

A BARNES & NOBLE OUTLINE

HISTORY OF Music

MONOPHONIC MUSIC TO ABOUT 1300 / THE
POLYPHONIC PERIOD (800-1600) / THE BAROQUE
PERIOD (1600-1750) / THE CLASSICAL PERIOD
(1750-1820) / THE ROMANTIC PERIOD (1820-1900)
/ THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

HUGH M. MILLER

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HISTORY OF MUSIC



by Hugh M. Miller

PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF MUSIC, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO



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Preface to the Fourth Edition

Since *History of Music* was first published in 1947, minor revisions and corrections have been made periodically, and the chapters dealing with twentieth-century music have been updated. The present edition is a completely rewritten and extensively reorganized work which takes into account numerous suggestions from readers and further experience in using the history as a textbook. The objectives of the Outline remain the same as before: concise presentation of basic essentials of music history in terms of broad stylistic periods, techniques, forms, schools, principal composers, and mention of representative compositions.

For references to recordings and scores at the ends of the first sixteen chapters, Arnold Schering's *Geschichte der Musik in Beispielen* has been deleted, and Carl Parrish's valuable *Treasury of Early Music* added.

Two new features will increase the value of the book: (1) inclusion of musical examples in score to illustrate certain technical problems, and (2) the use of photographic reproductions to illustrate basic types of notation discussed in Chapter 12.

It is hoped—and with modest feelings of confidence and optimism—that in its present edition the Outline will be an even more useful source of information than it has proved to be over the past quarter of a century.

Preface

The acquisition of historical information about music is of little value unless that information is applied directly to the literature of music. In any study of the history of music there is, inevitably, a considerable quantity of factual material that is of purely historical interest. However, in the present Outline, nonessentials, such as biographical detail, have been minimized or else eliminated altogether. The present emphasis is upon the organization and presentation of essential historical information that has a direct bearing upon the actual music of any given period, or else upon the development of musical trends. The Outline deals primarily with the characteristics of form and style as they apply to music of broad and specific periods, to nationalities or schools, and to the most important composers. This Outline, then, is intended to be a substantial guide to intelligent study of music by the amateur as well as by the advanced student of music. It can be applied equally well to the occupation of listening to records and to detailed analysis of musical scores.

Furthermore, the present work is more than a mere review outline. It is a functional work which can be used as the basic textbook in a college course in the history of music. This does not preclude collateral reading in the many excellent textbooks in general music history which are indeed valuable. But the present Outline should be the core of the study.

At the end of each chapter through baroque music, record lists have been provided. These are selected from available recordings including long playing releases, the *Anthologie Sonore*, and *2000 Years of Music*. As more and more representative works are issued, especially recordings of music prior to 1600, the lists should be supplemented.

Score lists, also, have been provided for representative music up to 1750, music for later periods being much more easily accessible. These lists are primarily based upon three musical anthologies: *Historical Anthology of Music*, 2 volumes, Apel and Davidson, 1947, 1949, Harvard University Press; *Geschichte der Musik in Beispielen* ("History of Music in Examples"), Arnold Schering, 1931, Breitkopf & Härtel (reprinted by Broude Bros., 1950); and *Masterpieces of Music before 1750*, Parrish and Ohl, 1951, Norton.

The author here wishes to express his deep gratitude to Dr. Lloyd Hibberd, North Texas State College, Denton, Texas, for his reading of the entire manuscript and for numerous invaluable suggestions and criticisms and to Mr. Walter Robert for reading proof.

Abbreviations

- HAM *Historical Anthology of Music* (scores)
MM *Masterpieces of Music Before 1750* (scores and records)
TEM *A Treasury of Early Music* (scores and records)

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The study of music history requires a preliminary understanding of some basic concepts and approaches.

Interdependence of Music. Music, like other arts, is not autonomous; it is always part of a total culture, both in time and place. Therefore, it is important to study music history against the backgrounds of social, economic, political, cultural, and philosophical developments.

Relation to Literary Arts. Music, as a form of human communication, from its earliest known beginnings has been closely associated with the literary arts: poetry, drama, and religious texts.

Music Literature. The study of music history is necessarily based on the study of music literature. Factual information is, of course, essential to history in any field, but unless that information is applied directly to the actual sound of music it is of negligible value. Thus, one must hear representative music of any era to understand that era musically. It is a great advantage to the modern student that there is a wealth of music authentically recorded and available for study.

A further approach to music literature is the study of musical scores. Modern editions and anthologies of early music enable the student to see in detail the various aspects of construction. Whenever possible, it is best to combine the visual aspect with the auditory, to "see" the music while hearing it.

Kinds of Historical Information. An adequate study of music history involves a coordinated knowledge of several areas.

Forms. The term *form* refers to the structural principles involved in musical composition. A given form is determined by a combination of these principles. The history of music is in part the history of ever-changing forms.

Style and Technique. Musical style is the composite of numerous techniques of composition involving the elements of melody, rhythm, harmony, texture, dynamics, and others. In certain periods of history, certain styles prevail. All eras, countries, schools, and individual composers have their own stylistic characteristics. Thus, one can speak of renaissance style, French style, Venetian style, or Beethoven's style.

Medium. In music, the term *medium* means the performing agent. In general, media are vocal, instrumental, or both; they are subdivided into various solo or ensemble combinations. The kinds of media employed in any given period constitute one indication of the kinds of musical sounds encountered at that time.

Broad Categories. Music history can be approached from the standpoint of broad categories of music literature such as religious music, secular music, dramatic music, symphonic music, and so on.

Geographical Areas. Music often develops differently in different regions, such as broad geographical areas, countries or cities. Music of a particular region is usually referred to as belonging to a *school*. Hence, we have such expressions as the Flemish school, the Italian school, or the Venetian school.

Composers. To know music history is to be familiar with the important composers and their contributions to music literature and the development of music. Sometimes a composer represents the culmination of a period (J. S. Bach in the baroque era); sometimes a composer represents revolutionary innovations (Stravinsky and Schoenberg in the 20th century).

Documents and Manuscripts. Valuable contributions to music history have also been made by authors who have explained the musical practices of their own times. Such documents, many of which have been translated and published in modern editions, afford insight into music history.

Our present knowledge of earlier periods stems largely from

manuscripts in musical notation preserved in libraries and in museums throughout the world. The well-informed student of music history should know about them.

Notation. Since antiquity, music has been written down according to various systems of symbols called *notation*. How such systems developed is an important facet of historical knowledge (though such knowledge contributes little to the student's perception of musical sound). The advanced student must learn early notation for the purpose of transcribing manuscripts.

Chronological Organization. Music history, like the history of any other field, involves the chronological development of thought and practice from its earliest known beginnings to its present forms.

Period Division. The history of Western music is conventionally divided into eras, or periods of time. These divisions, which generally conform to similar eras in general history and the history of other arts, are referred to, respectively, as pre-Christian (Antiquity), medieval, renaissance, baroque, classical, romantic, and modern periods. Some eras are subdivided into early, middle, and late periods (early Renaissance, late Baroque, etc.), and subdivisions of major periods sometimes carry special names such as *Ars Antiqua* and *Ars Nova* of the Middle Ages.

Although period divisions are used for convenience in the historical organization of events and developments, it must be kept in mind that change from one period to the next does not take place suddenly. Evidence of change is invariably manifested before the beginning year of an era, and, conversely, the characteristics of an era continue long after it has ended. For example, evidence of baroque practices can be found at least two decades before the year 1600, when the baroque period is said to have begun, and renaissance techniques continued to be employed well beyond that year. Furthermore, no period in itself is static; changes take place continuously within a period.

I

*Antiquity
and
Plainsong*

CHAPTER 2

Antiquity

Relatively little is known about the music of Antiquity (from pre-historic times to about A.D. 200). Well-established generalizations are that music existed in ancient civilizations and that our European musical heritage stems mainly from non-Western cultures in pre-Christian times.

General Considerations

Before describing the principal musical cultures, we should answer these questions: Why is knowledge so limited? What are the sources of information? What are the theories concerning the origin of music?

Limited Knowledge. Much less is known about ancient music than about ancient pictorial art, architecture, or literature, for sound is an immediately perishable medium and its preservation depends either on the electromechanical means of recording of the 20th century or else on an adequate system of musical notation. Neither of these methods existed in Antiquity. What little music was preserved in notation before the birth of Christ is mostly indecipherable.

Sources of Knowledge. The limited information we have about ancient music has been gathered mainly from four sources: pictorial material, literary material, extant instruments, and ethnomusicology.

Pictorial Material. Pictorial representation of musical activity, especially that of people playing instruments, tells us something

about the music of Antiquity. Drawings dating back to prehistoric times establish at least the existence of music.

Literary Sources. As long as man has had systems of written communications, he has recorded his ideas about music, rules of its construction, and its place in his society. Literary sources constitute our best information about ancient music.

Extant Instruments. A considerable number of instruments has been excavated from ancient caves, tombs, and temples. From such material, scholars are able to reconstruct instruments and sometimes even to determine the scales that were used. However, no one has been able to recreate the music which was once played on such instruments.

Ethnomusicology. Research dealing with primitive and non-Western systems of music is called *ethnomusicology*. It has provided some insight into ancient practices. By studying ancient cultures which still exist today (China, India, Arabia, etc.) and primitive cultures (such as those found among the aborigines of Australia, New Guinea, and South America), scholars have been able to project theories about ancient music.

Theories of the Origin of Music. We do not know precisely how or when music began, but there are some acceptable theories about its origin in prehistoric times.

Communication. In prehistoric times, man used primitive forms of drums and trumpets for communicating sound signals. He may have found these sounds pleasing to the ear and thus began to use them to create music.

Dance and Work Rhythm. Another theory is that music developed from the natural urge to accompany dance and work with some kind of rhythmic sounds, which gradually became musical creations.

Emotional Expression. Song may have evolved from the spontaneous vocal expression of anger, fear, anguish, and joy.

General Features of Ancient Music. Though we possess no definite knowledge of how ancient music actually sounded, we can make certain generalizations about the practice of music in ancient times.

Dependency. It is unlikely that ancient music was ever an independent art created solely for the pleasure of listening to it.