The Composer's Inner Ear:
A Guide to Expressive Performance[1]

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Abstract

There is little debate regarding music's capacity to inspire, uplift, and rejuvenate the human spirit. From the very earliest times, group singing has expressed feelings and emotions that are inherently and uniquely human. How should the conductor look beyond the explicit information contained in the notated symbols of pitch and time to discern the inherent expressive vocabulary? This essay explores potential avenues to the unwritten expressive nuances a composer may have had in mind, by which choirs are enabled to project the music's deeper emotional meaning.

Emotions and their expression are at the very center of human life. In fact, "emotional expression is more central to music than to language."[2] From the very earliest times to the present, centuries before the development of notation, group singing has been a response to feelings and emotions.

Spontaneous singing initiated by internal emotions is inherently human. When we experience music we "gain an impression of tension and resolution, of anticipation, growth and decay."[3]

Language and music are combined when we sing. Composers accurately write words under symbols of pitch and time. The challenge is finding unseen expressive nuances heard by the composer's *inner ear*. Once we understand the implied rhetoric, we may better acquire the insight of the composer, imagining what emotion the composer felt.

Imagination—it is a characteristic human quality not unknown to choral directors! Studying a composer's notational craftsmanship is fundamental; however, more importantly, we must try to understand the composer's innter ear that is reflected by the symbolic notation of it. We must imagine the expressive gestures they represent. Often, we see only the surface and too often we follow the symbolic instructions too literally, not burrowing more deeply to consider the question of *why*.

[1] Throughout this essay I have borrowed extensively from my book, *Emotion in Choral Singing: Reading between the Notes*. GIA Publications, Inc., 2019.

[2] Mithen, Steven J. *The Singing Neanderthals: the Origins of Music, Language, Mind, and Body* (U.K.: Harvard University Press, 2007), 24.

[3] Ibid.

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How do we best answer this question? Through understanding change, attitude, and implication: how the text-music relationships may relate, to some degree or another, at any given moment, to the composer's chosen tempo, meter, texture, speed of harmonic rhythm, and how that will affect our choice of implied expressive nuances: dynamics, phrasing, articulation, linear direction, rubato. Once we understand the expressive gestures that lie behind the symbolic notation, we can tell our students, "this is why the composer did that, and *that* is why we are taking the piece this way!" This is powerful and inspiring.

Western choral art is entirely wrapped up with intervals, which innately project sound qualities and emotions (*affetti*). Man *sang*, recent research reveals, before he *spoke*. Earliest group singing was in response to personal, cultural, spiritual stimuli, spontaneously and audibly expressing emotion. The intrinsic fundamental of "chorus singing" offers us a window of insight into how we might view a score: the gesture behind the symbolic notation reveals the composer's mind's ear, the intended *emotion* to be experienced through bringing the notation alive in sound.

The Expressive Power of Intervals: An Historical Overview

The earliest chant notation reminded singers of the melodies and of the inherent expressive nuances that had developed over eight centuries of aural tradition. The melodies were meant to adorn the sacred texts. The early symbols placed above the texts were related entirely to expressive nuances that would project feelings. The history of western choral music is based upon the intertwining relationships of intervals, creating a palate of sound-colors, a mosaic of *affetti* filled with emotional undercurrents.

The theme of this essay can be summed up in two words: emotional connection. Both vertical and horizontal intervals possess a rich vocabulary of meanings. Chords and melodies create ever-changing expressive meanings, suggestions, expectations, questions, confirmations. Intervals are the aural channels through which expressive nuances are projected. Conductors and performers may fail to recognize the emotional connections of varied patterns of harmonic and melodic intervals.

Mithin, quoting the work of psychologists Hella Oelman and Bruno Loeng presented at the 5th Triennial ESCOM Conference in 2003, reveals that the connection between particular emotions and particular musical intervals seem "to be relevant for the emotional experiences of musical intervals of humans across cultures and time, and thus might be universal.[4]

There is a common spirit in choral music of the Renaissance, derived from Chant and medieval music. Composed melodies reflect varied ranges and intervallic relationships in the four modes, each with an associated plagal mode starting a fourth lower. Renaissance composers intentionally portrayed textual mood through the choice of modes. Dorian (D-d) is a mixed mode and sounds both serious and happy; Phrygian (E-e) sounds sad, sometimes exotic, vehement; Lydian (F-f) passionate, strong, quasi erotic; Mixolydian (G-g) sounds happy, playful, serene. We can feel these moods by playing scales both ascending and descending a number of times on the white notes of a piano. Why? because of the whole and half step sequences. Modal melodies frequently occur throughout the history of choral music.

We all remember melodies we sang during childhood years. From the popular songs of the Beatles to Christmas carols, folk ballads, patriotic

[4] Mithen, *The Singing Neanderthals*, 91.

songs, and church hymns, they stick with us, creating feelings and moods. We experience meaningful nostalgia when we sing or hear them.

Melodies vary enormously: linear scales, melodic leaps, ascending, descending, short, long, and combinations of multiple relationships. Playing melodies of varied types is an exploration worth experiencing. Each elicits an emotion. Go to a piano and play varied short-note melodies (three to five motes) and see how they affect you. Do the same with longer melodies. The experience will elicit feelings inherent in the innumerable combinations and sequences of note patterns that you might play.

Vertical-Harmonic Intervals Then and Now

From earliest times, expressions of mood and emotion were related to intervallic symbols of perfection and imperfection. Reinforced by reverberant cathedrals, perfect intervals corresponded to the natural overtone series. In medieval vocal polyphony pure intervallic ratios were related to theology: unison 1:1 (God); octave 2:1 (God/Father); and fifth 3:2 (God, Father, Son). These mathematical ratios were the vertical intervals used at cadences.

By the middle of the Renaissance (c. 1520) the interval of the major 3rd (5:4) was found in compositions, though rarely at final cadences. The pure overtone major third (for example E produced by the fundamental C), is out of tune and irreconcilable with the E produced by a series of four pure perfect fifths (C-G-D-A-E). The difference between the two is easily heard; it is not subtle. The lovely sound of a pure major third was especially favored in English 15th century sacred music. By the mid-16th century, composers included major thirds in final cadences. This change in compositional attitude necessitated a new tuning system. Meantone (or Just Intonation) produces "natural pure major 3rds that are low compared to equal (piano) temperament. Minor thirds were rarely allowed at cadences.

Natural pure intervals infiltrated Renaissance compositions and created the nomenclature of perfect and imperfect intervals. Unisons/ octaves, fifths/fourths are "perfect"; major thirds /minor sixths are "perfect"—they sound "at rest" in the overtone series, and there is no natural tension. Other intervals sound "imperfect" and call for resolution. We hear them as dissonant: minor and major seconds, major and minor sevenths; augmented and diminished fourths and fifths. Minor thirds and major sixths are also considered imperfect. They have tension and require resolution. Composers signaled a cadence by using the imperfect minor third to contract to a perfect unison, the major sixth to expand to a perfect octave. To express extreme emotions such as pain, loss, passion, bitterness, or sadness, the exquisite dissonant major seventh or minor second was used and demanded resolution.

Chord progressions have intrinsic expressive qualities that can meaningfully be highlighted through the use of dynamics, ranging from obvious to subtle. For example, play these progressions and be aware of their affect, their mood; feel the emotion: I ii IV I implies *diminuendo* to ii, *crescendo* to IV, and *diminuendo* to I. In many examples that one can play, a major chord followed by a minor chord suggests *diminuendo*; a minor chord followed by a major chord suggests *crescendo*. There are variants; some progressions seem "equal" and may not suggest any particular dynamic change. I urge you to intentionally experience this by playing varied short/long chord progression on the piano. See how they feel. Try matching logical dynamics with the progressions you invent.

At cadences in particular, be aware of how the chord is "spelled." The bass: the root in the bass sounds final and has a sense of permanence. The third in the bass feels impermanent, somewhat ongoing; the fifth in the bass is not stable; it suggests ongoing eternity. The soprano: the root suggests the end, and final resolve; the third feels like the emotion is not resolved; the fifth seems almost to confirm ongoing, ever- present, a truth.

Mood. What could be more human than mood, especially the sensitivity to changes of mood? When we sing we feel moods and we project moods. In fact, mood sensitivity may be the most important window through which conductors gain insight. In preparing for a performance, choirs imagine how their sound can change and inspire their listeners' state of mind. The capacity to bring notational symbols to meaningful, aural life boils down to comprehending the composer's emotional communication, the humanity in their music.

The history of notation reveals notes written on graphs with symbols, but no expression. While by the nineteenth century composers wrote expressive nuances into the score, the implied expressive gestures may remain hidden; they do not appear on the graphs. Expressive nuances are implied *between the notes*. They are, primarily:

1. the direction and design of the melodic lines;
2. the juxtaposition of harmonic progressions;
3. the note values—spacing and sizes;
4. choices of voicing, especially soprano and bass voicings of root, third, and fifth, in final chords; the placement of hemiolas;
5. the inherent expressivity of major and minor chords, and the dissonant chords of varied levels.

Catalyst for Change: Verbs, Nouns, Adjectives, Pronouns, Adverbs

We frequently use two words to describe the relationship between the visual and aural arts that relate to how a composer sets the text: *word painting*. To represent sound images, composers employ harmony (consonance, dissonance), melody (shape, direction), rhythm (fast, slow), and texture (polyphonic, homophonic). Throughout my years of studying scores and preparing rehearsals, it occurred to me that there are a number of common predispositions that drew composers toward word painting. Highlighting words *via* expressive musical vocabulary was the result of their desire to aurally represent parts of speech. Verbs seem especially enticing, for they express both motion and emotion, qualities abundant in both sacred and secular texts.

Notational portrayal of feelings and moods appeared in the early sixteenth century, sparked first in the motets of Josquin des Prez. By the middle of that century, word painting in madrigals became the catalyst for the *seconda practica*, especially in the hands of Cipriano de Rore and Giaches de Wert, these two brilliant students of Claudio Monteverdi. Concurrent with the development of the madrigal, "eventually performers applied expressive nuances not included in the notation, such as dynamics and tempos. In response to the emotion of the text, mid-16th century performers are described as singing fast, slow, loud, soft".[5] While very few expression marks were written by composers during the seventeenth century, the emotional quality of verbs, nouns, adjectives, personal pronouns and conjunctions became subject to amplification by the composer from Medieval music to today.

[5] Hudson, Richard. *Stolen Time: The History of Tempo Rubato* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 6.

In sum, from 1350 to 1700 there was no need for composers to write expression marks into choral score because contemporaries understood how the notation reflected the intended inherent expression. In this context, an important question to ask is, "what part of speech is the composer emphasizing, today or centuries ago; what emotion is s/he trying to highlight and by what element of music—harmony, melody, rhythm, texture or a combination?"

Because choral compositions reflect to some degree or another a word-music relationship, it is important to consider the word "reflect." In that context, two questions arise: "how does the composer reflect the text?" and why and how did they directly reflect their prioritization of *feelings* that drew them to a specific word or a phrase?

Connecting a composer's reflections to a specific part of speech is key. Verbs, for example, signal motion and emotion. Composers highlight verbs of motion primarily with movement: fast notes, direction of notes, tempo changes. They occur especially in polyphonic or fugal textures. Composers highlight verbs of emotion with harmony: fear, sadness, disappointment, loss, and anxiety, with dissonance, chromaticism, minor chords, cross-relations, closed textures, and unresolved progressions; happiness, joy, exuberance, love, freedom, and contentment with major keys, major chords, modal progressions, harmonic motion, open textures, and high or clear textures.

Emotional expression is made relevant only when choirs can meaningfully project it aurally. In rehearsals, conductors can teach singers how to project emotional expression by analyzing a composer's notational vocabulary of feelings, often intertwined with the expressive power of intervals. Intervals, both vertical and horizontal, convey moods, interact with parts of speech, and enhance emotional flavors. In considering the many stimuli that trigger a composer's written vocabulary of expressive nuances, I offer interpretive ideas in compositions of three well-known composers: Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Heinrich Schütz, and Benjamin Britten. In doing so the primary purpose will be to activate our insight by asking, "why did the composer do that; what emotion might the composer feel when he set the music that way?! What was the composer's mind's ear—the internal expressive emotional feelings that s/he hoped the conductor would comprehend and be able to teach a choir to aurally project?

G. P. Palestrina—*Sicut cervus desiderat*

(a score is provided on page 66)

Published in 1584, Palestrina divides *Sicut cervus desiderat* into two parts. For this essay I discuss part one focusing attention on many expressive nuances that will bring audible clarity to Palestrina's "word painting": tempo, tuning, balance, phrasing, articulation, dynamics, linear direction, and rubato. Based on Psalm 42:1, Palestrina divides his composition into three overlapping sections: 1) *Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum* (As the deer desires running waters, mm. 1–25; 2) *ita desiderat* (so longs for, mm. 23–44; and 3) *anima mea, ad te Deus* (my soul for you, God, mm. 40-58). Palestrina's central theme is the verb *desiderat* (longs for, desires). Although "desires" appears only twice in the Psalm text, Palestrina amplifies the emotional meaning by repeating *desiderat* twenty-four times.

Word-Music Relationship Related to Structure

The verb *desiderat* has three complementary meanings: to desire, to long for, to yearn. Palestrina makes clear this thematic message in mm. 1–25 with short rhythmic ascending notes

contrasting with the long flowing lines ("running waters"), and in mm. 23–44, with imitative polyphonic lines on only two words, *ita desiderat. Anima mea*, (my soul) the object of *desiderat*, in mm. 40–58 begins with a motif of seven imitative descending notes, each enhanced with an appoggiatura, a longing gesture. The sopranos first sing the motive on the highest note of the motet. The three words, *ad te, Deus* are extended with ornamental lines that highlight the noun *Deus*.[6]

Palestrina describes running water with continuous overlapping polyphonic lines, interrupted by two structural cadences (mm. 22–23 and 54–55) and two inconsequential passing cadences (mm. 13 and 17). Therefore, the specific word "desiderat," set in quarter notes, dotted quarters, and eighth notes, gain increasing urgency. The subtle poignancy of Palestrina's conception for *urgency* is manifested by the fact there are no structural cadences in two-thirds of the motet (mm. 23–55), reinforcing Palestrina's conception "my soul *urgently* desires God." Passing dissonances (major seconds or minor sevenths) are common. Palestrina paints nouns (water, deer, fountain) with major 7th dissonances, highlighted in my edition with vertical slanting lines. The dissonances appear on two momentary Phrygian cadences (mm. 10 and 37), reflecting emotions of pain and sadness related to yearning and longing.

Given these insights into Palestrina's score, how can we best make clear these compositional emotional gestures? One of the basic principles to best aurally amplify the expressive meaning of this motet is to balance contrapuntal lines and tune dissonances and principal cadences.[7] The emotional meaning of parts of speech (nouns, verbs, *etc*.) can be treated with dynamics, phrasing, articulation, linear direction, and rubato.

Dynamics

When performing *Sicut cervus*, dynamics can be employed on many levels:

1. In sections one and two, to clarify long and short notes of the head-motifs and subsequent quick notes on *desiderat*, add modest crescendos and diminuendos. Be aware of overbalancing the eighth notes when singing *aquarum*.

2. As each vocal part ascends, to allow listeners to perceive points of arrival, create an initial forward crescendo with slight motion.

3. At the end of the first section, the bass entrance overlaps the structural cadence with the head motif, *ita desiderat* mm. 23–43. This 24–bar section magnifies the word "desires" with ever-flowing, overlapping, quick imploring polyphonic lines. By employing subtle dynamics with forward motion, there will be an increased feeling of urgency telegraphed by the continuous motion. Take care to balance quicker notes with longer cadential notes by allowing the long notes to recede into the background. Provide quick notes with subtle articulation.

[6] Note that the tenor melodic line on Deus (God), mm 47–49, reflects the soprano melodic line on *aquarum* (water) mm 19–23, almost note-for-note. In this way, near the conclusion of the motet, Palestrina reminds us that the "hart [deer that] desires springs of [flowing] water," (mm 19–23 of the soprano) is the precise parallel affect (via the melodic tenor, mm 47–49) of "so longs my soul for thee, O God."

[7] Major seventh dissonances are exquisite if in tune; an example in m. 10: allow the B of the soprano to be low enough not to sound like an out-of-tune octave. Cadences, especially the final cadence, m. 58, tune to the overtone series; let the tenor B be low to the *piano* third. It is easy to hear the octave, third, and fifth overtones in the air by playing strongly a low bass G (for example) on an in-tune piano. Note the major third is quite low to the piano (tempered) third.

Palestrina signals each structural (and passing) cadence with suspensions–a structural announcement. To clarify the signal, balance and tune the two-note suspensions. In the third section, *anima mea*, Palestrina also consistently announces the head-motive with a suspension, enhancing the emotional quality of "my soul" (possessive adjective, noun), the object of "desiring." The suspensions feel "imploring." In this context, that emotion is best served by adding a brief crescendo on "*a*" with excellent tuning when balancing the two notes of the appoggiatura.

It is interesting to observe, with the exception of the tenor, bars 47–48 on *Deus*, "magnifying God," that the last third of the motet contains fewer eighth notes. This pattern seems to suggest a quality of contemplation ("my soul for thee, God"). Nearing the final cadence a slight diminuendo may highlight this emotion. The final cadence occurs before the last four bars, a typical trait of many Palestrina motets. The motet concludes with a deliberate feeling of winding down, enhanced by the final plagal cadence that can be served appropriately by an expressive diminuendo.

Phrasing

In this edition, micro phrase-groups are indicated with brackets placed above three-note groups. The purpose of these marks is to visualize the melodic and rhythmic asymmetric groupings in each vocal line. Normal two-note groupings of motives relate to the natural half-note pulse signaled by the *alla breve* 𝔠 sign. The bracket placed above three-note groupings reveals asymmetry and highlights the melodic-rhythmic nuances of each independent vocal part, *one of the primary sources of expression in singing Renaissance polyphony*. To highlight and contrast asymmetric polyphonic phrase-groups add very subtle brief forward rubato motion (beat 1, 2'3 1,) with a very subtle dynamic-rhythmic fluctuation: *cresc 1 to 2', 3 to 1*, to discreetly "catch up" after the 'mark.

Motion and Rubato

As Don Campbell writes in *Music: Physician for Times to Come*, "Music moves. Not only emotionally, but bodily: music dances inwardly and incites to gesture, to dance, outwardly. Song and gesture both contain movement generated by the musical thought and form.… Even thinking music, without sound, involves the experience of movement in imagination… the movement of music thought is not mere movement: it is expressive movement."[8]

Notation is a graph that visually indicates pitch and time. When a choir sings, motion occurs naturally; music-making and motion are thus allied. Shifts from two-note to three-note groupings commonly occur in polyphonic textures and in hemiolas and phrases that mirror the strong-weak syllabification of words. These shifts offer modest opportunities for illumination with rubato and dynamics, creating subtle linear expressivity.

Quick-moving notes reflect verbs of motion, or emotion. Forward motion (rubato) will aid in this emotional affect. As the phrase ends, relaxation will occur. Melodic lines that arrive at a momentary destination, as demonstrated in the opening motive, rise and fall according to the syllabic stress of the words: Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum. Cadences indicate how the composer organizes the textual structure. Modest motion of tempo can articulate the beginning or end of these musical structures. To highlight cadences, add rubato to unwind the inherent forward motion (mm. 22–23, 54–55), and especially at the final plagal cadence. As

[8] Campbell, Don. *Music: Physician for Times to Come* (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 2014), 124.

Richard Hudson says in *Stolen Time: The History of Tempo Rubato*, "The idea of retarding at cadences seems to have been transmitted also to polyphonic music.... Late in the sixteenth century the cadence could be emphasized, even in types of music otherwise in strict rhythm by extending the penultimate note or chord."[9]

On page 66, please look at my edition of Palestrina's *Sicut cervus desiderat*. The original pitch was F; I transposed it up a whole tone to G.[10] The original note values are halved. Brackets above notes indicate three-note groups in the context of duple meter. Cadences and dissonances are projected by vertical and slanted dotted lines. The alto has a low range, one "high" A; the lowest note is G. This is a comfortable range for a high tenor. Consider using some tenors and/or baritones in falsetto for frequently balancing the four vocal parts.

Heinrich Schütz: *Selig sind die Toten*

(a score is provided on page 70)

It is our task as conductors to teach our ensembles how to understand the structural, stylistic, and expressive elements' relationship to word meanings. Singers learn how the composition reflects the meaning of the texts both broadly and in detail. With in-depth analyses, insightful conductors realize how a composer illuminates the meaning of a word, creates the mood of a verse, or expresses the emotion of a line of a text. These insights must also reveal an understanding of the implicit gestures not notated in the score. The importance of a conductor's insight into the implicit gestures will inspire the choir in rehearsals when they explain the meaning of the emotional contours of each phrase of music. Heinrich Schütz's *Selig sind die Toten* offers an excellent example of his rich vocabulary of implicit expression, not evident in the score notation.

Selig sind die Toten is one of the twelve motets for six-part choir in Schütz's *Geistliche Chor-Music* of 1648, the year in which the Peace of Westphalia concluded the Thirty Years War which had devastated the court and church music establishments. Schütz spent much of his life employed in Dresden as well as traveling throughout Europe, including studying with Monteverdi at St. Mark's in Venice. By 1630 he came back to Dresden to resume compositional duties for court ceremonies, and by 1650 Dresden employed nineteen musicians including normally three singers per part.

Most interestingly, the motets contain no basso-continuo parts. During the seventeenth century, pitch standards were primarily related to the inclusion of instruments for court ceremonies or concerted works; if performed only in church, it was the organ that set the pitch. During this time church-pitch for choirs varied considerably and choirs would have performed these motets on many pitch standards. Collected works editions write *Geistliche Chor-Music* almost entirely on G; the original pitch was on F. We do not know the pitch of the Dresden organ in the mid-to-late-seventeenth century, though some scholars believe that it may have been approximately a whole tone above the original written pitch. That the motets were written primarily on F and that modern editions have transcribed them on G has often suggested to me the decision to perform many Schütz motets on F-sharp, a key that stays far better in tune than F or G.

[9] Hudson, Richard. *Stolen Time: the History of Tempo Rubato*, 7.

[10] The pitch of the organ of Cappella Giulia was a half-step low to A=440. The sound of Palestrina's *Sicut cervus* was therefore pitched on F-sharp, a "key" that corresponds easily to falsetto or high tenor ranges as well as tenors, baritones, basses. The Harvard Glee Club performed *Sicut cervus* on F-sharp many times and this "key" created a beautiful and natural sound.

Analysis for Performance

These words are from Revelation 14:13, from Schütz's Lutheran Bible.

> *Selig sind die Toten*
> Blessed are the dead
>
> *Die in dem Herren sterben*
> who die in the Lord.
>
> *Nun, ja der Geist spricht*
> Now, yea the Spirit speaks;
>
> *Sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit*
> they rest from their labors;
>
> *Und ihrer Werke folgen ihnen nacht*
> their works do follow them.

In translating Schütz's mind's-ear to the choir there are innumerable expressive nuances that can be considered. From the written notation we see many opportunities to improve clarity of tuning, balance, and texture, and there is a range of expressive components that we can use to project aural clarity of Schütz's emotional intentions: dynamics (dynamic/motion), phrasing, articulation, linear direction (dynamic/motion), and rubato (dynamic motion).

Words and Music—Tuning, Balance, Linear Direction, Dynamics, Motion

The first twelve measures present varied musical implications for the words *Selig sind die Toten* (Blessed are the Dead). Measures 1-7 create a unity of spirit with a rich sonorous homophonic texture; these majestic measures represent the universality of the adjective *blessed(ness)*. To achieve this unity of spirit, the six vocal parts must be in tune and well balanced to meaningfully project aurally the inherent beauty of the "oneness" in this gesture; singing a modest crescendo from the opening *Selig* to the "known-object" *Toten* will highlight this gesture. Tune well the final G major chord.[11]

For the next phrase, *die in dem Herren sterben* (who die in the Lord,) Schütz provides an immediate contrast of texture; the brief overlapping imitative polyphonic lines project the independence of all persons, and humanity's outcome: to die (verb, *sterben*) leading to the direct object, *Herren*. Singing the quarter notes of each of the ascending lines with a modest crescendo with forward motion that leads to *Herren* will meaningfully highlight the individuality and the inevitability of humanity. A D-sharp appears in the alto on *sterben*; in German "sharp" also means "cross."[12] The final chord of this phrase is pitched on B major, a harmony symbolically distant from the opening G major (*Selig*). Tune and balance carefully these two major chords. Let the descending completion of the phrase on m. 12 relax with a modest diminuendo, confirming the inherent nuance of an "Amen" plagal (IV-I) cadence.

Beginning m. 13, Schütz offers a joyful setting of *selig sind*. Each part overlaps and imitates each other in dance-like triple groups of three quarter-notes; the bass projects the triple motion in augmentation, as all parts approach a brief cadence at *Toten* on E, symbolically containing two sharps. A degree of forward motion with each *selig*, reflecting the strong/weak syllabification, will reveal Schütz's enthusiastic setting of this compelling, brief sequence.

In mm. 19–36, the imitative polyphonic ascending patterns first heard for the text "who die in the

[11] As mentioned before, listen to the overtones created by the low G. Tune especially the third to match the B of the overtone.

[12] The sharp sign # relates to two words in German: "sharp" and "cross." The cross symbolizes the crucifixion and is commonly used by German composers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most noteworthy in Bach's Passions and many cantatas.

Lord" are elongated; this setting meaningfully enhances the emotion of *selig*: "happiness, blessedness, longing." The length of the phrase seems to magnify humanity's hopeful and joyful anticipation of inevitable death. These eighteen measures seem to confirm a reaffirmation of faith, within which brief cadences contemplatively occur.

At m. 37 there is a strikingly strong major seventh dissonance on the downbeat that alerts us to a new text: *Nun, ja der Geist spricht* (Now, yea the Spirit speaks); it is a phrygian cadence that expresses an emotion of sorrow on die *Toten*, (the dead) and with *selig*, resolution. A single tenor voice announces, "Yea. The Spirit speaks"—a strong gesture that projects the Spirit's individuality. We can complement the emotional content of this phrase that Schütz intends by carefully tuning and balancing the major seventh dissonance, allowing a subtle ritard and diminuendo at the cadence, and employing individualistic strong dynamics for the solo tenor who interrupts the phrase.

Schütz's setting of "Yea, the Spirit speaks" (mm. 40–45) has a joyfully dramatic expression; he repeats *der Geist sprichts* four times with quick overlapping voices, as if to say, "Listen, listen, listen—the Lord, Lord, Lord, speaks!" The long notes are a cry for strength and the repetitive gestures reinforce the feeling of urgency. Tune and balance the series of chords on the verb *spricht*, with pure unisons, octaves, and fifths, and especially the major third that is in tune with the overtone series, a pitch that is low to piano equal temperament.

The brief, powerful setting of "the Spirit speaks" (mm. 45–49) is given a poignant resolution by Schütz's beautiful contemplative setting of *sie ruhen* (they rest). Rest is portrayed with long, slow notes as if time is suspended, on a series of plagal cadences enhancing moods of tranquility and resolution. The affect of these moods can be projected with a calm diminuendo, and a subtle tempo relationship from *ru-* to *-hen* each time this gesture occurs.

Immediately following is Schütz's expressive setting of *von ihrer Arbeit* (from their labor). It could not be more vivid! We hear an extended series of dissonant passing half-note chords. Measures 49-55 contain vertical tone-clusters: D, E, F-sharp, G and A, that are initiated by the bass and overlapped by the tenor I, tenor II, alto, and soprano voices. When contrasted with the tranquility of the slow, restful IV–I cadences, humanity's labors will be made especially dramatic by tuning and balancing the dissonances, thereby clarifying these note clusters. Technically, to receive expressive clarity, the whole steps (D-E-F-sharp, and G-A) must be tuned slightly wide to tempered tuning, each chord balanced as they pass in time. The half-steps with the crossing tenor parts in mm. 50–51 will be made clear through balancing them and singing a wide enough interval to confirm the half-step crossings are not out of tune unisons.

Between mm. 55–64, Schütz returns to the tranquility of rest followed by the anxiety of "your labors." This time, Schütz highlights the pronoun *ihrer* (your) with many compositional techniques:

a. chromaticism: two diminished fourths (mm. 61 and 63),

b. high-ranged dissonances between the two soprano parts,

c. a striking series of three suspensions, and

d. in m. 63, the vivid diminished fourth (soprano I, tenor I) with the half-step dissonance (soprano I and alto) that resolves immediately to a half-step dissonance between the alto and tenor I.

In this manner, Schütz increases the emotional intensity of *ihrer*, (your [labor]), giving this pronoun ownership. Throughout the beautiful consonances of rest and the many forms of dissonance and vocal suspensions, the conductor must carefully balance and tune the individual vocal parts to allow these intervals to reflect the expressive sensitivity Schütz intends.

Beginning in m. 65, Schütz sets the final phrase of the text, *und ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach* (and their works do follow them), by employing a very different affect. His festive, imitative, quick-note textures in close canonic imitation highlight the verb "to follow" in an eight-measure "eagerly anticipated" style. This heart-felt celebration of "for those who die—their works will be remembered" amplifies the sentiment. The rewards of life's struggles are made even more vivid by Schütz's imagination when he repeats *sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit* in the highest range of the entire motet with a full six-part texture (mm. 82–84). The rich sonority of the six vocal parts highlight the meaning Schütz seems to intend for the celebration of all generations whose works will be remembered (mm. 85–91). This is made all the more poignant by the long, lyric vocal lines peppered with chromaticism and dissonance.

In mm. 65–90, Schütz emphasizes the emotional expressions of resting, laboring, and remembering, by contrasting these moods with the same powerful images:

a. slow notes on IV-I cadences for "rest,"

b. excruciating dissonances for "your labors," and

c. joyful imitative, rhythmic, and quasi dance-like motives for "shall be remembered."

Schütz's final seven measures provide a summary of faith, and conclude with two high sopranos imitatively echoing "your works will follow after you." The final G major chord contains D as the highest note. Schütz's choice of the fifth of the chord as the highest note reflects the emotional quality of sound he intends concluding with "your works will follow after you," "forever," "on-going."

Benjamin Britten: The Evening Primrose (Five Flower Songs, Op. 47 No. 4)

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976) composed Five Flower Songs in 1950, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth wedding anniversary of Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst, founders of the Dartington Hall project in progressive education and rural reconstruction. *The Evening Primrose*, on a poem by John Clare, is the slow movement of Britten's set of five songs with poems on the subject of flowers.

It was in the fall of 1959 that I was introduced to this wonderful music when singing with the Chamber Singers at the University of California, Santa Barbara, under the direction of Dorothy Westra. Professor Westra introduced the Chambers Singers to the many newly composed works by, among others, Britten, Vaughan Williams, Irving Fine, and Aaron Copland, and the rich repertoire of the Renaissance. Little did I know as an undergraduate how deeply influenced I would be by her choices of repertoire. *The Evening Primrose* was my favorite of Britten's *Five Flower Songs*, and it still is. More than fifty years later I continue to turn to choral music by these British and American composers, and the rich range of polyphonic choral music of the Renaissance.

Part I: Text and Music: Britten's Setting of John Clare's The Evening Primrose[13]

The poem by John Clare provides an atmospheric setting of the primrose, a pale rose that blooms only at night. Clare sets his description of the evening primrose with a series of seven rhymed couplets. The poignant description John Clare provides offers a series of events; it is a personalization of the life of the primrose and is portrayed with remarkable detail by Benjamin Britten. The first two couplets depict sunset and the atmosphere of dusk sensed by the primrose. Britten offers a general atmosphere of *Andante tranquillo* ("Walking along, quietly). The author has performed this piece many times and suggests a tempo of quarter note = c. 58. Below is a discussion of the word/music relationships within each of the seven couplets.

Couplets

First: "When once the sun sinks in the west" begins on a B6 chord followed by Britten's projection of the word "sink" with a colorful B7 chord; the bass line sinks from D to G#. The destination of the "sun sinking in the west" is the A major chord on "west," that is harmonically removed from the B major origin. These chords project the atmosphere of dusk descending, that is sensed by the primrose. Bar three, "and dewdrops pearl the evening's breast," begins on B major; the words, "and dewdrops pearl," portray a new scene filled with colorful harmonic motion. Britten highlights "pearl" with a beautiful A6 chord with an added major second B in the soprano. In bar four the bass continues to descend to a final stunningly beautiful F-sharp major chord on "breast" highlighting the object of the pearling dewdrops.

Second: On the text "almost as pale as moon beams are, or its companionable star," Britten writes a soprano/alto duet with triple groupings that highlight the natural syllabic word stress. The melody of the alto is the same as the soprano, upside down, and its text projects the inuendo that "its companionable star" is "almost as pale as moonbeams are." Britten's dynamic markings mirror the parallel affects of these complementary texts.

Third: The words, "the evening primrose opes a new; its delicate blossoms to the dew," portray the primrose blossoms responding to the dew. In bar eight the birth of the primrose is symbolized by Britten's poignant modal progression from F-sharp major to D-sharp (E-flat) major on the word "primrose." The words "opes a new" project a new, not yet heard B7 chord that highlights the blossoming. At "its blossoms," the SAB voices harmonically maintain the B7 chord, marked *ppp*, a dream-like affirmation of "anew." The tenor voice sings "its delicate blossoms to the dew" on a subtle, gentle melody of triple groupings; Britten's independent tenor statement seems to magnify the singularity of the primrose, delicately blossoming.

Fourth: The core of the unfolding primrose is couplet four: "And, hermitlike, shunning the light, wastes its fair bloom upon the night." Britten's vivid picture is strongly projected by the dissonant harmonic, melodic, and chromatic description, set under the dynamic *pp*. Given the colorful text, this dynamic seems ironically subdued, though it beautifully simulates the idea of "hermitlike." Britten reflects the emotions of the words "wastes

[13] Part I offers an in-depth exploration of the manner in which Britten highlights the word/music relationships throughout his composition. Because this essay is able to include only a few score examples due to copyright restrictions, the author hopes that the above study of the text/music relationships will be an incentive for conductors to obtain a copy of Britten's score. Part II below provides this author's interpretive ideas of phrasing, articulation, linear direction, and rubato coupled with dynamics, with considerable attention to specific measures that will require excellent intonation and balance.

its fair bloom upon the night" with rich harmonies. He first projects the word "wastes" on a beautiful A-sharp 6/4 (B-flat 6/4) chord. The beauty of this chord amplifies the irony that only in the night can the primrose blossom, and on "bloom" Britten chooses a sadly beautiful E minor chord. From bar 14 to 15, the soprano chromatically ascends from E to A, projecting the idea of "blooming." This adjective is amplified by Britten's crescendo markings that arrive at the apex of the activity, "night," with a pure, relieved D major chord. Britten connects the object of "wastes its fair bloom upon the night" by extending the ATB parts over the barline to the word sung by the soprano: "Who," the primrose. The subtle diminuendo above the chord on "night" pictures a tender image of this subtle connection.

Couplets five and six are the core of the story: the unfolding primrose and her continued night blooming that will anticipate an awareness that soon her gaze will encounter the sun.

Fifth: Couplet five describes how the night (and most humanity) is blindfolded to the primrose's caresses. This imitative two-part polyphonic texture of the soprano and alto contrasts and complements the previous densely-formed refuge the primrose had taken, "shunning, hermit like, the sun's light." The phrase begins *pp* and concludes the duet with a diminuendo to *ppp* at the end of the final syllables of "caresses," suggesting "to nothing." The bass at first imitates the soprano but then continues the minor-third pattern and descends to a low G-sharp that confirms the sun "knows not the beauty he possesses." Irony is again reinforced by Britten's *pp*, and then an immediate crescendo on 'knows not the beauty," followed by an immediate diminuendo on the words, "he possesses." The crescendo the composer employs magnifies the concept that the sun has no knowledge of the "beauty." The diminuendo reflects a sadness that the sun never witnesses the beauty of the primrose. The lack of a tenor line represents that the sun can never view the primrose.

Sixth: "Thus it blooms on while night is by; when day looks out with open eye." Throughout the first four measures, Britten offers a new dynamic range that highlights the blooming primrose at its prime, followed by an inkling that day begins to appear with it's still-opened blossom. In mm. 20–23, the composer writes five dynamic marks and two accents. These expressive dynamics, ranging from a crescendo to f and a decrescendo to *ppp*, seem to represent what a witness might feel in observing the primrose blooming throughout night, followed by the peeking dawn. Accents occur above the word "day" and the syllable "o"(-pen), creating a sense of alarm that anticipates "day looks out with open eyes." Note also on the words, "When day" the octave leap of the bass and the soprano leap to the F-sharp on "day," the highest note so far in this composition. The "sorrowful" diminuendos above "looks out with open eye" highlight the day dawning, observed and feared by the primrose.

The whole joyous nightlife of the primrose is magnificently projected by these dynamics including the atmospheric, sad turning point that will occur at the primrose's end.

Seventh: "Bashed at the gaze it cannot shun, it faints and withers and is gone," tells us that the sun has begun to appear, embarrassing the primrose, and her blossoms faint, wither, and over time, are gone. Britten seems to take "bashed" not as a sudden terrible event, but that occurs over time as a quality of emotional acceptance during the sunrise. The low texture with *p* diminuendo at mm. 24–25 almost suggests a quality of humility, especially in contrast with Britten's dramatic setting of couplet six. Britten also punctuates the emotions of "cannot shun" with the bass A/B

cluster against the soprano C-sharp, and then the bass G-sharp that creates a diminished fifth with the soprano D. These vertical chromatic sonorities are followed by the A-sharp of the tenor, the third of a beautiful F-major chord, that stands out ironically in relief. Britten writes a diminuendo on the word "shun" that applies especially to the ATB parts, tied to the downbeat of m. 26. In this way Britten poignantly and subtly connects the meaning of the inability of the primrose to shun the sun to the resulting in "it faints and withers."

The lovely polyphonic setting of "it faints and withers and is gone" begins with the soprano and tenor in canon an octave apart, followed by the same melody sung upside-down by the bass and alto. These overlapping strictly canonic melodies are marked *pp* and repeated twice, projecting the idea that over time primroses rise and slowly wilt as they do in nature, with the repetitions of "faints, withers, and is gone." [Note that the canonic soprano and tenor and upside-down bass, and also "it faints and withers and is gone" are an exact duplication of the canonic melody of the soprano and the upside melody of the alto (mm. 5–6) on the words "Almost as pale as moon beams are." This imitation reminds us of the beginning of the primroses nightly story.]

As this lovely piece concludes, the penultimate measure includes a diminuendo placed poignantly over the word "and" in the soprano, reaching to *ppp* on the soprano high F-sharp, highlighting the emotional conjunction "and." The soprano, alto, and bass note values slow down, while the melody of the tenor on "it faints and is" employs a syllabic triplet melodic contour reminiscent of the whole final scene. The final bar on "gone" is on a unison bass and tenor F-sharp with an open fifth between the alto and soprano that produces no precise tonality, just a reminder of F-sharp major, the dominant of the original B major tonic. The *ppp* diminuendo to the end of the bar sums up the sense of finality for the dying primrose.

Britten's Word/Music Relationships and Suggested Interpretive Ideas[14]

How might a choral conductor approach performing this gem of a part-song? The primary catalyst for the conductor's interpretation of Britten's setting is to ask the question, "what compositional ingredients does Britten use to aurally present the subtle story of a night in the life of the primrose? How can I aurally create the passing poetic emotions of *The Evening Primrose*? A brief summary of Britten's compositional mastery that reflects John Clare's moods, feelings, and emotions are create by:

a. the general atmosphere,

b. the primrose unfolding,

c. the night blooming, unseen,

d. the primrose's beauty, hidden by night,

e. night blooming,

f. then the bashing of the primrose by the beginning of daylight, followed by

g. the blooms that wither, faint, and are gone.

Britten's compositional technique reflects each mood offered by the textual imagery. Each mood is created through change in texture, melody, and rhythm. At the outset Britten states a mood, *Andante tranquillo*, suggesting "walking quietly and peacefully." His range of dynamics—*ppp* to f, indications of crescendo and diminuendo, and stress on specific words and/or syllables—masterfully projects many moods. Our interpretive ideas will relate to highlighting change, the implementation of dynamics, phrasing,

[14] The text/music relationships of the seven rhymed couplets have been explored above. In section II the author suggests many expressive nuances: dynamics, phrasing, articulation, linear direction, and rubato, with considerable attention to balance and intonation.

articulation, linear direction, and rubato, with significant attention to intonation and balance. The coupling of dynamics with rubato are important in projecting Britten's imaginative setting of Clare's poetry.

Part II: Interpretive Suggestions Based on Britten's Text/Music Relationships

When once the sun sinks in the west
and dewdrops pearl the evening's breast

The opening B6 chord on "When once the" provides a quality of gentleness that anticipates the "sun sinks in the west" that is reinforced by Britten's *pp*. Here we see again the emotional *affetti* and instability of chords built on the first inversion. Projecting these words as a complete phrase with no breath over the bar line and with a little forward motion on "sun sinks," followed by a little relaxation "in the west" communicates the intended mood. Within this phrase Britten portrays "sinks" on a colorful B7 chord, followed by the inevitable sinking "in the west" on a harmonically distant A-major chord. In both this phrase and the next, carefully balance and tune these homophonic chords.

"And dewdrops pearl the evening's breast" begins on B major; "and dewdrops" begins a new scene with colorful harmonic motion to "pearl," highlighted by a beautiful A6 chord with an added B in the soprano. The B is an octave above the tenor A and the bass C#. Each vocal part should be provided with excellent ear-voice coordination to allow this poignant chord to ring with clarity. The bass continues to descend leading to a final stunningly beautiful F-sharp major chord on "breast," highlighting the object of the pearling dew drops. Throughout these opening four measures Britten sets the text with an undulating strong/weak syllabic emphasis against the quarter-note meter. Triple note groups coincide with the natural word stress: "When once, the sun," and "dew drops pearl." Project the triple by way of subtle rubato leading to the modest emphases on "once," "sun," "dew," and "pearl." In measures two and four, tune the major thirds on "west" and "breast" (C-sharp and A-sharp) slightly low to tempered tuning in order to highlight their beauty. Make sure the bass F-sharp balances the full chord. Full attention to balance and intonation here will create a warm, restful quality to complete this lovely couplet.

Almost as pale as moon beams are,
or its companionable star

The soprano/alto duet mirrors the triple groupings that we observed in the first couplet. The melody of the alto mirrors the soprano melody, upside down. Highlight these beautiful triple-note groupings with forward motion to "pale" and "-pan," followed by a relaxation to "beams are" and "-a-ble star." Attention to rhythmic precision in mm. 6–7 will clarify the composite duple-triple nuances.

The evening primrose opes anew,
its delicate blossoms to the dew

The "birth" of the primrose is symbolized by Britten's poignant modal-progression from F-sharp major to D-sharp (E-flat) major on "primrose; "anew" contains a "new" (not yet heard) B7 chord. Make sure B/A-sharp on "anew" do not sound like an out-of-tune octave, by allowing the A# to be very slightly low to tempered pitch.[15]

At the words, "its blossoms," the soprano, alto, and bass voices maintain the B7 chord while the tenor, alone, subtly magnifies the primrose's

[15] All comparative pitch references of "sing high" or "sing low" (i.e. A vs G-sharp) refer to the tempered pitch of a well-tuned piano.

"delicate blossoms to the dew." Note that Britten writes *ppp* for the SAB parts allowing the tenor to have preference. The melodic contour of the tenor projects the inherent syllabic stresses with triple groupings.

And, hermitlike, shunning the light,
wastes its fair bloom upon the night

Britten's notation projects insightful word-painting for the opening two bars with the closed, dense, harmonically dissonant texture. In bars twelve and thirteen two major-seventh dissonances A#/B occur on "And" and "shun." These two notes can sound like an out-of-tune octave unless the bass B is sung very slightly high. There are three F-sharp/E-sharp dissonances that alternate between soprano/bass and bass/soprano. Careful attention to this dense alternation on "her-mit-like" and "-ning the light" is well worth the time; this pitch alternation can easily morph into an out-of-tune octave.

In mm. 13–15 Britten contrasts the dense "hermit" texture with beautiful harmonies on "wastes its fair bloom on the night." "Wastes its" is set on an inherently unstable A-sharp (B-flat) 6/4 chord, which promptly moves to a functionally unrelated E-minor chord on "bloom." The syllable "-on" has a momentary 6/4 A-major chord progressing to a passing, color-filled D7 chord, arriving at a stable D-major triad on "night." This sequence requires close attention to vertical clarity and good intonation. From "wastes" to the final chord on "night," the homophonic texture should crescendo through the apex of the phrase on "the," then diminuendo to "night."

It is interesting to observe that the *pp* in mm. 12–13 seem to suggest a squarely rhythmic observance of syllabic stress. This quality suddenly "awakes" to a harmonically beautiful open texture with Britten's dynamic markings from "wastes" to "night," which suggests *forward motion* of the entire phrase up to the diminuendo mark between "the" and "night." Given this context, the diminuendo suggests a quasi-ritard on the word "night." This two-bar phrase coupled with Britten's purposeful dynamics, will directly support the emotional quality of the transition words, "Wastes its fair bloom upon the night." Furthermore, note how the composer connects the word "night" to the soprano downbeat on "Who," signifying that "who," is the sun that wastes the primroses fair bloom.

Who, blindfold to its fond caresses,
knows not the beauty he possesses

Britten sets "Who, blindfold to its fond caresses" *pp* with imitative soprano and alto lines, contrasting the prior homophony. This text represents the beauty of blossoms that the sun will never be privileged to see. Perhaps the absence of the tenor part symbolizes the sun's loss. The bass adds that the sun "knows not the beauty he [the primrose] possesses," while the upper two voices repeat "caresses," drawing attention to the poetic irony. Take care to observe the dynamics above the soprano and alto parts while the bass swells downward from A to G-sharp with greater intensity. The emotional affect of the words sung by the soprano and alto can be slightly amplified by singing both parts with very subtle forward motion on "Who, blindfold to its fond," overlapping with a relaxing motion from "its fond caresses." Given Britten's dynamics, consider amplifying the bass "Knows not the beauty, with forward motion on "not the beauty," and then a relaxing quality from "-ty through "he." The drama of the bass part in mm. 17-18, the melodic gesture and dynamics "possesses" suggests a slight ritard.

Thus it blooms on while night is by;
When day looks out with open eye,

In this brief passage Britten heightens the dramatic scene of the story with seven dynamics and two

accents. The drama is portrayed by the accents placed on the word "day" and syllable "o," (of "open"), and the seven dynamics marks that include the only *forte* in the piece. On the words, "Thus it blooms on while night is by," the first crescendo amplifies the verb "blooms," and the second amplifies "night.' The diminuendos in the final two bars seem to suggest daybreak, as observed by the primrose. Note the octave leap in the bass to a major second against the tenor on "day," and the leap of a fifth in the soprano, combining the highest pitch and the loudest dynamic in the composition. Britten's detailed expressive gestures, strictly observed, vividly portray the emotional message of these four bars.

'Bashed at the gaze it cannot shun,
it faints and withers and is gone...

Britten's dynamic p on "bashed" contradicts the "strength" connotation of this word. In the context of the life of a primrose it seems to signify it is a natural event, especially amplified by the diminuendo marking of the whole phrase. The diminuendo over "shun" may be seen to suggest the wilting of the primrose; however, the alto, tenor, and bass on the word "shun" are held into the next downbeat beginning on the two words, *it faints*, that connects these two phrases. These are very subtle dynamics Britten uses. Allow them to express the emotions of the words. Maintaining their subtlety calls for intentional vocal focus within this phrase. Note the complex harmony that sets the word "cannot" with an F-sharp minor triad with an added B against the A in the bass and C-sharp in the soprano; this is followed by the B minor triad with an added G-sharp in the bass that forms a diminished fifth with the soprano.

The lovely overlapping canonic melodies of the soprano and tenor on "it faints and withers and is gone" are followed by bass and alto that imitate their canon upside-down. Repeated twice, the whole may create a jumble of words. Throughout these canonic phrases, clear intonation and diction with excellent vertical precision must be maintained. The feeling that Britten seems to be portraying is that each primrose is separately, individually fainting, withering, and dying, while the quasi-dense melodic/harmonic/textual "sameness" create an atmosphere that all primroses, by nature, do the same thing when the sun sets.

Britten's diminuendo in mm. 29–30 stretches the word "and" to *ppp* on a soprano F-sharp, which must be placed high. Also consider the import of the slowing note values in the soprano, alto, and bass, against the tenor on "it faints and is," creating a reminder of the whole scene. The final "gone" has no precise tonality, neither hinting at F-sharp major or minor, just an empty, open "gone."

Concluding Thoughts

In this essay I have considered the word/music relationships as seen through the work of composers from three different eras. Each composer weds his composition to ongoing change in harmony, melody, rhythm, and texture which, properly considered, reveals some of the composer's mind's ear. I have hopefully revealed the mental-aural image, thereby suggesting expressive nuances that can be placed between notes or over phrases: dynamics, phrasing, articulation, linear direction, and rubato. We saw that, in *The Evening Primrose*, Britten employs nearly all of these categories of expression.

Finally, in studying these compositions for performance, I urge choral conductors to remember these three choral fundamentals: balance, vowels, and tuning. Consider how each melodic line and each chord can project beauty and meaning, through careful attention to sonorous balance, uniformity of vowels, and excellent intonation.

Sicut cervus desiderat

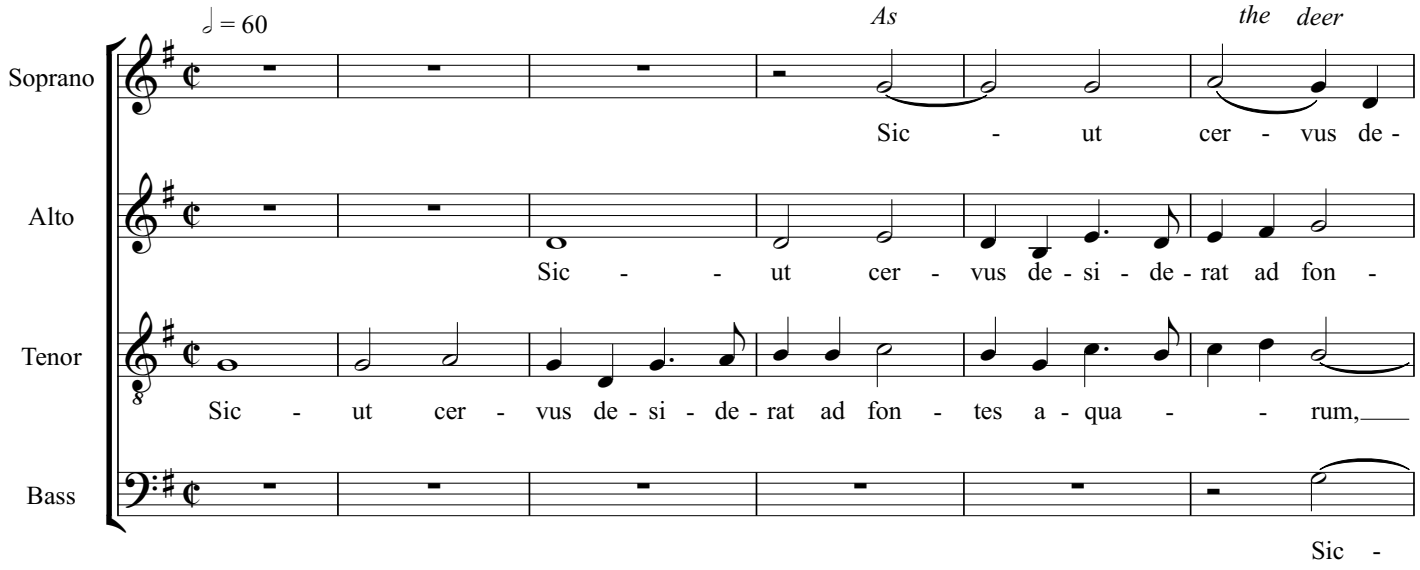
Prima pars

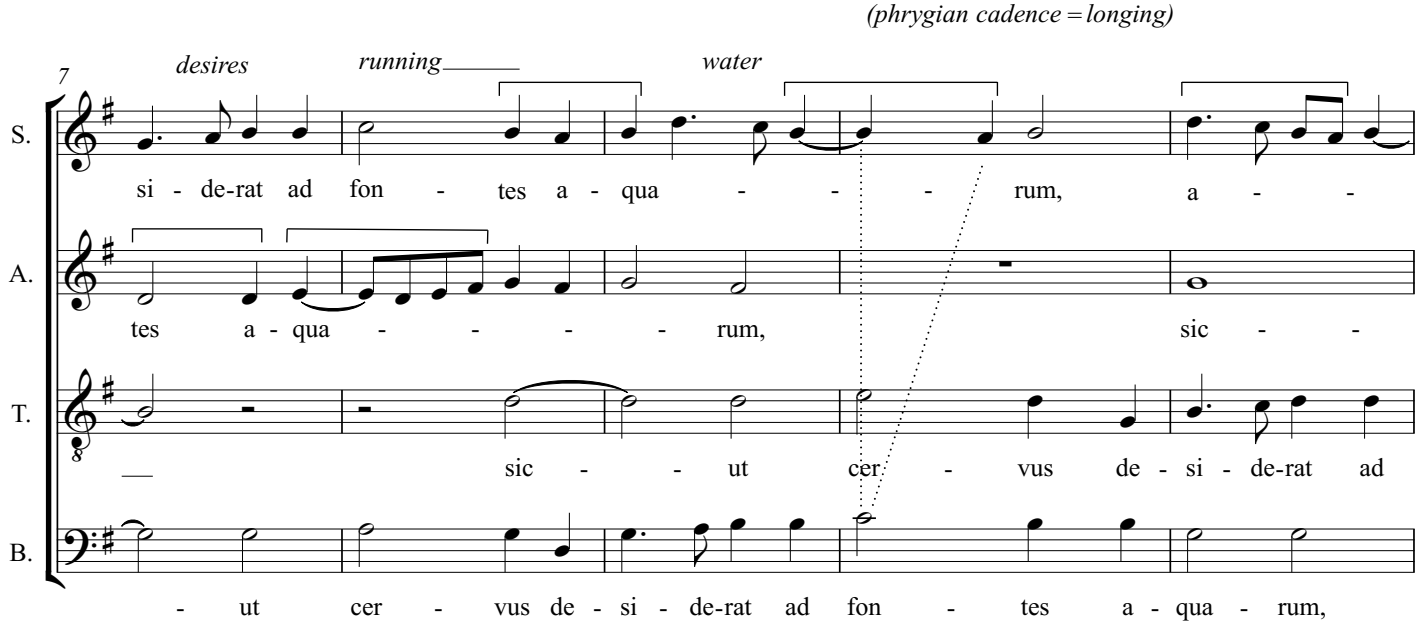
Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
(c.1525-1594)

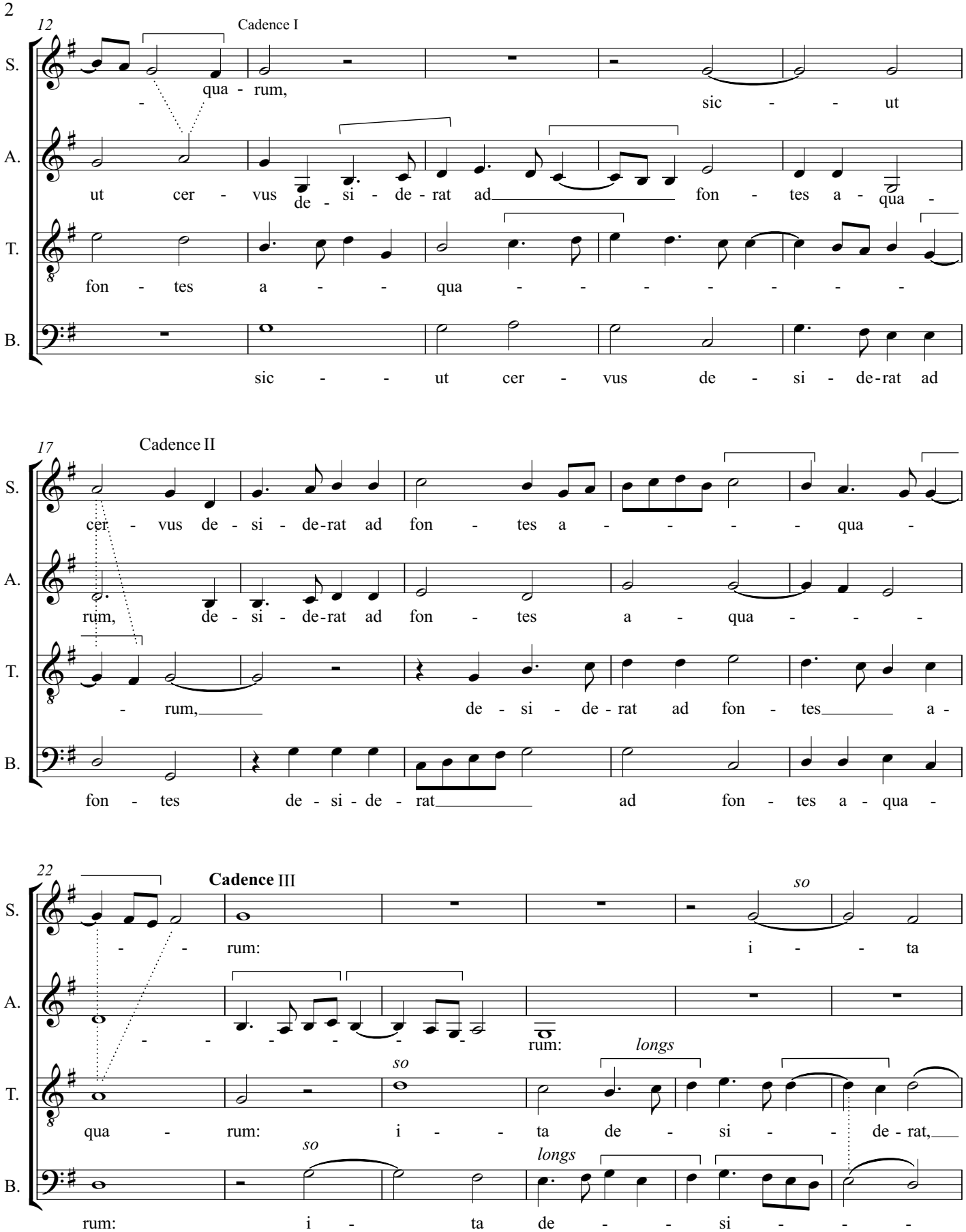
Edited for the Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum by Jameson Marvin

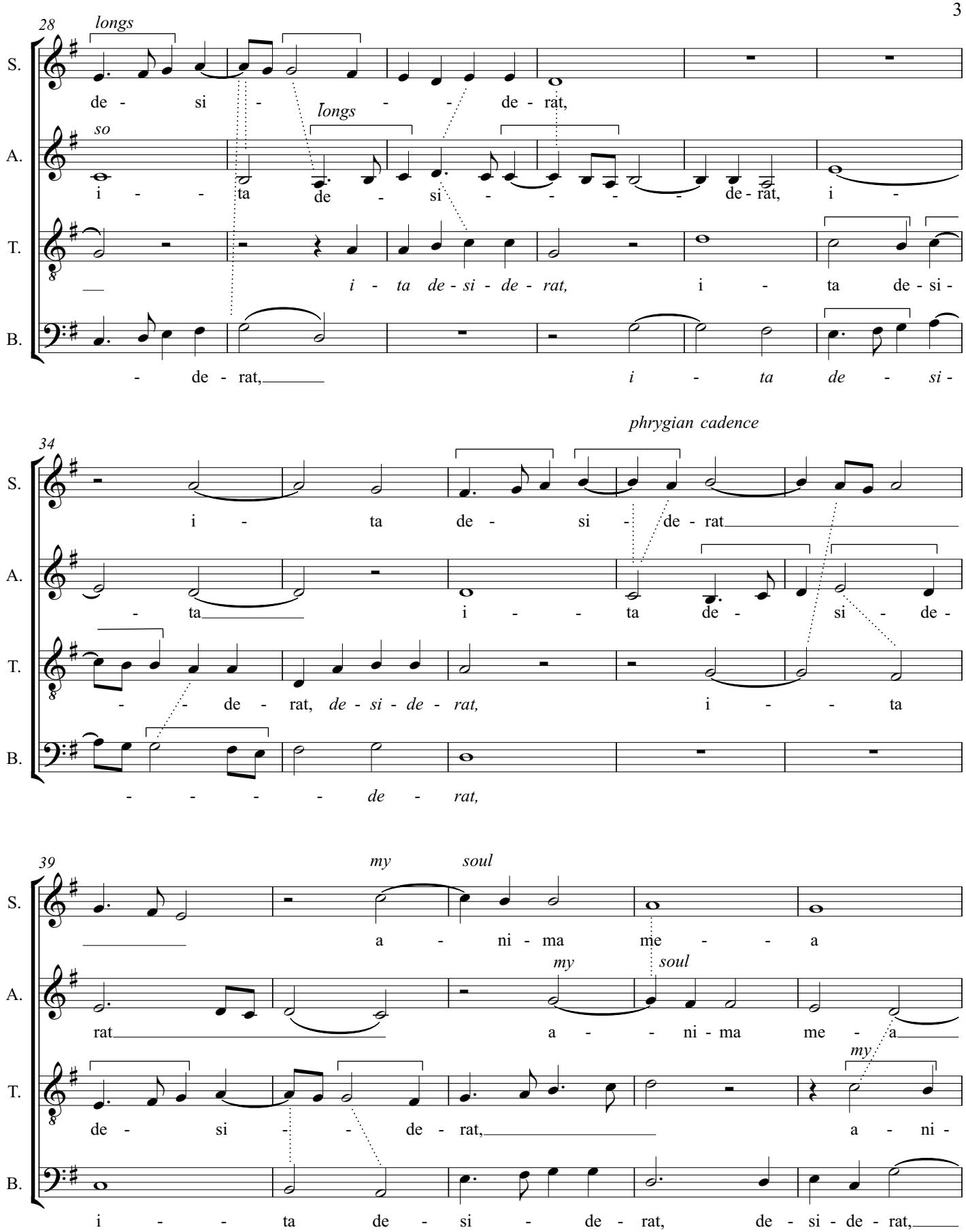
Psalm 42:1 *As the hart desires springs of water, so longs my soul for thee, O God.*

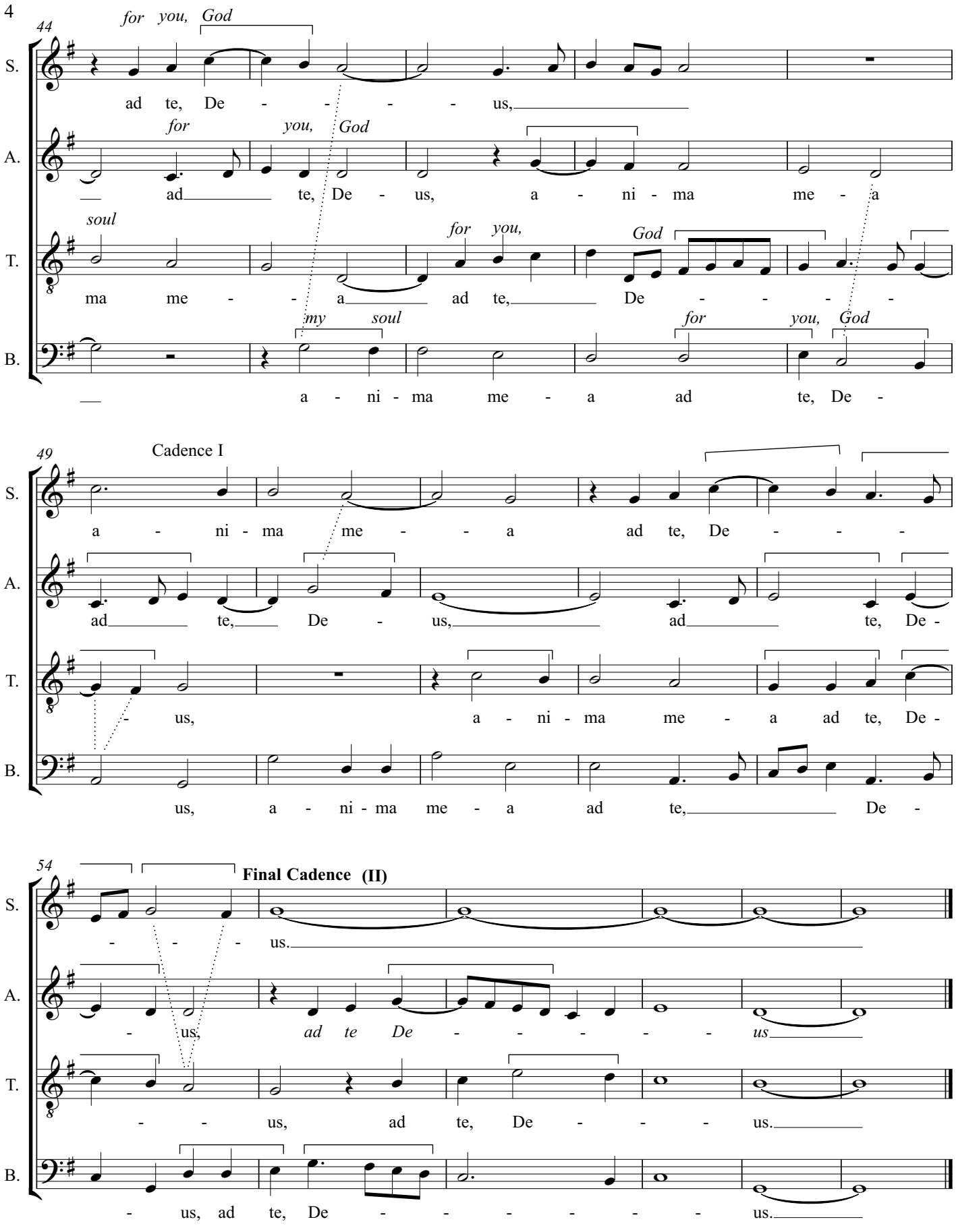
The notation is halved; the original pitch was on F. S*icut cervus* appears in Gardano's second book of four-voice motets of 1604. Palestrina composed *Sicut cervus* for the Cappella Giuglia in Rome 1571-1594. The organ pitch of A was 410-413 in the 1470s and 80s (i.e. *Sicut* sounded on E). The verb, *desiderat* (yearns, desires, longs for) appears twice in the Biblical corpus. Palestrina repeats this verb 24 times in *Sicut cervus.* Thus, *yearning* is the core emotion for this motet.





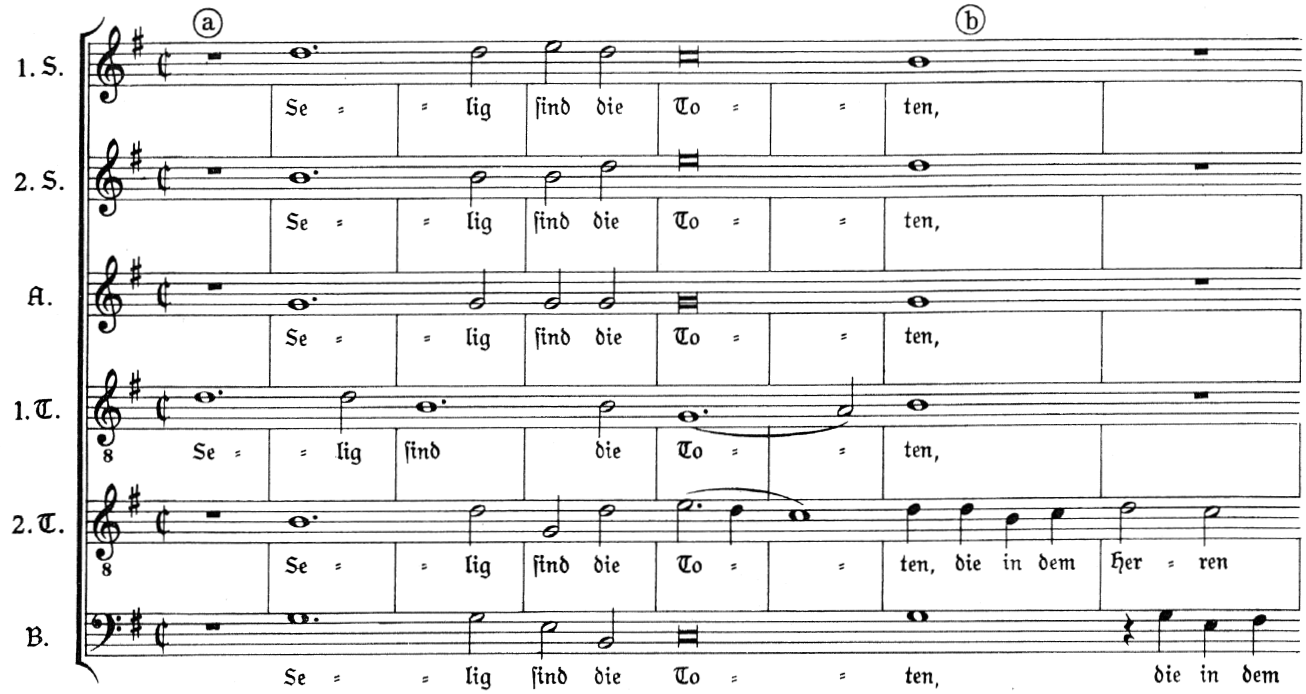

12
Cadence I
S.
A.
T.
B.
- qua - rum,
sic - - ut
ut cer - vus de - si - de - rat ad fon - tes a - qua -
fon - tes a - - qua - - - - - - -
sic - - ut cer - vus de - si - de-rat ad
17
Cadence II
cer - vus de - si - de-rat ad fon - tes a - - - - qua -
rum, de - si - de-rat ad fon - tes a - qua - - -
- rum, de - si - de - rat ad fon - tes a -
fon - tes de - si - de - rat ad fon - tes a - qua -
22
Cadence III
so
- - rum: i - - ta
- - - - - - - rum:
longs
so
qua - rum: i - - ta de - si - - de - rat,
so
longs
rum: i - ta de - - si - - -

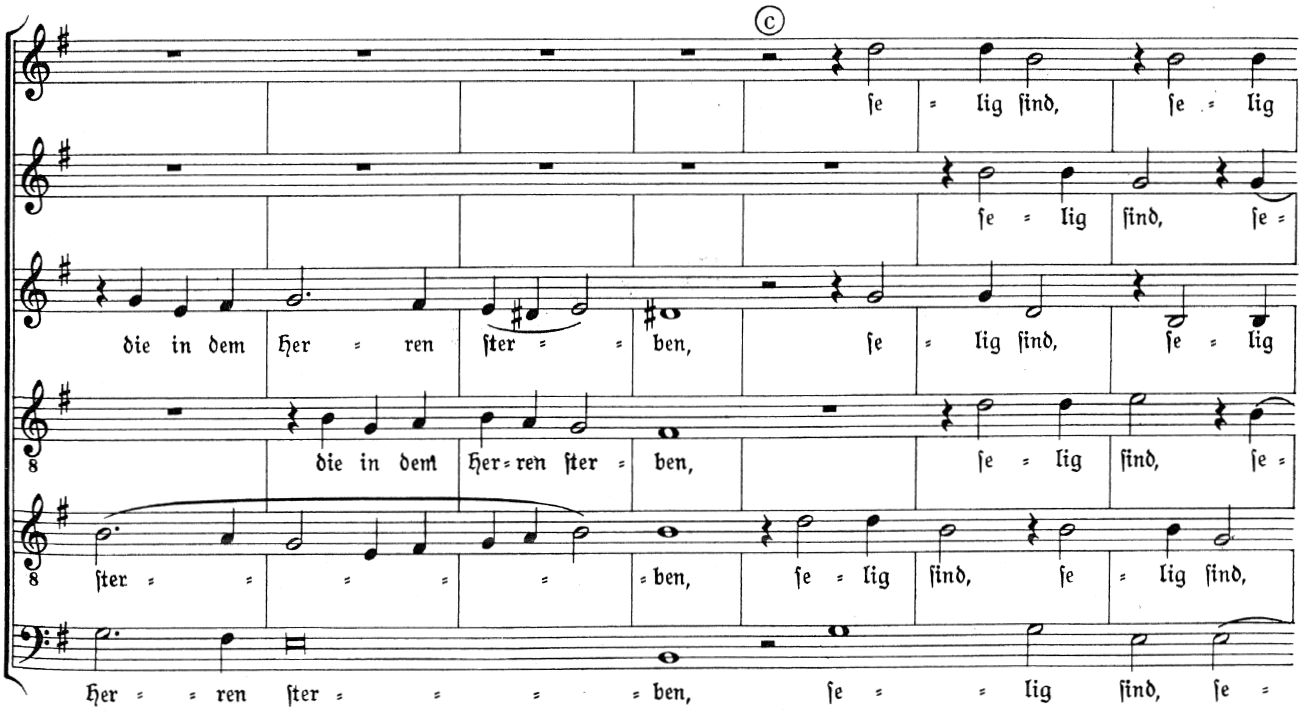

28
longs
S.
de - si - - - de - rat,
longs
so
A.
i - - - ta de - si - - - - de - rat, i -
T.
i - ta de - si - de - rat, i - ta de - si -
B.
- de - rat, i - ta de - si -
34
phrygian cadence
S.
i - ta de - si - de - rat
A.
- ta i - - ta de - si - de -
T.
- - de - rat, de - si - de - rat, i - - ta
B.
- - - - de - rat,
39
my soul
S.
a - ni - ma me - - a
my soul
A.
rat a - - ni - ma me - a
my
T.
de - si - - de - rat, a - ni -
B.
i - - ta de - si - de - rat, de - si - de - rat,

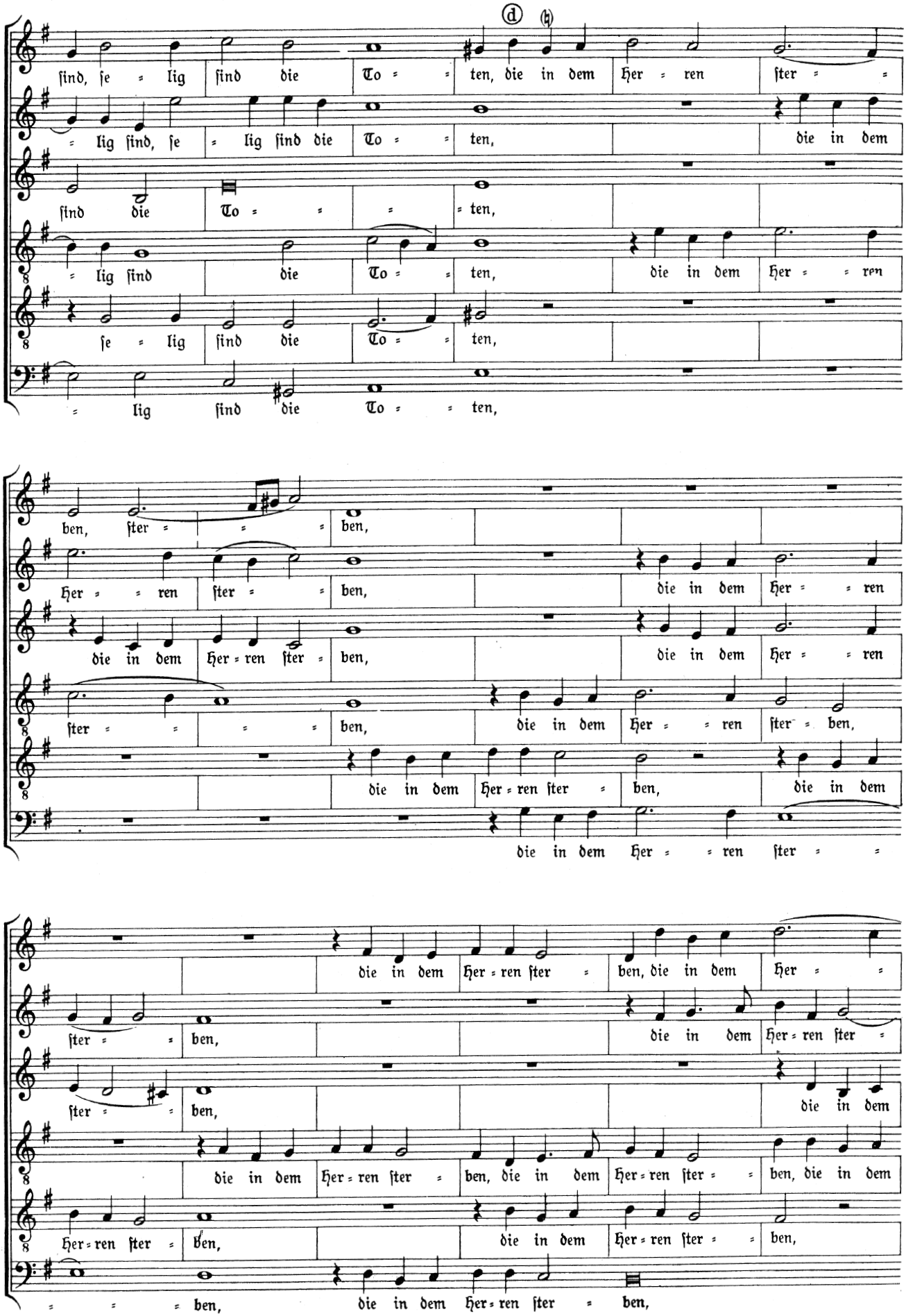

44
for you, God
S.
ad te, De - - - - us,
A.
for you, God
ad te, De - us, a - ni - ma me - a
T.
soul
for you, God
ma me - - a ad te, De - - - -
B.
my soul
for you, God
a - ni - ma me - a ad te, De -
49
Cadence I
S.
a - ni - ma me - - a ad te, De - - -
A.
ad te, De - us, ad te, De -
T.
us, a - ni - ma me - a ad te, De -
B.
us, a - ni - ma me - a ad te, De -
54
Final Cadence (II)
S.
- - - us.
A.
- us, ad te De - - - - - us
T.
- - us, ad te, De - - - - us.
B.
- us, ad te, De - - - - - - us.

23. Selig sind die Toten

Motette aus der „Geistlichen Chormusik“ von Heinrich Schütz
Gesamtausgabe in Einzelheften. Herausgegeben von Wilhelm Kamlah






sind, se = lig sind die To = = ten, die in dem Her = ren ster = =
= lig sind, se = lig sind die To = = ten, die in dem
sind die To = = = ten,
= lig sind die To = = ten, die in dem Her = = ren
se = lig sind die To = = ten,
= lig sind die To = = ten,
ben, ster = = = ben,
Her = = ren ster = ben, die in dem Her = = ren
die in dem Her = ren ster = ben, die in dem Her = = ren
ster = = = = ben, die in dem Her = = ren ster = ben,
die in dem Her = ren ster = ben, die in dem
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ster = = ben, die in dem Her = ren ster =
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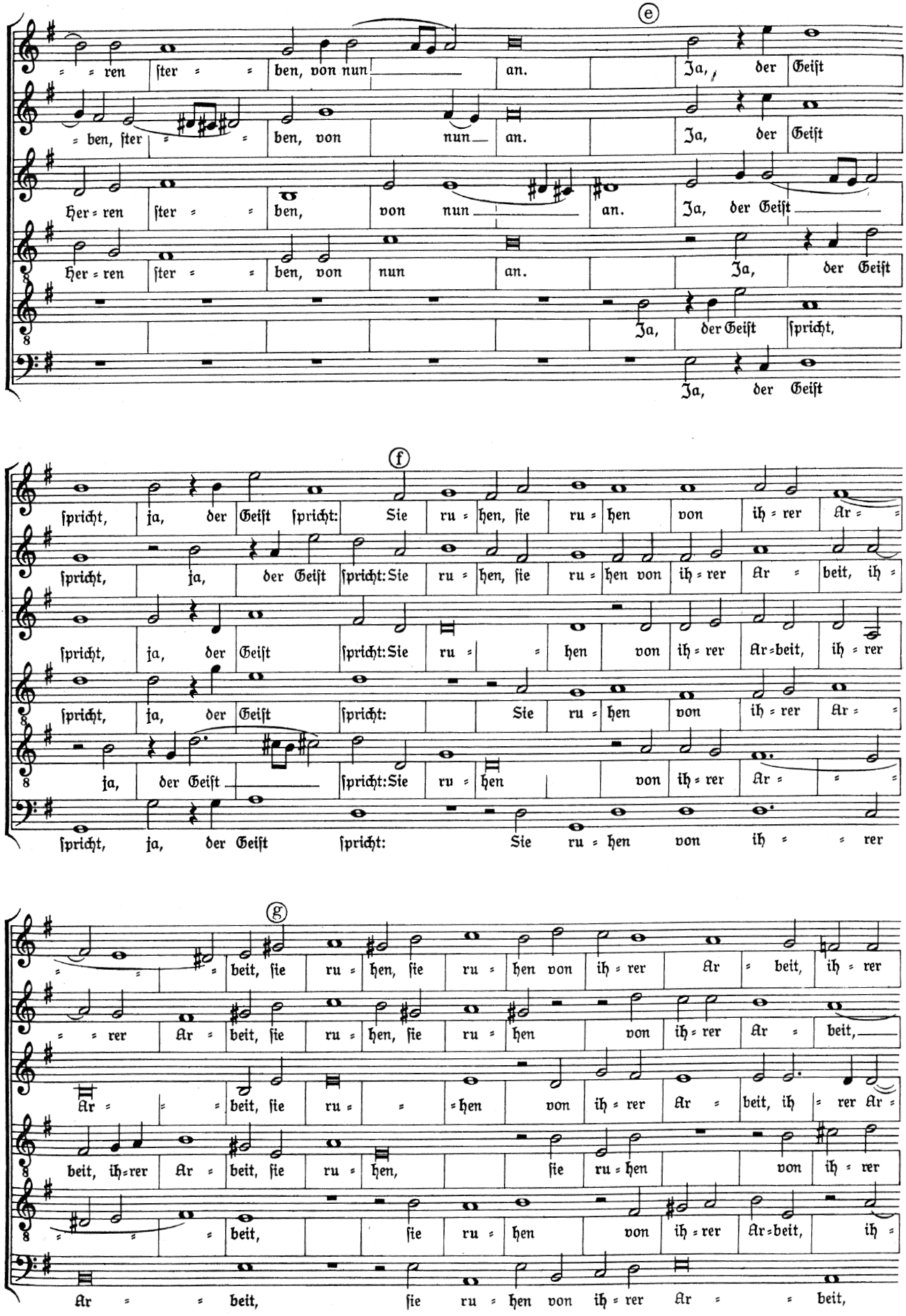
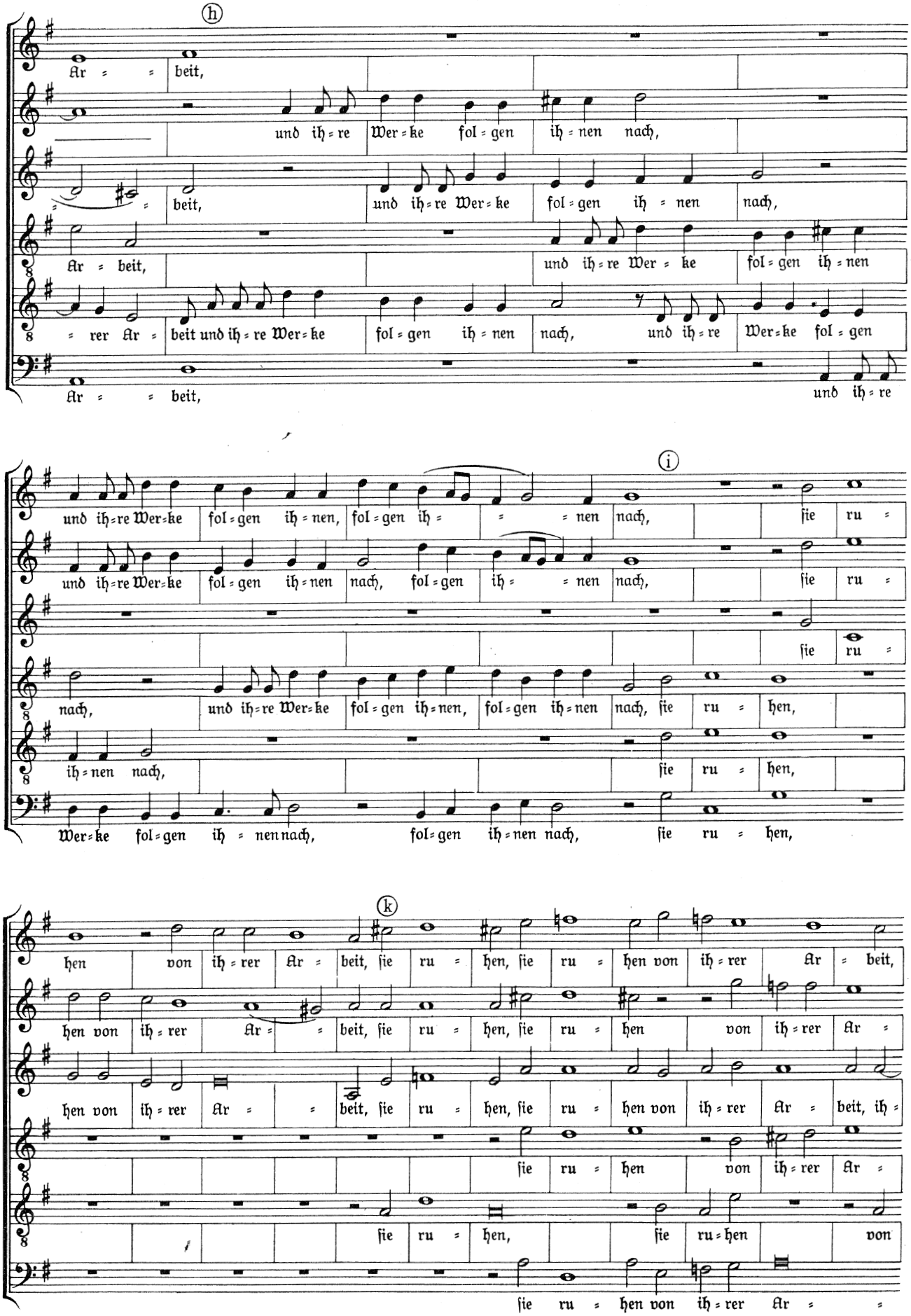
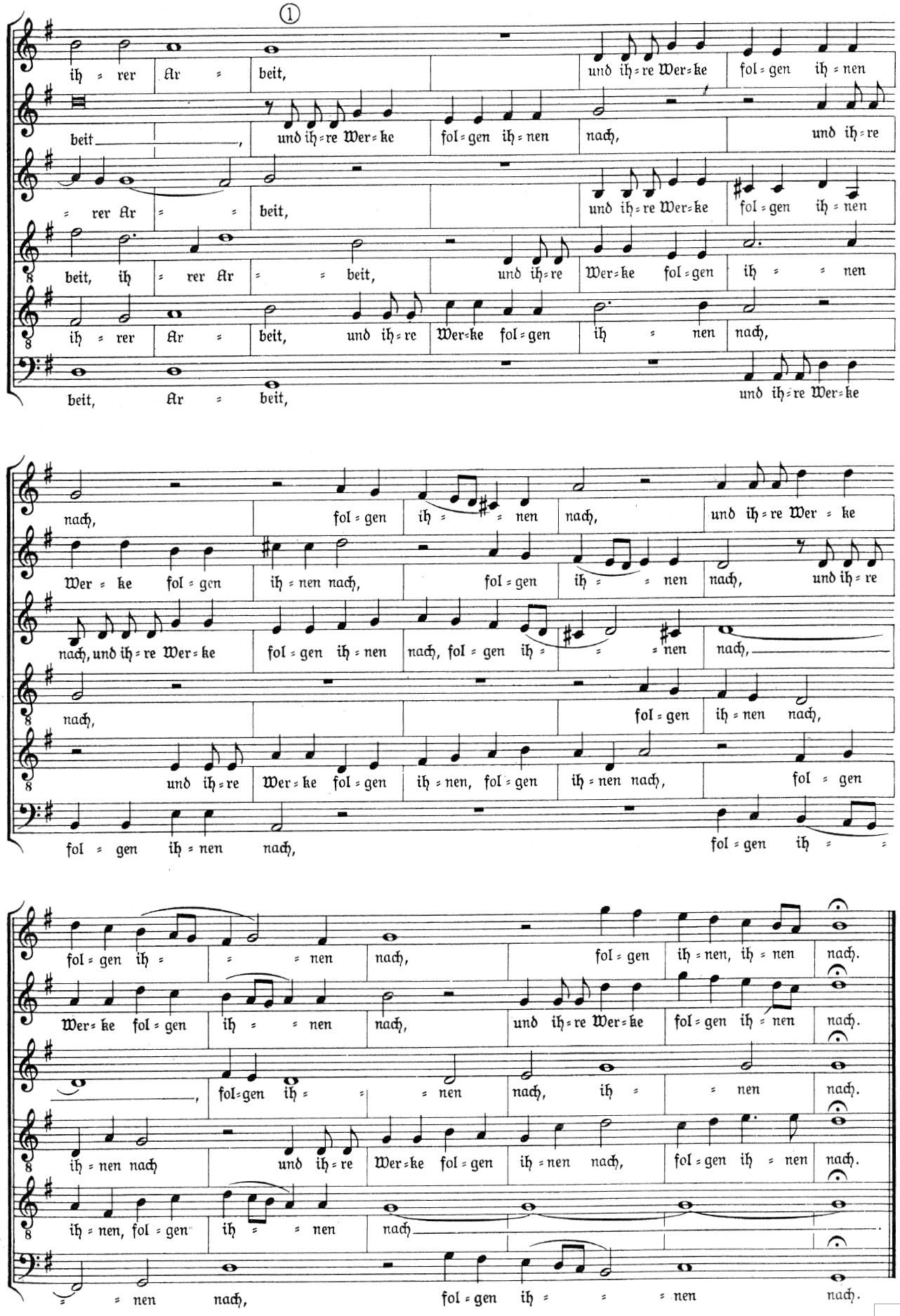
= = = ben, die in dem Her = ren ster = ben,


ⓔ
ren ſter ben, von nun an. Ja, der Geiſt
ben, ſter ben, von nun an. Ja, der Geiſt
Her ren ſter ben, von nun an. Ja, der Geiſt
Her ren ſter ben, von nun an. Ja, der Geiſt
Ja, der Geiſt ſpricht,
Ja, der Geiſt
ⓕ
ſpricht, ja, der Geiſt ſpricht: Sie ru hen, ſie ru hen von ih rer Ar
ſpricht, ja, der Geiſt ſpricht:Sie ru hen, ſie ru hen von ih rer Ar beit, ih
ſpricht, ja, der Geiſt ſpricht:Sie ru hen von ih rer Ar beit, ih rer
ſpricht, ja, der Geiſt ſpricht: Sie ru hen von ih rer Ar
ja, der Geiſt ſpricht:Sie ru hen von ih rer Ar
ſpricht, ja, der Geiſt ſpricht: Sie ru hen von ih rer
ⓖ
beit, ſie ru hen, ſie ru hen von ih rer Ar beit, ih rer
rer Ar beit, ſie ru hen, ſie ru hen von ih rer Ar beit,
Ar beit, ſie ru hen von ih rer Ar beit, ih rer Ar
beit, ih rer Ar beit, ſie ru hen, ſie ru hen von ih rer
beit, ſie ru hen von ih rer Ar beit, ih
Ar beit, ſie ru hen von ih rer Ar beit,


h
Ar = = beit,
und ih = re Wer = ke fol = gen ih = nen nach,
beit, und ih = re Wer = ke fol = gen ih = nen nach,
Ar = beit, und ih = re Wer = ke fol = gen ih = nen
= rer Ar = beit und ih = re Wer = ke fol = gen ih = nen nach, und ih = re Wer = ke fol = gen
Ar = = beit, und ih = re
i
und ih = re Wer = ke fol = gen ih = nen, fol = gen ih = = = nen nach, sie ru =
und ih = re Wer = ke fol = gen ih = nen nach, fol = gen ih = = nen nach, sie ru =
sie ru =
nach, und ih = re Wer = ke fol = gen ih = nen, fol = gen ih = nen nach, sie ru = hen,
ih = nen nach, sie ru = hen,
Wer = ke fol = gen ih = nen nach, fol = gen ih = nen nach, sie ru = hen,
k
hen von ih = rer Ar = beit, sie ru = hen, sie ru = hen von ih = rer Ar = beit,
hen von ih = rer Ar = = beit, sie ru = hen, sie ru = hen von ih = rer Ar =
hen von ih = rer Ar = = beit, sie ru = hen, sie ru = hen von ih = rer Ar = beit, ih =
sie ru = hen von ih = rer Ar =
sie ru = hen, sie ru = hen von
sie ru = hen von ih = rer Ar = =


①
ih = rer Ar = beit, und ih=re Wer=ke fol=gen ih = nen
beit, und ih=re Wer=ke fol=gen ih=nen nach, und ih=re
= rer Ar = = beit, und ih=re Wer=ke fol=gen ih = nen
beit, ih = rer Ar = = beit, und ih=re Wer=ke fol=gen ih = = nen
ih = rer Ar = beit, und ih=re Wer=ke fol=gen ih = nen nach,
beit, Ar = beit, und ih=re Wer=ke
nach, fol=gen ih = = nen nach, und ih=re Wer = ke
Wer = ke fol=gen ih=nen nach, fol=gen ih = = nen nach, und ih=re
nach, und ih=re Wer=ke fol=gen ih=nen nach, fol=gen ih = = = nen nach,
nach, fol=gen ih=nen nach,
und ih=re Wer=ke fol=gen ih=nen, fol=gen ih=nen nach, fol = gen
fol = gen ih=nen nach, fol=gen ih = =
fol=gen ih = = = nen nach, fol=gen ih=nen, ih=nen nach.
Wer=ke fol=gen ih = = nen nach, und ih=re Wer=ke fol=gen ih=nen nach.
, fol=gen ih = = = nen nach, ih = = nen nach.
ih=nen nach und ih=re Wer=ke fol=gen ih=nen nach, fol=gen ih=nen nach.
ih=nen, fol=gen ih = = nen nach
= = nen nach, fol=gen ih = = = nen nach.