

introductory notes not only appear in the digital version but are also printed in the accompanying book.

The CD Rom itself is well presented and easy to use. Pleasing to the eye and published in a professional manner, this digital collection includes an easy-to-use interface as well as onomastic, topical, and toponymic indices. These are particularly useful for they allow the reader to search this vast array of confraternal regulations for a variety of investigative purposes. As an example, the topical index includes the denial of membership to black people, a feature appearing in over a dozen of the confraternities' regulations. The ease with which a scholar can cross reference matters such as this one for a wide collection of these religious associations makes this collection an impressive and valuable research tool.

Aside from the introductory remarks already mentioned, the accompanying book includes a short preface and general guideline for the project, a chronological list of the various regulations covered in the collection, and a short analysis of the different types of confraternities appearing in this work. The inclusion of the topical and onomastic indices (without references to corresponding page numbers, unlike those in digital form) might seem somewhat unnecessary. This minor quibble does not detract from the overall value of the work in question. These hereto unpublished confraternal regulations, presented so professionally and efficiently in digital form, will certainly provide scholars with invaluable and easy access to these geographically dispersed regulations. This collection represents a treasure that cannot be ignored by those interested in early modern Spanish confraternities.

Cristian Berco
Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies
Victoria University in the University of Toronto

The Florence Laudario. An Edition of Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Banco Rari 18. Music ed. by Blake Wilson. Texts ed. and trans. by Nello Barbieri. Recent researches in the music of the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance, 29. Madison, Wisc.: A-R Editions, 1995. cv, 135 pp., 2 ill. ISBN 0-89579-321-0.

The Florence Laudario is a modern edition of a manuscript once owned by the Company of Santo Spirito. The Company, which met at the Augustinian church of Santo Spirito, was one of twelve confraternities established in late thirteenth-century Florence for the purpose of singing vernacular religious songs as a spiritual discipline. Lauda singing originated as an oral practice, so when the songs came to be written down it was usually only their texts that were recorded. As one of only two extant laudarios from late medieval Italy that include both music and texts, the manuscript Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Banco Rari 18 (referred to here by its sigla Mg^l) is a valuable record of this devotional

practice.¹⁰ Although the manuscript has already been published in facsimile,¹¹ Blake Wilson's recent edition is a valuable contribution on several fronts. It is the first publication of the manuscript's complete contents (Liuzzi's facsimile omits a group of Latin-texted pieces), and the first time a large corpus of lauda texts have been published with full English translations. And based on a careful editorial approach, Wilson is able to suggest several important revisions to our understanding of the repertory contained in Mgl¹.

The largest portion of *The Florence Laudario* consists of the edited laude. Nevertheless, Wilson's brief introduction provides a useful overview of the Florentine laudesi companies and their practices. The Company of Santo Spirito was one of the smaller and less affluent companies: its recorded assets in 1427 comprised a mere 285 florins, in contrast to the 14,947 florins recorded by the city's wealthiest company, Orsanmichele. In view of this disparity, it is striking that Mgl¹ is a profusely decorated volume, with illuminated initials marking the beginning of every lauda. The two photographic reproductions included in the edition give some sense of the decorations, although unfortunately the plates are only black and white. As Wilson observes, the expenditure on such a volume by even a modestly endowed company speaks to the importance of such books to the company's identity and practices, comparable to the role of decorated chant books within the Latin liturgy.

Another parallel to the Latin liturgy lies in the two types of service books owned by laudesi companies: those for ferial services, which did not record music, and those for festal use, which were more elaborate and included music. Mgl¹ is obviously an example of the latter, its contents organized in a series of liturgical cycles beginning with songs to the Holy Trinity, followed by a temporal, Marian cycle and sanctoral cycle. The sanctoral cycle in particular localizes the manuscript, with laude addressed to Florentine saints such as Reparata, Zenobius, and to St. Augustine, patron saint of the Company of Santo Spirito.

In keeping with the mandate of the A-R Editions "Recent Researches" series, the volume aims to serve both scholars and performers of early music. Thus the prefatory material includes not only the customary scholarly apparatus – explanation of editorial methods, individual commentary on each of the pieces – but also a brief description of historical performance practices and suggestions to modern performers. The lauda texts have been separately edited and translated by Nello Barbieri; they too receive their own set of comments. Both music and texts are anonymous, although Barbieri has identified the authors for a number of laude, including one by Jacopone da Todi, a Franciscan friar associated with early lauda

10 The other late-medieval laudario with music notation is the older, thirteenth-century Cortona, Biblioteca Comunale 91.

11 Fernando Liuzzi, *La lauda e i primordi della melodia italiana*, 2 vols. (Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1934/5).

poetry. The laude vary in musical style and poetic quality, a reflection of their popular origins. The majority, however, follow the customary ballata form with respect to both texts and music.

The edition aims to replicate the physical properties of Mgl¹ as much as possible. To this end, the contents of the manuscript are presented in their original order and all items, even incomplete pieces, have been included. The single-line melodies have been transcribed to reflect the original, non-mensural notation used in Mgl¹, a notation similar to that used for plainchant. In doing so, Wilson rejects a earlier theories that sought to apply a rhythmic interpretation to the lauda melodies and advocates instead a freer approach that can reflect the accentual and rhetorical properties of the text.¹²

There is one important qualification to the diplomatic intentions of this edition. At some point between the manuscript's compilation and the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, the outer edges of the manuscript were first severely trimmed, then subsequently restored. In the process, many of the capital initials were damaged, and the top staff of music of most folios was cut off (the texts were largely spared). Within the same time period the manuscript was restored, skilfully enough that the reconstructed portions are not noticeable in Liuzzi's facsimile edition. Earlier studies of Mgl¹ have observed unexpected melodic differences between formal sections that would, according to standard ballata form, use simple repetition (i.e., the two piedi typically repeat the same phrase; and the volta uses the same melody of the refrain). Through careful comparisons with concordant readings, Wilson determined that nearly all of these variations are faulty, a result of the manuscript's unfortunate mutilation and reconstruction. *The Florence Laudario* incorporates Wilson's own emendations (carefully indicated in both music and commentary sections), which as a whole suggest that the original manuscript transmitted a more stable and conventional corpus of lauda melodies than has been supposed.

Interested readers will want to turn to Wilson's excellent companion monograph, *Music and Merchants: The Laudesi Companies of Republican Florence* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992), which develops at greater length the connections between laudesi activities and the prosperous merchant economy of late medieval Florence. In the meantime, *The Florence Laudario* provides an enticing introduction to the subject of lay spirituality and its expression in vernacular song.

Maureen Epp
University of Toronto

12 These theories are summarized in Cyrilla Barr, *The Monophonic Lauda and the Lay Religious Confraternities of Tuscany and Umbria in the Middle Ages* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1988), 115–23.