

INTRODUCTION

The Composer

Giovanni Valentini (ca. 1582/83–1649) was one of the most highly respected (and certainly highest paid) musicians at the Habsburg court in Vienna during the first half of the seventeenth century.¹ Probably originally from Venice (though his early years remain hazy), Valentini spent the first decade of the seventeenth century in Poland, serving as court organist to King Sigismund III, before entering Habsburg service in 1614. In that year he joined the Graz court chapel of Ferdinand, Archduke of Styria, moving with his employer to Vienna when the archduke became Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II in 1619. In 1626 Valentini was appointed *maestro di cappella* of the imperial chapel, a post he held for the rest of his life, continuing to serve during the reign of Ferdinand II's successor Ferdinand III (r. 1637–57). Throughout his tenure as *maestro di cappella*, Valentini enjoyed a very close relationship with his employers, especially Ferdinand III, who in his youth had been taught music and Italian poetry by Valentini and who continued to turn to the composer for musical advice throughout his life.

Valentini published a great deal of sacred music, with his first print appearing in 1611, when he was still serving the Polish king.² His remaining five publications were issued during his Habsburg service, the first in 1617 and the last in 1625, the year before he became *maestro di cappella*. Although he stopped publishing music, from 1642 until 1649 he published nine volumes of poetry, including several Italian libretti. It is not unusual that Valentini's musical publications ceased after his promotion to chapel master, for an important part of the duties of his new post was to provide music for special occasions at the court, works that would have been unsuitable for publication on account of their occasional nature and grand performing forces. A published description of Ferdinand III's coronation as King of the Romans in December 1636, for instance, reports that Valentini composed the *Te Deum*, mass, and motets sung during the coronation, as well as the "concertos and symphonies" that were performed during the following banquet.³ Although the vast majority of Valentini's post-1625 works have been lost, a number of them have survived in manuscript copies in various European libraries, including the fourteen-voice motet *Cantate gentes*.

¹ Biographies of Valentini are available in Hellmut Federhofer and Steven Saunders, "Valentini, Giovanni (i)," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., 26: 209–11; Saunders, *Cross, Sword and Lyre: Sacred Music at the Imperial Court of Ferdinand II of Habsburg (1619–1637)* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 64–67 and 152–53; *idem*, ed., *Fourteen Motets from the Court of Ferdinand II of Habsburg*, Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era 75 (Madison: A-R Editions, 1995), xii–xiii; and *idem*, "Sacred Music at the Habsburg Court of Ferdinand II (1619–1637): The Latin Vocal Works of Giovanni Priuli and Giovanni Valentini," 2 vols. (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1990), I: 468–81.

² A comprehensive list of Valentini's works is provided in Saunders, *Cross, Sword and Lyre*, 238–48.

³ *Le quattro Relazioni seguite in Ratisbona nelli tempi sotto notati... Seconda della Incoronatione dell'istessa Maestà li 30. Decembre 1636...* (Vienna: G. Gelbhaar, 1637), sigs. Cv–C2r ("Si diede nel mentre principio à suono d'ogni sorte de stromenti da Musici à cantare il *Ve Deum laudamus*, come anco la Messa, e Mottetti, opera nove del Sig. Giovanni Valentini Maestro di capella di S.M.C") and sig. Dr ("Tutto il tempo che durò il Conuito, i musici Casarei fecero lor belli concerti, e simfonie, massime alcuni novamente composti dal Sig. Gio: Valentini"); all spellings given as they are in the source.

The Work

Cantate gentes is a rare example of an occasional work that has survived to the present day. Although its unique manuscript source offers no clues as to its date or the reason why it was written, a manuscript treatise written in 1659 or 1660 by Samuel Capricornus, chapel master of the Württemberg court chapel at Stuttgart (who had spent time at the Viennese court in 1649), mentions that the motet was composed for the Hungarian *Landtag* in Pressburg in June 1647, at which Ferdinand III's eldest son, Ferdinand IV, was crowned King of Hungary.⁴ Capricornus's report is substantiated by the work itself, which in its text and music is perfectly appropriate for a grand political event.⁵

The brief text, an exhortation to celebrate in the eyes of God, begins by addressing three different social classes in ascending order of rank, the people, the nobility, and finally royalty:

Cantate gentes in conspectu Regis Domini.	Sing, people, in the sight of God the King.
Exultate Principes in conspectu Regis Domini.	Rejoice, princes, in the sight of God the King.
Jubilare Reges in conspectu Regis Domini.	Shout for joy, kings, in the sight of God the King.
Quoniam est Rex Regum et Dominus Dominantium.	For he is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The motet then concludes by providing a reason for rejoicing, drawing upon a well-known text that would have been of utmost importance to the Habsburgs during a ceremony establishing their political sovereignty.⁶ By reminding listeners that God is the “King of Kings,” the motet asserts that the Habsburgs' political authority is derived directly from God himself, an important political trope during the early modern era.

Valentini's music contributes to the political significance of the work in several ways. For one thing, the large-scale scoring, consisting of seven vocal parts and seven instruments plus basso continuo, would have immediately impressed upon listeners the grandeur and majesty of both God and the Habsburgs. The obbligato lines for three cornetti are also striking, and indeed, Valentini's deployment of these instruments throughout the work seems to serve as an emblem of the Habsburgs' political might. For the first 108 measures, their use is restricted to instrumental sonatas before each statement of the first three lines of text. In mm. 109–16, however, they appear with the voices for the first time, in a grand tutti statement of “Jubilare Reges.” This is then followed in mm. 116–22 by an astonishingly virtuosic interlude for the cornetti, consisting of longwinded sixteenth-note figures and echo effects. The musical styles employed in the vocal parts also contribute to the motet's political message, for the music becomes increasingly virtuosic as the work proceeds. The first section, addressing the people,

⁴ Capricornus's treatise is transcribed in full in Josef Sittard, “Samual Capricornus contra Philipp Friedrich Bötdecker,” *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musik-Gesellschaft* 3 (1901–2): 87–128. *Cantate gentes* is mentioned on p. 101, with an excerpt from the work provided on pp. 99–100.

⁵ My discussion of this motet is indebted to Saunders, *Cross, Sword and Lyre*, 108–9 and *idem*, “Der Kaiser als Künstler: Ferdinand III and the Politicization of Sacred Music at the Hapsburg Court,” in *Infinite Boundaries: Order, Disorder, and Reorder in Early Modern German Culture*, ed. Max Reinhart, Sixteenth-Century Essays and Studies 40 (Kirksville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1998), 197–98.

⁶ Versions of the final line of the motet appear twice in the Bible, in 1 Timothy 6: 15 and Revelations 17: 14. Saunders has also pointed out that the text occurs in the coronation liturgy during the prayer blessing the royal vestments (*Cross, Sword and Lyre*, 109).

consists primarily of eighth and quarter notes, and melismas in this section are limited to brief cadential figures. In contrast, the triple-meter second section, addressing the nobility, features a repeated melismatic figure throughout. Finally, the last section of the work highlights the important phrase “Dominus Dominantium” with a repeated virtuosic sixteenth-note figure heard in both the voices and the instruments. Through all of these means, the music emphasizes the power and unrivaled glory of royalty over the other social classes (while still remaining subservient to God), thereby making this work an excellent example of *musica politica*, in which music harmoniously reflects the perfect order and balance of the absolutist state.⁷

Suggestions for Performance

Cantate gentes poses few problems for performers. The proportional relationship between the duple- and triple-meter sections is that of *proportio tripla*, in which three whole notes in triple meter equal one whole note in duple meter. This creates the aural effect of one measure in triple meter equaling one measure in duple, which produces satisfying results in this work. The violetta parts were most likely intended for members of the viol family, which continued to be used at the Viennese court throughout the seventeenth century. The manuscript offers a number of possible substitutions between trombones and viols, though for timbral consistency it is recommended that the “alto trombone o violetta secondo” part be played on a string instrument and the “viola o trombone secondo” part on a wind instrument. Considering that the work was performed during a political ceremony in which it would have been important to create a magnificent effect, the vocal ensemble probably consisted of more than one person on a part. A performance by a large ensemble would certainly be viable, but for *concertato* interest, it is recommended that the duet passages in mm. 14–26, 53–73, 97–109, 123–28, and 132–41 be performed by soloists. It would not be inappropriate to double the basso continuo line with bowed or plucked string instruments, but because of the large instrumental ensemble (which often doubles the continuo line), doing so is unnecessary in this work.

⁷ On *musica politica*, which was first discussed by Athanasius Kircher in his *Musurgia universalis* of 1650, see especially Volker Scherliess, “Musica politica,” in *Festschrift Georg von Dadelsen zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Thomas Kohlhase and Volker Scherliess (Neuhausen-Stuttgart: Hänssler, 1978), 270–83; Saunders, *Cross, Sword and Lyre*, 109; and Andrew H. Weaver, “Piety, Politics, and Patronage: Motets at the Habsburg Court in Vienna During the Reign of Ferdinand III (1637–1657)” (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 2002), 129–31 and 282–89.

CRITICAL REPORT

The Source

Cantate gentes survives in one manuscript source, which is part of the famed Düben Collection: Sweden, Uppsala University Library, Vokalmusik i handskrift 66:15.⁸ According to Bruno Grusnick, who catalogued the vocal works of the Düben Collection in the 1960s, the manuscript was copied in 1663.⁹ The manuscript consists of fifteen parts, each comprising a single folio. Due to the incredibly large number of significant errors in the parts, which remain uncorrected in the manuscript, it is highly improbable that this source was ever used for performance.

Facsimiles of all of the parts are available online at

http://www.musik.uu.se/duben/presentationSource.php?Select_Dnr=1638.

Editorial Methods

The voice names in the edition are provided exactly as they appear in the manuscript source, with the exception of the alto trombone part, which reads “Alto Trombone o Violetta primo” and has been changed to “Violetta secondo.” Also reproduced exactly as they appear in the source are all other verbal aspects of the edition, including the dynamic markings in mm. 116–21 and the vocal texts. Capitalization of the texts in the edition follows the source, and common abbreviations have been tacitly expanded throughout. Repeated lyrics marked in the source with a repeat sign have been placed in angle brackets.

The use of clefs in the parts is as follows: canto primo = C1; canto secondo = C1; alto = C3; tenore primo = C4; tenore secondo = C4; basso primo = F4; basso secondo = F4; violetta = C1; alto trombone o violetta secondo = C3; cornetto primo = C1; cornetto secondo = C1; piffaro o cornetto terzo = C3; viola o trombone secondo = C3; basso trombone = F4. The organ part uses primarily the F4 clef, but it occasionally features brief passages in C3 or C4 clef; the edition uses exclusively the bass clef for the organ, with clef changes indicated in the critical notes.

This edition preserves the original rhythmic values in a 1:1 ratio. The final note in every part is a longa (represented as two attached double whole notes with a fermata), which has been transformed in this edition to a whole note with a fermata. The original meter signatures have been preserved in the edition. Barlines appear only sporadically throughout the parts and have been tacitly added and regularized in this edition. Thin-thin barlines have been added to all parts in mm. 13, 52, and 128 to demarcate important section breaks; the only place in the source where thin-thin barlines occur is in m. 13 of the cornetto primo part.

This edition follows modern practice for stem direction and beaming, employing “vocal beaming” in which notes are beamed based on the syllabification of the text. All slurs have been retained in the edition, with slurs added editorially to any passage that carries a slur in other

⁸ A catalogue of the Düben Collection, edited by Erik Kjellberg and Kerala J. Snyder, is available online at <http://www.musik.uu.se/duben/Duben.php> (accessed 3 October 2007).

⁹ Bruno Grusnick, “Die Dübensammlung: Ein Versuch ihrer chronologischen Ordnung,” *Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning* 48 (1966): 78.

parts. Editorially added slurs are indicated with dashed slurs. Note values interrupted by the editorial barlines have been broken with ties as per modern practice.

All original accidentals have been retained in the edition, including those that are redundant or unnecessary in modern practice. All editorially added accidentals are placed in square brackets, with editorially added cautionary accidentals placed in parentheses. In cases where an accidental is notated in the source and there is an editorial accidental on the same pitch earlier in the measure, the source accidental is repeated in the edition. Once introduced, both editorial and source accidentals remain in effect until the end of the measure, as per modern practice.

Figured bass symbols, which appear rarely in the source, are reproduced exactly as they appear, with the exception of the natural signs in mm. 157 and 158, which are flats in the source. Editorial figures have been placed in square brackets.

Critical Notes

The notes below describe readings in the source that differ from those in the edition, except for the changes discussed in the editorial methods. Pitches are given according to the system in which middle C is *c'*. The following abbreviations are used: C1 = canto primo, C2 = canto secondo, A = alto, T1 = tenore primo, T2 = tenore secondo, B1 = basso primo, B2 = basso secondo, V1 = violetta, V2 = violetta secondo, Cor1 = cornetto primo, Cor2 = cornetto secondo, Cor3 = cornetto terzo, Trom2 = trombone secondo, BT = basso trombone, O = organo.

M. 7, Trom2, the following sixteen extraneous beats inserted between beats 2 and 3:



M. 9, Cor1, note 3, *a'*; Cor2, note 3, sharp under note.

M. 15, O, note 1, *E'*.

M. 18, O, note 3, *F'*.

M. 21, V2, note 3, *e'*.

M. 22, V2, missing.

M. 23, V1, beats 1–2, two tied quarter notes.

M. 30, T1, beats 1–2, half rest missing.

M. 31, B1, note 2, sharp written above the note; V2, note 2, *F*.

M. 34, O, notes 1–2, C4 clef.

M. 82, V1, c'' dotted double whole note.

M. 84, A, the measure consists of a whole note, dotted whole note, and half note on d'; T2, note 4, whole note.

M. 85, V1, note 2, half note.

M. 86, C1, note 2 has no augmentation dot and beat three consists of two half notes on b'.

M. 87, B1, whole note tied to a double whole note.

M. 88, O, note 2, B'.

M. 91, Cor1, note 4, sharp above note; Cor1, note 5, sharp; Cor2, note 2, sharp under note.

M. 93, Cor3, note 4, B.

M. 94, Cor3, note 1, e'.

M. 100, O, note 1 is a half note, and note 2 is missing.

M. 101, V2, note 2, G.

Mm. 101–2, O, missing.

M. 104, T1, note 2, F; note 3, G, but corrected to F over the staff.

M. 106, T2, note 2, A.

M. 107, O, note 1, quarter note.

M. 108, O, note 4, half note on C#, preceded by an extraneous quarter note on A.

M. 109, A, note 4, e'; V2, note 1, D; Cor3, note 4, e'.

M. 110, Cor3, note 3, e'; Trom2, note 4, d'.

M. 111, Trom2, note 8, A.

M. 112, T2, beat 3, half rest missing.

M. 112, O, note 4, to m. 113, note 2, C3 clef.

M. 114, T2, slur is placed over notes 3 and 4.

M. 116, O, note 1, pitch is unclear.

M. 117, Cor1, two crossed-out beats at the end of the measure; Cor2, notes 13 and 15, sharp under note.

M. 117, O, note 3, to m. 118, note 2, C3 clef.

M. 118, O, note 1, F.

M. 119, Cor3, quarter notes on *c'* and *g'* inserted between notes 2 and 3.

M. 121, Cor1, notes 8 and 16, sharp above note; O, C4 clef.

M. 125, B2, note 8, sharp.

M. 128, B2, note 4, eighth note.

M. 132, V1, beats 3–4, missing.

M. 135, C1, note 3 is *b'* and note 8 is *c''*; V2, note 3 is A.

M. 136, C2, note 1, *c''*.

M. 138, B2, notes 4 and 5 are eighth notes; V1, note 1 is *d'*.

M. 141, V2, note 1, F

M. 143, C2, note 3, *d''*.

M. 143, C2, several crossed-out beats at the end of the measure.

M. 144, B2, notes 3 and 4, eighth notes.

M. 147, O, note 2, pitch is unclear.

M. 148, B2, notes 3 and 4, eighth notes; V1, note 2 is *b'* and note 3 is *c''*.

M. 149, T1, note 3 has an augmentation dot.

M. 150, C1, the part ends in this measure with a longa.

M. 151, BT, note 4, pitch is unclear.

M. 152, Trom2, note 2 has augmentation dot.

M. 155, T1, beat 3, whole rest; V2, note 4, A.

M. 157, B2, notes 3 and 4, eighth notes.

M. 158, T2, notes 3 and 4, eighth notes.

M. 159, O, note 2, B'.

M. 161, V1, beat 1, missing.

M. 162, T2, note 7, d'.