

Philippe de Vitry (1291–1361) is frequently hailed as a renowned poet, music theorist, composer, diplomat and bishop. Along with Guillaume de Machaut (c.1300–1377), he is emblematic of the French 14th century—a pivotal era in the history of Western music and poetry, and one in which he flourished as an influential public intellectual and early humanist. But while Machaut has been the subject of ongoing work within and beyond musicology, Vitry's fortunes have been more volatile. Although he has remained central in textbook accounts and other grand narratives, Vitry's activities as a composer have only rarely been the focus of scholarly work in recent decades. As for his theoretical writings, these have receded from the spotlight as a result of an argument that they did not, in fact, exist. Sarah Fuller's provocative 1985 suggestion that Vitry's *Ars nova* was 'a phantom treatise'—a historiographical artefact born of a teaching tradition—resulted in a waning of interest in Vitriacian theory by essentially dissolving the category.

But things are changing, as they are wont to do. The collection of essays which opens the present issue of *Early Music* began life as papers presented at a symposium on Vitry held at Yale University on 6–7 November 2015, and represents a resurgence of interest in Vitry, though with a difference. This work is less interested than earlier accounts in situating Vitry as a magisterial composer and revolutionary theorist, instead examining his role in the broader landscape of late medieval musical activity. Through the common threads of approach in each of these essays, Vitry emerges as a node in a network of places, people, sources and theoretical constructs.

The first two essays take newly emerged musical sources as points of departure. Anna Zayaruznaya shows how a fragmentary source can dramatically redefine our understanding of two late motets by Vitry, and consequently our perception of his late style. Karl Kügle presents a new source for one of the best-known early 14th-century motets, possibly also by Vitry, and for a second relatively unknown motet. Kügle situates these fragments within the intellectual and cultural life of the Rhineland, specifically Cologne, demonstrating a network of links to Paris, and a cultivation of an *Ars Nova* repertoire in the Rhine–Meuse region.

Theoretical sources grappling with notational change also provide new perspectives. Karen Desmond examines the theorist Jacobus's objection to single semibreves.

In looking for this notational usage to determine what Jacobus was reacting to, Desmond finds evidence of notational updating that position scribes as agents of theoretical change. Finally, David Catalunya looks anew at a music treatise that he proposes was copied at Barcelona Cathedral in the 1340s. Despite its Spanish provenance, the treatise serves as an early witness to some of the central theoretical innovations of the so-called 'French' *Ars Nova*.

As a group these four essays attest to the continued importance of primary sources for the study of medieval music. Although most of the treatises and motets discussed here have long-since been edited, their editions occlude the revealingly messy variants and graphical modifications to notation that the sources preserve. The sources themselves are messy and apparently inconsequential: small and fragmentary, the biggest being a paper booklet of eight pages, and the smallest being trimmed manuscript pages recycled as flyleaves. But it is probably no coincidence that these 'marginal' material witnesses are eloquent: much more so than the large codices which participate in canon formation, small and fragmentary sources can help us see music theory and repertoire in states of flux. And states of flux, in turn, lead to the re-examination of chronologies. Ultimately the essays collected here at once decentralize Vitry and show how his compositions and theory were successful: by travelling among networks much broader than the Parisian orbit so often described as the centre for his activities.

Elsewhere in this issue, Cory Gavito introduces a new source for the 17th-century guitarist Francesco Palumbi's songs, and shows how its staff-notated musical information may help in the realization of other guitar songs that are preserved only in *alfabeto* notation. Shanti Nachtergaele considers the practice of double bass reduction, an *ex tempore* procedure for extracting simplified double bass parts from a *basso continuo* carried out by double bassists in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Timothy Chenette looks for principles of musical order in the apparently disordered context of Gesualdo's *Tenebrae* responsories, and Patrizio Barbieri presents new archival information revealing the identity of the 'Abbé Wood' credited by Charles Burney with the making of the first pianoforte imported to England.

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