, *SCRIPTORVM IL-/lustrum maioris Brytannie, quam nunc Angliam & Scotiam uocant Catalogus: à Iapheto per 3618 annos, usque ad annum hunc Domini 1557*. etc., Basileae, apud Ioannum Oporinum, 1559, centuria decima, p. 43: "Odingtonus (ut ego accepi) monachus Eueshamensis fuit, idemque philosophus ac mathematicus in primis illustris. Ac ne quis de meorum fide verborum dubitet, malo ut aequus lector ab eius libris, quam à nostra pronunciet oratione. Scripsit autem librum de motibus planetarum, qui & Theoricam refert, ac Almanac reuersionis eorum: quo in opere, Profacium Iudaeum Anglicum secutus est. Bartheletus medicus mihi dixit, se aliquando legisse Odingtoni elegantem de Mutatione aeris libellum. Haec Lelandus. Claruisse fertur Odingtonus anno Christi 1280, sub eodem Edvardo (I)." John Pits (Pitaeus), *RELATIONVM HISTORICARVM/ de Rebus Anglicis/ TOMVS PRIMVS*... (no more printed), Paris, 1619: "Odingtonvs natione Anglus, ordinis S. Benedicti Monachus Eueshamensis, vt ex Lelando colligo, Philosophus & Mathematicus suo tempore valdè insignis. In quibus scientiis aliquando Magistrum habuit Profacium quendam & ipsum natione Anglum, genere Iudaeum. Inter alia scripsisse perhibetur

De motibus planetarum, *Librum vnum.*

De mutatione aeris, *Librum vnum.*

Claruit anno post aduentum Messiae 1280, cum Anglicani regni clauum teneret Edvvardus primus." (p. 362).

§ 6. THE *SUMMA DE SPECULATIONE MUSICAE*

A complete and comprehensive account of the *Summa* is beyond the scope of an introduction to the edition. The footnotes to the text show sources quoted directly or clearly paraphrased by Odington. In some cases, however, the relations of multiple sources to the *Summa* are so complex as to require a discursive account, the function of this chapter. The literature on passages which have been extensively studied, particularly those concerning the third as a consonance (II, 10) and the value of the *longa* (VI, 1), is summarised in the footnotes to the relevant passages.

A. The Title and Arrangement of the *Summa*

Odington's choice of *Summa* as the title of his work places it in the tradition of the great mediaeval *summae*. Throughout its career, from its modest beginnings as "a short compendium of individual things" to the crowning achievements of St. Thomas Aquinas, the *summa* exhibited two characteristics: the collection of authoritative statements and a more or less independent attitude in dealing with them.¹ In its fully developed form this 'singulorum brevis comprehensio' was governed by three principles. As summarized by Erwin Panofsky they are: totality, the principle of sufficient enumeration; organization into a system of homologous parts, or the principle of sufficient articulation; and distinctive or deductive cogency, or the principle of sufficient interrelation.²

The ordering of the *Summa de speculatione musicae* clearly embodies these principles. The six *partes* combine the principal types of musical treatises known in the Middle Ages into one encyclopedic work. Parts I and II, arithmetic and music as the study of harmonic proportions, belong to the tradition of the quadrivium. Part III, describing the construction of organs, bells and monochords, typifies the ubiquitous treatises on monochords and related instruments which go back to the ninth century (the monochord division of Odo) and, indeed, to the *De musica* of Boethius and classical antiquity. Similarly Part IV, the chapter on rhythm and metrics,

1. Alois Dempf, *Die Hauptform mittelalterlicher Weltanschauung: eine geisteswissenschaftliche Studie über die Summa*, München and Berlin, 1929, pp. 135-136.

2. Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Art and Scholasticism*, Latrobe, Pa., 1951, pp. 31-34.

<I. DE INAEQUALITATE NUMERORUM ET EORUM
HABITUDINE>

1 Prima pars habet capitula decem: De utilitate arithmeticae et eius musicae introductione; [f. 1v] De axiomatibus; De inaequalitatibus specie quae multiplex dicitur; De superpartulari; De superpartiente; De multiplici superpartulari; De multiplici superpartiente; De proportionem numerorum qui ab aliis metiuntur; De triplici media proportionalitate, quae inaequalitates quas creant; <Quae species superpartularis, scilicet sesquialtera et sesquitercia, primam terminat speciem multiplicando, scilicet duplam vim habens>.

2 <1.> De utilitate arithmeticae et eius musicae introductione.
3 Rubrica.

4 Quoniam de musica praesens est pertractatio, et ipsa quidem est de numero relato ad sonum,¹ prius de arithmetica arbitror exponendum, quae est de numero per se, sine qua quicquid inclitum nequit pertractari. 5 Arithmetica autem nominis interpretatione est scientia de numero.² 6 Est autem numerus principale in animo conditoris exemplare, ut ait Nichomachus. 7 Cum ergo exemplatum respondeat exemplari, manifestum est quod omnes creaturae factae secundum numeralem proportionem. 8 Et patet quoniam quattuor elementa, septem orbes planetarum proportionatis intrinsecus certis distinctis numeris conditor ipse consolidavit.³ 9 Aiunt enim astrologi primam celestem ex diapente diatessaroneque constare, qui unum faciunt diapason, hoc est in numeris ex sesquialtera et sesquitercia, quae duplam faciunt habitudinem ut patet posterius. 10 Huiusmodi certa sunt interstitia.⁴ 11 Ait etiam Plato animam mundi musica continentia esse coniunctam et sic numero metiendam.⁵ 12 Non dico sicut dicunt aliqui super his, quod motus superiorum corporum aliquam faciunt harmoniam vel sonum nec etiam innatum nobis et propterea non auditum.⁶ 13 Sed sunt corpora illa secundum harmonicam proportionem coniuncta et se habent proportionaliter sicut eorum diametri. 14 Non

1 ars metrica etc pro arithmetica passim

8 intrinsecus pro intrinsecus distinctos pro distinctis 12 audiri pro auditum

¹ CI II, iii, 21.

² IE III, i; VB XVIII, attr. to Alfarabi.

³ BA I, 2.

⁴ Cf. BM II, 27, CI II, v, 2.

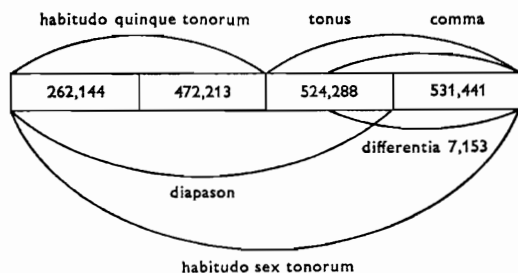
⁵ BM I, 1 (convenientia pro continentia).

⁶ Aristotle, *De caelo*, B 9, 290 b 12. Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentaria in libros Aristotelis, de caelo et mundo*, II, c. 10, lect. XIV (HM 7, pp. 26-34).

6 Per hoc ergo manifestum est diapente ex tribus tonis et semitonio minore constare, diatessaron vero ex duobus tonis et minori semitonio, et prius diapente et diatessaron unum diapason coniungere ostensum est. 7 Ergo diapason ex quinque tonis et duobus semitoniis minoribus constabit deficientque a sex tonis. 8 Et intervallum quod est inter sex tonos et diapason comma vocabitur.¹

1 <8.> In quibus numeris constat comma et quid sit eius proportio.

2 In proximis numeris praecedentibus non potest denominari comma quia 1,536 sex tonos non praecedit. 3 Sed accipiamus priores qui in minoribus numeris sunt quasi isti. 4 Secundum illam doctrinam multiplicentur, et duplicetur radix eorum, et comma mox monstrabitur, ut monstrat subiecta formula.



5 Est igitur comma illud spatium quod est inter 524,288 et inter 531,441, et differentia eorum est numerus 7,153. 6 Proportio vero numerorum comma continentium maior est quam *sesqui* 74, minor vero quam *sesqui* 73, quia 7,153 numerus maior quam 74 pars numeri 524,288 et minor quam eiusdem numeri 73 pars, quia si 7,153 septuagesies quater ducatur, fiet 529,322, qui maior est quam 524,288. 7 Si autem septuagesies ter augeatur 7,153, fiet 522,169, qui minor est quam praedictus numerus. 8 Maior est proportio numerorum comma continentium quam *sesqui* 74, minor quam *sesqui* 73, ut patet in minoribus numeris 24 et 31. 9 Maior est proportio 30 ad 34 quam *sesquiquarta* et minor *sesquitertia*. 10 Ista patent prius. 11 Vero commatis apertius sic potest denominari. 12 Si

figura: cccclxxij cccxij pro 472,213

5 dxxij. cclxxxvij pro 524,288. 7 auge = augeatur *cod*

¹ BM II, 31.