



## **Adventures of Portuguese 'Ancient Music' in Eighteenth-Century London**

**Dr Owen Rees**

**25 June 2010**

It is an enormous pleasure to be here, and I am very grateful for the invitation from Gresham College to talk tonight about Portuguese music in England.

The tale begins with a surprising discovery in Oxford. For many years, I have been working on the history of Portuguese music, in particular the golden age of Portuguese music which was during the 16th and early 17th Centuries. I have expended an enormous amount on flights to go and consult sources in Portuguese libraries, thinking that that is where you need to go, little realising that about 500 yards from my office in Oxford was sitting a very well-preserved book of masses by one of the principal Portuguese composers of that golden age, Duarte Lobo. I will not try and show off by saying Duarte Lobo too often – the English version of his name is penned Wolf, if you prefer that, but as we will see, his name, Lobo or Lupus in Latin, has caused part of the hiding of his music in English sources that I am going to talk to you about.

It is that book which seems to have caused an extraordinary fashion in 18th Century London for singing Portuguese polyphony. We tend to think of the revival of interest in performing and recording music as part of the Renaissance, the 16th and early-17th Centuries, as a relatively modern phenomenon. However, that was not the case for England. In 18th Century England, there was a very well-established fad, if you like, which went on for the whole century, for performing music of the Renaissance, and the main theme of my lecture today is to give you a taste of what these societies in 18th Century London, in particular the Academy of Ancient Music and the Madrigal Society, were like and what they did, and I will look at that phenomenon through the lens of this Portuguese music, which was among their favourite repertoire.

I will begin by setting the historical scene. Portugal went through a turbulent time in the early 17th Century. Since 1580, Portugal had been ruled by the Kings of Spain, Philip II, III and IV, who the Portuguese are careful to call Philip I, II and III of Portugal. There were great hopes for Portuguese independence to be restored, and the figure on whom these hopes increasingly rested in the early decades of the 17th Century was John IV, as he became, in 1640, when Portuguese independence was restored and John was placed on the throne.

Among those encouraging this nationalist enterprise, were the musicians, of whom John was the greatest patron in early 17th Century Portugal. Figures like Duarte Lobo, Manuel Cardoso; Filipe de Magalhaes (Magellan) were all enjoying the patronage of John in terms of him paying for their pieces to be published and in terms of very close interactions with him while he was still Duke of Braganza both before the Restoration and after 1640. We know that Duarte Lobo was one of these composers who worked, partly through the music that he composed, partly covertly, to support the Restoration cause and the restoration of independence for Portugal. So 1640 is a crucial date in Portuguese history in the 17th Century, and after 1640, for decades, the Portuguese were seeking international allies that could support them in the firming up of their national independence. Among the most important allies were the English, historic allies of the Portuguese. We find, for example, a Portuguese in London at the court in the 1640s publishing a work called, "Portugal Liberated from the Unjust Dominion of the Castilians".

Just a few years later, two years after the English Restoration of 1660, Charles II married the daughter of John IV of Portugal, Catherine of Braganza, famous for bringing Bombay and tea. Catherine, when she

came to England, brought with her, as anybody in that sort of station would, her own chapel establishment, a chapel in the sense of a group of chaplains, some of whom were singers and also instrumentalists. Most of them, at first, were Portuguese, but increasingly, as her chapel establishment developed in England, from the 1660s onto the early 1690s, the Portuguese quotient in the chapel was reduced, and an increasing number of French musicians, and then, in a dominant role, Italians, took over. This chapel was based, first of all, at St James' Palace, and then, for most of Catherine's time in England, in Somerset House, and we have one picture surviving of what the chapel in St James' looked like, as redecorated and fitted out for the Queen. Two diarists heard this Portuguese choir of Catherine of Braganza soon after it arrived although neither of them liked it. The first, John Evelyn, referred to the "pipes, harps and very ill voices". A few months later, in September of that year, Samuel Pepys, was no better when he heard it. "I heard their music, which may be good, but it did not appear so to me, neither as to their manner of singing, nor was it good concert to my ears." Peter Leech, who has written about Catherine of Braganza's chapel in England, suggests that perhaps it was the unusual combinations of voices and instruments that these diarists heard that perhaps contrasted with what they were used to and put them off. Pepys eventually got to like the music, much later. However, a few years before this English Restoration and Charles' marriage to Catherine of Braganza, Portuguese music had slipped into England by another route, and this was thanks to the purchase of a single volume. This volume was to prove the point of origin for these numerous performances of Portuguese polyphony in London during the 18th Century.

The book was a copy of a printed collection of masses that's entitled "Liber Missarum", "Book of Masses", published in folio format, and it was published by the most famous and prestigious music printing house of the early 17th Century – the House of Plantin based in Antwerp – and it appeared in 1621. The music was by Duarte Lobo, and he was, at that point, Chapel Master, in other words in charge of the music, at Lisbon Cathedral for much of the first half of the 17th Century, and, in his own lifetime, one of the most highly regarded Portuguese composers of the age. In fact, he had so many eminent pupils he was known as the teacher of the musicians of Portugal.

This copy of his "Book of Masses" was bought by a London book dealer, possibly not with an eye to the music itself but to the nice appearance of the book and its rather impressive size and layout. It may never have been used by singers, and this probably accounts for its good quality of preservation, not that I am accusing all singers of having dirty hands! The book dealer was called George Thomason. He was a great collector of materials relating to the Civil War. They are now called the Thomason Tracts and are kept in the British Library. He presented this book that he had bought from Plantin to the Bodleian Library in Oxford in 1659. You cannot read the title page on this reproduction, but the scribble halfway down on the right hand column is where it is marked that this is a presentation by George Thomason, and that is where we get the date 1659. It may be that this copy was not used until the early 18th Century, and there is an irony here, because Catherine of Braganza came to Oxford with the court in the mid-1660s, so it may be that we had Portuguese musicians singing in Oxford, unaware that in the Bodleian was sitting this splendid volume by one of their most famous Portuguese composers of the period.

I would like to introduce you, briefly, to the piece in this volume that is at the heart of our story today, and it is a motet. Although this is a book of masses, it was common practice in the period to include one or two motets at the end of a volume of masses. The piece concerned is one from right at the end of the book, "Audiui vocem de coelo deccentem mihi". This is "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord", "Beati mortui". It comes after the eight voice requiem mass by Lobo. We do not have any evidence that this book sitting in the Bodleian was used between its arrival in the Bodleian in 1659 and the early 18th Century, but we do know that, in the early 18th Century, musical antiquarians came to Oxford and started making use of this, and many other books, Lassus, Victoria and the Madrigalists in Oxford collections. At least two of these musical antiquarians used this book to make copies. The one I am going to talk about today was called Henry Needler, and he was active in London. It seems to have been thanks to Henry Needler that this music of Duarte Lobo made its way into London musical circles. He was a civil servant, and he was part of these societies who were interested in what they called "ancient music", music of the 16th and 17th Centuries.

So, I looked up Needler in one of the two great late 18th Century histories of music, a more famous one by Charles Burney and another by John Hawkins. They were ferocious rivals. John Hawkins says of Needler that he was "one of that association which gave rise to the establishment of the Academy of Ancient Music, and being a zealous friend to the institution, attended constantly on the nights of performance, and played the principal violin part. The toils of business he alleviated by the study of music, and in his leisure hours, employed himself in putting into score the works of the most celebrated Italian masters, with a view to

improve himself and enrich the stores of the Academy”.

So here was a civil servant who was spending his evenings or early mornings copying out polyphony, both for his own interests and for the Academy of Ancient Music. We have lots of copies of ancient music in the hand of Needler surviving in the British Library and in the Royal College of Music.

I am going to talk about briefly about two books. The first is a book which is a complete copy of the entire contents – not just the contents, but all the prefatory material and the dedications – of the Book of Masses sitting in the Bodleian. Needler reproduced, in his fair calligraphy, the title page of Lobo’s volume. This was one of the things that caused a problem for later recognition of Lobo’s Portuguese nationality. This problem extended right up until the 20th Century. These were described as works by *Eduardus Lupus*, in Latin, so *Eduardi Lupi* in the genitive, so he became known as *Lupi*, and we will see later one of these English manuscript sources where it was found with his name spelt *Lupi* and then some joking singer has written *Loopy* over the top of the copy, obviously in a bored moment during a Madrigal Society evening. So, the complete contents include “*Audivi vocem de coelo*”, this motet, and Needler scored the piece up. Originally, the parts were separately arrayed on the page, in the 1621 print, but by this time Needler had scored the piece up in order to see how it went. I should emphasise the bottom line; I have not scribbled on this British Library manuscript. Where I have put red, this is just to show you that Needler was taking musical interest in these pieces – he has added a sharp at that point. It was not in the original print, but a lot of the subsequent English copies of the 18th Century of this piece included that sharp. So he was not simply copying this music out to practise his penmanship; he was taking a direct interest in it. How do we know that he copied this from that particular Bodleian copy? Well, luckily for us, he almost says so because the other principal British Library manuscript by Needler includes a contents page. You can tell he was a civil servant taking trouble over things such as beautiful columns, and in the last column, right at the bottom, there are three works by Duarte Lobo, called *Eduardi Lupi*. He copied from the Bodleian Library, so it must have been from that particular copy.

Once Lobo’s music was available in these London musical circles, thanks to Needler, it enjoyed a striking success among these lovers of “ancient music”, and that success can be measured in terms of the quite extraordinary numbers of surviving manuscript copies, 16, particularly of “*Audivi vocem de coelo*”, this motet. This is an extraordinary number by the standards of the preservation of any 16th, 17th or 18th Century work. From England only, in fact very largely from London, we have 16 manuscript copies of one piece from the 18th Century through to the early 19th, and, in total, 22 manuscript copies which are including some of these works by Duarte Lobo. Some of the names I will mention from the Madrigal Society, the Academy of Ancient Music, you will see feature in that fourth column. Most of the performances of this Portuguese music in 18th Century London of which we have records involved these two societies, the Academy of Ancient Music and the Madrigal Society. So, we know, for example, that the Academy of Ancient Music performed some of these works by Duarte Lobo on these dates in their evening musical sessions, starting in the early 1730s, and “*Audivi vocem*” is there at the head of this list, and the last of which I have found records so far in 1773, and you can see that “*Audivi vocem*” is the favourite piece there. “*Audivi vocem*” was also firmly established in the repertory of the Madrigal Society.

To give you just one example, in 1769, the Madrigal Society sang Lobo’s motet, “*Audivi vocem*” at no fewer than eight of its meetings, so it was one of its most popular works in that period. You may be wondering about these meetings and societies. Both the Academy of Ancient Music and the Madrigal Society met weekly. They met in pubs, so their venues were various London taverns. This gives a trail of the Madrigal Society, from the 1740s onwards, and this list may not be complete. So they often met in the upper room of a tavern. In a corner of the room would be kept their locked chest, where the musical sources were. There was a fine for the President of a particular meeting of the Madrigal Society who forgot to bring the key to the music chest for a particular meeting. So, the Twelve Bells of Fleet Street, the Anchor & Crown in Whitefriars are examples and it is clear in which areas of London they tended to congregate. The Academy of Ancient Music held what it called its “publick nights” on Thursdays, and at these “publick nights”, each member could bring two guests. Here is the printed programme of one of these nights, from April 24th 1746. On the right hand side, you can see that the second part of the evening’s music began with what is called here, wrongly of course, “*A Motet for Four Voices*”. It is actually a Kyrie eleison the first movement of a mass. Sadly, we do not know which of the masses from the 1621 book they were performing, but this is music by Lobo, or *Lupi* as they called him, alongside, as you see, “*Say, Gentle Nymphs*” by Morley.

The Academy of Ancient Music, in 1761, published a book giving the texts of their favourite pieces which were the most often performed pieces: “The Words of such Pieces as are most usually performed by the

Academy of Ancient Music". Duarte Lobo does surprisingly well in this list in terms of the numbers of pieces. If you look down at the right-hand side there, the beginning of the index, you can see two works by Lupi, 'Asperges me' and 'Audiui Vocem' again, and alongside works by Byrd, Palestrini, Handel, Purcell, Victoria, Pepusch, who I will mention again a little bit later, and Stradello, so we have a mixture of 16th, 17th and early 18th Century works by English, Portuguese, as it happens, and Italian composers, for example. The Madrigal Society, from time to time, drew up rules. Its membership was originally amateur. The founder, John Immyns, gathered to sing this music artisans, and these were amateur singers, but, increasingly, the meetings of the Madrigal Society attracted professional singers from St Paul's, from Westminster Abbey, from the Chapel Royal, and they also brought in boy trebles, particularly from St Paul's Cathedral, to supply the top line in some of their meetings.

This is just a selection from a long list of rules. You can see, first of all, that the performances of the night should be divided into two acts, with an interval of about half an hour between each act – that is when they ate – and four madrigals should be performed in each act. They obviously worried about the timing. The next rule was: "In order to preserve the reputation of the Society, as well as the health of the members thereof, it's agreed that all musical performances shall cease at half an hour after 10 o'clock, unless some of the members shall be cheerfully incited to sing catches." There is a rule about the person who takes it in turns to be President at meetings: "It is ordered that every member whose turn it is to serve, or who does serve President of this Society, shall be obliged, every time his turn comes to be President, to present to the Society a score and parts of a madrigal, ready for the members to perform, under the penalty of forfeiting a penny extraordinary to the plate every night until such score and parts be presented." It is partly because of this rule that we are well-off for scores because it was your obligation to produce a piece, not always, to be honest, a piece that was unknown to the Society. Some of the later 18th Century scores and parts of "Audiui vocem" by Lobo are presentations of new pieces by a particular President. So, a certain President called Saxby presented the piece to the Society in August 1760. So, thanks to that, we have, in part, our multiple copies of these pieces. The stipulated maximum number of members for the Madrigal Society varied between about 20 and 40 over time. Among those who were turning up to these meetings and singing this Portuguese polyphony alongside motets and madrigals in the 16th and 17th Centuries was the very John Hawkins that I mentioned earlier, the historian who wrote "A General History of the Science and Practice of Music" in 1776.

So there was a mixture of sacred and secular pieces being performed in these two acts, usually of four pieces each. English and Italian composers were predominating, and this hidden, to some of the members, alongside Portuguese polyphony. Here is the last rule I have: "Any of the gentlemen of the Academy of Ancient Music" were at liberty to come in free of charge and attend these meetings of the Madrigal Society also. So there were relative, semi-private contexts for the performance of this music, but Lobo's music also received a much more public airing in London in the 18th Century, and this is in the context of benefit concerts, designed to raise funds, for example, for a particular musician. The musician, in this case, I have already mentioned – it was Johann Cristoph Pepusch, who was a noted instrumentalist, composer, teacher, and a central figure in the Academy of Ancient Music. He was greatly influenced and influential in this cultivation of "ancient music" in English circles. There was a benefit concert for Pepusch, which was held at Hickford's Rooms. Now, Hickford was originally a dancing master and his rooms originally for dancing classes. They were in James Street in the West End, and they became a fashionable concert room. In fact, eventually, they were replaced by a purpose-built concert room, about the size of Barnard's Inn Hall. We have newspaper advertisements and notices of a concert for Pepusch on 31st March 1732, which included music by Duarte Lobo, and it is the earliest reference in fact that we have, or have so far located, to performing Lobo's music in England. The other composers mentioned in this press notice for the concert were: Corelli, Italian, late-17th and early-18th; Byrd, again; and Purcell, again.

This is where we approach the Gresham lecturers and professors. Another member of the Madrigal Society, who copied and acquired copies of "Audiui vocem" and other works by Duarte Lobo, was an organist, a composer of glees, a piano teacher to the daughters of those who were well enough off to pay for piano lessons. He was called R. J. S. Stevens, Richard Stevens, who was born in 1757 and died in 1837. Among his organists' posts in London, he was organist of the Charter House. Luckily for us, Stevens wrote voluminous diaries and recollections. One of his main themes was his 20-year campaign to woo a particular lady and persuade her to marry him. She steadfastly refused to do this for well over a decade, but also, he gave information about his musical pursuits. He was a member of the Madrigal Society. This is one extract of Stevens recounting one of his visits to the Madrigal Society in 1809, and he did not have a good evening. "Tuesday, January 10th, I dined with the Madrigal Society, being the



anniversary,” in other words, this was a special meeting which would be particularly grand. “The performance of the madrigals was tiresome in the extreme. They were badly selected and wretchedly performed. Beale in the Chair.” There is another reference in the diary which shows that he did not like Beale. The slide gives one instance of the kind of copies of Madrigal Society meetings from which Stevens and others would have been singing, and this is the hand of the founder of the Madrigal Society, John Immyns, who gathered these artisans around him to perform this music.

What I have shown you here is the second page of a copy of “*Audivi vocem*” by Duarte Lobo. You can see the text... “...vocem de caelo, dicentem mihi”. You may just be able to see, on the second line of the music there, that Immyns has written a small word in the fourth bar, just where the singer sings “*Beati*”, and will come back to that point when we talk about performance, how these pieces were performed in 18th Century London, a little later. That was Stevens complaining about his bad night at the Madrigal Society. However, his recollections also give us two other glimpses of contexts in which this ancient music was performed, now in the early-19th Century. One of those contexts was the Gresham lectures. Stevens records that in his Gresham lectures he was revealing his interest in ancient music and used music to illustrate the points he had made. So, on July 7th in 1802: “The last music lecture day in Trinity Term, I exhibited practical examples of ecclesiastical melody and harmony by the following compositions.” So, rather than me standing here in a suit, you have to imagine an array of musicians, and a piano in one corner.

So, they began with the oddly spelled “*Bow thin ear*” by Byrd. This was followed by an anthem by Wise, one by Clark and “*Blow, I was in the spirit*”. He notes that the performers were Messrs. Price, Leete, Sale, Gore, and Nield. Hopefully he was not being literal when he remarked that “Were my vocal banned on this occasion and I took the piano forte.” Yet another context though was private music making. We have come across the accounts of the piano used as a domestic instrument in the evenings, for example, in “*Pride and Prejudice*”. Here was another kind of private music making in these musical circles where ancient music was admired. Stevens occasionally wrote down, in his diaries, which guests he had for dinner and what music was performed. So, on this day in 1816, he: “...dined home with Mr and Mrs Trueman, with Smith, John Smith, Streets, the Rev. George Savage, Mr and Mrs Lawford and Miss Jeffery, came to tea. We had some admirable vocal music, the first act badly performed.” On at least two of these occasions, one of which you see here, Stevens included works by Duarte Lobo. Again, the favourite was “*Audivi vocem*”, which is rubbing shoulders again with music by Purcell, Stevens himself, Haydn in this case, Graun, Purcell and Handel.

Stevens’ regular guests at these musical soirees included a professional bass singer who was called James Bartleman. Bartleman was another of these members of the Madrigal Society who owned, bought and copied ancient music, including music by Duarte Lobo. Stevens himself was shopping for this kind of source. He bought one manuscript, which is now in the Royal Academy of Music, which is entirely devoted to the music of Duarte Lobo, and this had been in the possession of two Oxford professors, William Hayes and his son Philip, both of whom had been Heather Professor of Music at Oxford, and again, avid collectors of “ancient music”. It was by using the manuscript that he had bought as his copy that Stevens was able to copy out a set of vocal parts and two scores of “*Audivi vocem de coelo*” by Lobo. As with the Henry Needler copy, the music was again arranged in score. However, you can see that Stevens did one other addition, which is that he used numbers of accidentals over some of the notes. What he was doing was providing figured bass, in other words, shorthand for what harmonies were going on, and this would have helped him as he played the piano for these performances at his house. So presumably, the two score copies he made were one for the conductor and one for himself, at the piano. This brings us on to the question of what we can know about what these performances were like. Of course, we are very used, in this post-modern period, of being made acutely aware of the awful gulf that separates us from any historic culture, and the difficulty of us understanding how artistic objects were understood and treated, and, in the case of music, performed. However, the copies of this Portuguese music, and other copies belonging to the Madrigal Society, give some fascinating clues.

I will come onto some of the detail about how they all performed in a minute, but first of all we need to establish how many people were performing. One extreme example, Steven’s own dinner parties, probably only had perhaps eight or nine singers, so not very much more than one singer on each part in the six-part piece “*Audivi vocem*”. As I mentioned, the meetings of the Madrigal Society would have involved somewhere between 20 and 40 singers, plus some boys perhaps from St Paul’s or elsewhere. However, by the early 19th Century, the Madrigal Society clearly sometimes had many more, and there is one surviving set of parts of “*Audivi vocem de coelo*” in the British Library which was copied for the Madrigal

Society. There were, for the very top voice, six copies, six for the second voice down – they were lucky, they had 12 tenors which does not happen these days, and in fact 15 basses, so some things never change. However, that is as nothing to some of the performances that took place in Paris of this Portuguese polyphony. Now, it did not make its way to Paris from Portugal; it arrived there from London – it is from this same English phenomenon. Here, we are faced with the phenomenon of grand choral performances of “ancient music” in 19th Century Paris and London, and the Parisian society concerned is called the Societe des Concerts de Musique Vocale Classique. It was founded and directed by the wonderfully named Joseph Napoleon Ney, who was Prince de la Moskowa. We know that the choir for the second of the concerts where Lobo’s music was performed numbered roughly 150 singers and Ney also then published Lobo’s motet in a monumental edition of the repertoire of his Societe. We are fairly confident that he got his copy of Lobo’s music from a 19th Century London printing of Lobo’s music.

This is the London printing by Vincent Novello. Novello was, again, a great enthusiast for early music and from Novello springs the Novello publishing house for music. In 1825 and 1827, he published, in several volumes, a collection of music he copied from manuscripts in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, and therefore, logically, called the volumes “The Fitzwilliam Music”, and there is our piece again, “Audivi vocem”. The composer is still being called Eduardi Lupi. There is an irony here. Novello actually was organist of the Portuguese Embassy Chapel, and that chapel was a resort for some English musical enthusiasts who wished to hear recent Portuguese and Continental Catholic music, but it seems that Novello, despite holding that post, did not know that this was Portuguese music because he says, in the prefatory material to “The Fitzwilliam Music” that this is “music by the great Italians”, so he was being fooled by that spelling of Lupi. At Queen’s, I was sorting through the choir library of Queen’s College Chapel Choir. I was looking through some shelves, with dusty volumes on, and there, arriving at Queen’s in the 19th Century and being sung in the Chapel, was a copy of “Fitzwilliam Music”. So again, enthusiasts, amateurs and choirs in various parts of England were performing this repertoire in the 19th Century. Turning then to performance, the manuscript copies and the printed editions of “Audivi vocem” tell us a good deal about how this motet and others were regarded and performed. I think the most vivid information is that the Madrigal Society singers in particular, those who remembered to bring a pencil to meetings, were adding pencil annotations of dynamics quite often in their sources.

This is actually the case where, as you can see, some singer has written “Loopy” over “Lupi” at the top right! So this is the beginning of “Audivi vocem”, and I am going to play you the piece now, so that you get some sense of the architecture of it. I would like you to listen out for a very surprising moment actually, for a piece of this period, which is when all of the parts disappear except the first soprano part. That line alone sings therefore with extraordinary emphasis “Beati mortui”, “Blessed are the dead”. This is a rhetorical device, because the previous bit of text has been: “I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, dicentem”, and then a high part is that voice singing “Beati mortui”, “Blessed are the dead”. [Recording plays] Where we get the clustering of dynamic markings in the copies is around that point and thereafter, when you get that sudden solo, “Beati mortui”. If you look on the slide, as we lead into that point, as the singers sing “dicentem mihi” repeatedly, “PR” – piano - is marked at the beginning of the third line of music in this piece. It was conventional in Madrigal Society performances for the solo line, the first sopranos, to be sung just by one voice, and remember that John Immyns’ own copy has “solo” at that point. As it happens Immyns and some others who marked up their copies wanted that solo to be sung “forte”, but thereafter, there was a variety of interpretations, and at the last two lines of music here, there is a repeated “piano” at “qui in Domino”, but then at the end of the penultimate line, a musical climax in fact, at “moriuntur”, “they die”. “Forte” is written at the end of the penultimate line.

It is quite interesting to compare the solutions of these 18th and early 19th Century performers with those of modern groups whose performances we all thought were the first revival of this music since perhaps the 17th Century. Actually, on average, I think it is true to say that what the piece reveals to modern groups concords quite often, strikingly often, with the most common solutions of these 18th and early 19th Century, which suggests, rather encouragingly, to me that there are, as I think anybody who performs this music believes, there are dynamics not written onto the original sources of course in Lobo’s time but inherently built into the way the music is constructed, which are there for 18th Century and 21st Century musicians to spot.

In conclusion, I have one or two questions. Did these English musicians know that these works which they so clearly admired were Portuguese? I have made it clear that Immyns certainly did and Needler did, because Needler had copied out, laboriously, that title page, where “Lupi”, “Lobo” is described as ‘Lusitani’, Portuguese. Needler did – he was a friend of Immyns. Immyns must have done. Some time during that

century, between the 1730s, when Needler and Immyns were first involved in this music, and the 1820s, when Vincent Novello was around, that knowledge seems to have fallen out of people's ken and they began treating him as Italian. As I mentioned earlier, one of the reasons that the existence of all this Portuguese polyphony in the British Library, the Royal College of Music, was hidden was that, if you look up the catalogues, this composer is marked as "Lupi". The problem for music historians is that there is what is called a "wolf pack" – too many composers of the 16th and 17th Centuries called Lupus, Lupi. Some of you may know that there was a Spaniard of this period called Alonso Lobo, same name, and there was the Portuguese Duarte Lobo. So it was very easy for historians to get confused, and it is actually, to look back on this story, thanks to the discovery of that Bodleian copy, and of the way it was used then in the 18th Century, which has revealed this mass of hidden copies. Whether there are other similar surprises sitting there in the Madrigal Society manuscripts, I do not know, but I suspect that there are interesting surprises, because it is a vast resource of early music, copied and signed 18th Century London. There is much interesting work still to be done on this field.

I will just mention another irony and come back to the troop Joseph Napoleon Ney, Prince de la Moskowa. He, because he obtained the piece from Vincent Novelli's edition, likewise probably thought that Lupi was Italian, but alongside it, in the same concerts, and in the same publication drive, he publishes the only work of Portuguese polyphony from the 17th Century which is still nowadays in the repertory of almost every cathedral choir in this country, and this is Crux Fidelis, by John IV of Portugal. If you detect a tremor in my voice, it is because it is not by John IV of Portugal! It was not composed even within hundreds of years of the time of John IV of Portugal. It appears, magically, for the first time, precisely in the circles of Joseph Napoleon Ney and his Society, as if by magic. The harmonic language, the way it is put together, the whole approach is thoroughly 19th Century and has nothing to do with John IV's taste in music, which we do in fact know. We have some fragmentary pieces, but enough to show us, of the kinds of writing that John IV approved of, and he also wrote music theory, where he supported the Palestrina style, and when he writes music, it is in that style. So, in those Parisian concerts, we have the famous name of John IV being attached, as a kind of forgery, to a new piece, in fact – we do not know who did that – alongside a genuine, and in fact famous, piece of Portuguese polyphony being sung as if it was Italian. Be that as it may, I think the main point that I would like to draw from this is that the music of the Portuguese golden age, coming in to England, as it happens, through Catherine of Braganza's chapel, and through this importing of a book into London and then to Oxford, and then back to London for the repertoire, gives us insights into the way, in 18th Century London, that this Portuguese polyphony was valued by 18th Century English musicians. They valued it, clearly, very highly. Although the works of Lobo became known in 18th Century London, that is just the tip of the Portuguese 17th Century iceberg in terms of this golden age I described at the start. Lobo was terribly lucky. He had his music published by Plantin in beautiful editions. His contemporaries in Portugal, just as much valued as him, by John IV and others, were unlucky. Their music was, in large part, unpublished. Those who were published were published by a local firm, the royal printer, who had been actually an apprentice in the Plantin printing house. These prints just did not make their way internationally, in the way that Lobo's music did, and so it is those other composers that this second revival for interest in Portuguese music that we have been experiencing for perhaps the last 30, 40 years, has the opportunity to broaden and one of the things we are going to try and show you at tonight's concert is the breadth and variety of that repertory from the 16th and 17th Centuries. Again, the good news is that, in terms of the task of uncovering that Portuguese golden age, there is more still to do than we have yet done.

© Owen Rees, 2010