

**The Use of Parody in Peter Maxwell Davies'  
*Taverner* and Related Works.**

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by

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## ABSTRACT

Parody is a concept central to much of the work of Peter Maxwell Davies. In this study the *First Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner, the *Seven In Nomine*, the *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner and the opera *Taverner* are used as case studies of Davies' use of parody. Three categories of parody are discerned: parody in its pre-Baroque sense which entails the use of musical material from pre-existing compositions; parody in its modern sense whereby a particular work or style is imitated in such a manner that the source is ridiculed or satirized; and the non-satirical parody of compositional devices, forms or other features characteristic of a particular musical period.

All four works examined in this study use the 'In nomine' by the sixteenth-century composer John Taverner as a source of pre-compositional musical material. Each of Davies' In Nomine works is examined in detail and the composer's use of the device and its function in each instance is discussed. The chronological consideration of the In Nomine compositions, and of *Taverner* in particular, reveals a gradual change in the manner in which Davies employed parody in his compositions. Attention is thus given to the transition from the emphasis on parody in the Renaissance sense to the emphasis on parody in its modern sense and it is shown that this transition clearly parallels the change that

was taking place within Davies' general compositional style during the sixties.

In conclusion, some reasons for the predominant role played by parody in Davies' output and the preoccupation with musical materials derived from the pre-Baroque are suggested, in order to show the relevance of Davies' use of parody within a twentieth-century context.

## PREFACE

I would like to express my thanks to all those who have assisted with various aspects of this research: David Smith for supervising my work; Craig Pilkington for help using the computer; Tiffany Callaghan for collecting materials from the Unisa library in Pretoria; Prof. D. Saddington for providing translations of the excerpts of Latin text from *Taverner*; and the staff of the Elenor Bonnar Music Library. The financial assistance of the HRSC towards this research is hereby acknowledged.

Except where specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, this thesis is entirely my own work.

SHIRLEY PILKINGTON

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## CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the most striking feature of Peter Maxwell Davies' considerable musical output is the composer's abundant use of musical material, techniques and devices borrowed from the Mediaeval and Renaissance periods. One needs merely to peruse a list of Davies' compositions to see that many of his works are based on, or even quote, music from the pre-Baroque.<sup>1</sup> A closer examination of his works reveals that his style often fuses the compositional methods and styles of the Middle Ages and Renaissance with those of the twentieth century.

Davies' frequent use of pre-existing musical material is in itself a feature of the composer's output which shows the influence of Mediaeval and Renaissance compositional practices, for the use of an extant musical source as the basis of a new composition was common during both the Mediaeval and Renaissance periods. The importance of this method of composition during the pre-Baroque is reflected in the fact that there were a number of techniques and genres that accommodated the use of pre-existing material. The device which perhaps could be said to represent the height of the practice of "borrowing" musical material is that of parody.

The parody of the Renaissance period is the "serious reworking of a composition involving additions to or

essential modifications of the original".<sup>2</sup> Parody differs from the cantus firmus technique (from which parody partly took over in the sixteenth century), because it involves the borrowing of more than a single melodic line. Thus parody results in the new composition being substantially influenced by the source which is being parodied, because the "themes, rhythms, chords and chord progressions [of the old work are] absorbed into the new piece and subjected to free variation in such a way that a fusion of old and new elements is achieved."<sup>3</sup>

Parody in its pre-Baroque sense is a strictly musical term. There is, however, a second definition of the term which is applicable not only to music, but to the other arts as well. The second definition of parody refers to the imitation of a particular work or style with the express purpose of satirizing or ridiculing the source. Thus the source that is being parodied is usually treated in an exaggerated or contorted fashion so that the farcical intent of the parody is obvious.

The many different ways in which Davies uses parody in his compositions do not, however, always fall neatly within the boundaries of the above two, generally accepted definitions of the term. Davies' elaborate use of parody both expands and fuses the two given descriptions of the device. Since the primary objective of this study is to identify examples of Davies' use of parody in his opera *Taverner*, it is felt

that redefinition of the term is necessary in order to facilitate a more accurate description and explanation of Davies' use of parody.

All parody is reliant on the use of borrowed material of some description. The above definitions of parody divide the application of the device into two main categories, according to the manner in which the borrowed material is treated: firstly, parody with an earnest intention; and secondly, parody with a satirical function. These two categories can be further divided according to the type and extent of the material that is borrowed. For the purposes of this study the following sub-divisions of the two major categories of parody will be considered: (1) the use of an extant musical source; (2) the use of the compositional techniques, forms, or other features which are characteristic of a particular musical period; and (3) the use of the term parody will also be extended to refer to cases in which Davies has not actually used a substantial portion of the extant composition, but where he has used themes from a composition as the basis of his pre-compositional material.<sup>4</sup>

The second aim of this investigation will be to examine the function of parody and to try and show the significance of its use. That many of Davies' works exhibit the use of parody on various levels and to varying extents raises questions about the meaning of the use of material and compositional practices from the Mediaeval and Renaissance



periods, and the role that it plays in Davies' compositions. As Ballantine states, "the unheralded appearance of atavistic exogenous traits as part of a new art work ... dramatically attract attention to themselves and raise questions that call for a systematic answer."<sup>5</sup>

Although not all of the instances in which Davies has parodied musical materials, forms, styles or compositional techniques from music of the pre-Baroque "dramatically attract attention to themselves", this study will demonstrate that the use of parody in aurally unrecognisable as well as aurally perceptible forms in *Taverner* (and, therefore, in Davies' works generally) is nevertheless functional and meaningful.

This study will focus on the use that Davies has made of parody in his opera *Taverner*, which uses the device in a number of different ways. Brief consideration will also be given to the group of instrumental works which, like *Taverner*, use the sixteenth-century composer John Taverner's 'In nomine' as a source of pre-compositional material. The instrumental In Nomine works are:

*First Fantasia on an In Nomine by John Taverner*

*Second Fantasia on an In Nomine by John Taverner*

*Seven In Nomine.*

*Taverner* was chosen as the central focus of this investigation for three main reasons. Firstly, *Taverner* was

the earliest dramatic work in conception even if it was not the first to be completed. Davies had been considering writing an opera on the life of the sixteenth-century composer John Taverner as early as 1956, but most of the work on the opera was done between 1962 and 1968. During the six years that it took for the music of *Taverner* to be written, a change took place in Davies' general compositional style: his use of parody began to include the use of satirical parody as well as the parody - in the Renaissance sense - of musical material, forms and compositional devices from early music. The use of parody in the Renaissance sense was already an integral part of Davies' compositional technique before he began work on the set of *In Nomine* works.

This leads to the second reason why *Taverner* was chosen as the main focus of this study: the change that took place in Davies' use of parody can be traced within *Taverner*. The opera can thus be considered as a transitional work between the compositions of the fifties and early sixties, which represent "a more or less abstract phase in Davies' relationship with early music", and the compositions from 1965 onwards, which "lean no less heavily on borrowed material, with the difference that the material is increasingly parodied, in the modern sense as well as the medieval".<sup>8</sup>

Thirdly, *Taverner* was chosen because of its integration of music, words and dramatic action. The fact that music,

dramatic action and text are interrelated in the operatic genre makes it possible to provide more concrete suggestions as to the function and significance of musical parody than if there were no words at all, because reasons for its use and meaning can be traced in the text and dramatic action.

The decision to give a passing consideration to the instrumental *In Nomine* compositions in this study was prompted by the close relationship of these works to *Taverner*, and the fact that the two fantasias and the *Seven In Nomine* function partially as a testing-ground in which Davies' could experiment with various methods of treating the material from Taverner's 'In nomine'.

Although this study has been restricted to the detailed investigation of only one of Davies' compositions, it is expected that many of the conclusions of this study will be applicable to other compositions by Davies, or at least provide a method by means of which other works could be approached. Furthermore, it is hoped that the examination of the relationship between *Taverner* and the instrumental *In Nomine* compositions will provide further insight into both Davies' methods of parodying material from early music, and the changes that took place in his use of the device.

## Notes

1. See Appendix for a list of works which use materials from the Mediaeval or Renaissance periods.
2. Willi Apel, The Harvard Dictionary of Music, 2nd ed. (London: Heinemann Books, 1970), s.v. "Parody", p. 643 (hereafter referred to as The Harvard Dictionary).
3. Stanley Sadie, ed., The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 20 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1980), s.v. "Parody", vol. 14, p. 238 (hereafter referred to as The New Grove).
4. The Harvard Dictionary (p. 643) states that parody can also be used to refer to the process whereby vocal compositions were transferred to the keyboard or lute. In this process the important themes of the vocal work were borrowed and then dealt with in a "new, usually more expanded manner". It is felt that Davies' use of themes of existing compositions as the basis of pre-compositional material can be regarded as parody in this sense.
5. Christopher Ballantine, Music and its Social Meanings (London: Gordon and Breach, 1984), p. 72.
6. The New Grove, s.v. "Davies, Peter Maxwell", by Stephen Walsh, vol. 5, p. 277.

## CHAPTER 2 : THE INSTRUMENTAL IN NOMINE WORKS

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The *First Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner, the *Seven In Nomine*, and the *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner all make use of musical material derived from the 'In nomine' section of Taverner's *Gloria tibi Trinitas* Mass. Davies' decision to use Taverner's 'In nomine' as a source of musical material for a series of compositions is particularly appropriate when one considers that this piece of music is historically important as the source of over a hundred and fifty In Nomine compositions composed in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The original 'In nomine' is from the Benedictus of Taverner's *Gloria tibi Trinitas* Mass. It is for this reason that the numerous In Nomine compositions from the time of Taverner to Purcell use the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant as cantus firmus. It would appear that the 'In nomine' section of Taverner's *Gloria tibi Trinitas* Mass was circulated as an independent piece of music shortly after its composition. It was arranged for performance on keyboard instruments and for ensembles, and its plainchant became popular as a cantus firmus for new instrumental compositions which were given the title "In Nomine".<sup>1</sup> The In Nomine became an important English instrumental genre during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: Ernst Meyer states that it was in this genre that

an independent instrumental form was first developed and established.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the In Nomine genre "became to some extent an arena for technical experiment or display."<sup>3</sup>

Some In Nomine compositions written during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are parody works in that they not only use the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant as cantus firmus, but also make use of other features of Taverner's original 'In nomine'. The New Grove Dictionary states that "Taverner's opening phrase, derived from the plainsong, was taken up by over a score of composers",<sup>4</sup> and Neighbour notes that many of the In Nomine works written during the sixteenth century used points of imitation and melodic figures from Taverner's original.<sup>5</sup>

*The First Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner (1962), the *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner (1964), and the *Seven In Nomine* (1963-65) are twentieth-century additions to the In Nomine tradition, because, although these works do not use the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant as a cantus firmus, they all take Taverner's original 'In nomine' as their point of departure.

The *First Fantasia* and the *Seven In Nomine* were both written in preparation for the composition of the opera *Taverner*. Davies states that the "*Seven In Nomine* started as a composition exercise ... [which he] regarded as studies for a large orchestral work ... which [he] had decided to base on

John Taverner's *In Nomine*. In this way [he] could prepare an experiment with the basic material of the orchestral piece."<sup>6</sup>

The "large orchestral work" mentioned above is the *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner. The *Second Fantasia* "grew out of the completed first act of *Taverner*, during the writing of which [Davies] had felt that many ideas were capable of a more symphonic development".<sup>7</sup> This fantasia also includes material that Davies subsequently used in *Taverner*, and so the *Second Fantasia*, too, functions as a work in which Davies tested ideas for their use in his opera.

Despite the fact that all the instrumental compositions are based on the same source material, the extent to which each of the works reveals the influence of the original 'In nomine' is variable. Nevertheless, certain elements, the origin of which can be traced back to Taverner's 'In nomine', emerge as predominant influences in all three compositions and are subsequently utilized in *Taverner*.

Two melodic fragments are the features from Taverner's 'In nomine' of which Davies makes most use (and which are the clearest influences of the original work on the three instrumental *In Nomines* and *Taverner*). The first fragment is the opening phrase of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant which forms the cantus firmus of Taverner's 'In nomine' (see Example 1), and the second is the opening phrase of

Taverner's treble line (see Example 2).

Example 1 : Opening phrase of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant





the final, and of the 'In nomine' in particular since B<sup>b</sup> is the repercussio of the mode in which the 'In nomine' appears to be written.<sup>8</sup>

The fact that whole-tone harmonies and melodic elements are predominant in all of Davies' In Nomine works, and the fact that one particular whole-tone chord emerges as the most important harmonic structure of this group of compositions has caused some writers to consider this as one of the ways in which Davies' In Nomine works have been influenced by Taverner's original 'In nomine'. In enumerating the elements from Taverner's 'In nomine' which he considers to have influenced Davies' In Nomine compositions, John Harbison includes the "strong B-F tritone" and the "emphasis on whole-tones in the cantus-firmus."<sup>9</sup> Harbison's opinion that Davies' use of whole-tone melodic figures and harmonies represents an influence of the original 'In nomine' is misguided and unsatisfactory for several reasons.

Firstly, the B in Taverner's 'In nomine' is consistently flattened so that the "strong B-F tritone" which Harbison mentions actually only occurs once in the whole piece, and in this example the tritone is filled in melodically so that its appearance is insignificant.<sup>10</sup> Secondly, the whole-tone melodic movement in the cantus-firmus (and any other melodic line) of Taverner's 'In nomine' remains within the boundaries of the mode in which the piece is written. The emphasis on whole-tone melodic movement therefore has a different

function in Taverner's 'In nomine' to that in Davies' In Nomine works. The melodic lines in Taverner's work do not contain any more whole-tone movement than one would expect to find in a modal composition, and thus the primacy of the mode is never threatened. Davies, on the other hand, uses whole-tone melodies and harmonies in order to avoid the suggestion of any particular mode or scale.

Thirdly, Davies' use of harmonies and melodies which emphasize the use of whole-tones and augmented fourths is not an atavistic feature that needs to be accounted for by reference to early music. Harmonies and melodies which reveal an emphasis on intervals derived from the whole-tone scale - the augmented fourth in particular - are characteristic of Davies' atonal, post-serial compositional style. Even the D-F\*-E-G\* whole-tone chord which features prominently in Davies' In Nomine works is not exclusive to this group of compositions. The D-F\*-E-G\* whole-tone chord appears as the last chord of both *Worldes Blis* and *St. Thomas Wake*, although it does not play as important a role in these works as in the In Nomine compositions.

The pervasive influence of harmonies and melodies derived from the whole-tone scale is a feature which can be better explained in terms of developments in the twentieth century. The attempt to write music that avoids tonal influences and negates the traditional tonic/dominant relationship has resulted in many works of the twentieth century revealing a

predominance of whole-tone elements. In the light of the above arguments, this study will not consider the predominance of whole-tone melodic and harmonic features in Davies' In Nomine works as an influence of Taverner's original 'In nomine'.

A brief survey of the instrumental In Nomine works reveals the manner in which Davies has parodied Taverner's 'In nomine', and will provide examples in which the above-mentioned features from the original composition have influenced the twentieth-century In Nomine works. The following discussion of the instrumental In Nomine works will also attempt to show that Davies does not merely superimpose or juxtapose "old" and "new" material, but that he has integrated material from the pre-Baroque with that of the twentieth century.

#### Notes

1. Instances of composers who wrote In Nomines can be found in Musica Britannica, volume 1, which includes settings by Richard Carlton, John Blitheman, and Richard Alwood, as well as those of several anonymous composers.
2. Ernst Meyer, English Chamber Music 2nd ed. (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1985), p. 85.
3. Oliver Neighbour, The Consort and Keyboard Music of William Byrd (London: Faber and Faber, 1984), p. 28.
4. The New Grove, s.v. "In Nomine", vol. 9, p. 230.
5. Neighbour, p. 28.

6. Peter Maxwell Davies, "Seven in Nomine", in Peter Maxwell Davies, ed. Paul Griffiths (London: Robson Books, 1981), p. 139.
7. Peter Maxwell Davies, "Second Fantasia on John Taverner's In Nomine", *ibid.*, p. 141.
8. Taverner's 'In nomine' appears to be written in the plagal form of the Dorian mode, transposed up a perfect fourth. The range of this mode is from D to D, G is the final, and B<sup>b</sup> is the repercussio.
9. John Harbison, "Peter Maxwell Davies' *Taverner*", Perspectives of New Music 11:1 (Fall - Winter 1972), p. 235.
10. The B to F tritone in Taverner's 'In nomine' occurs in the Tudor Church Music (vol. 1, p. 148) edition of the piece, but does not appear in any of Davies' arrangements of the piece which are taken from Musica Britannica, vol. 1.

## 2.2 FIRST FANTASIA ON AN IN NOMINE BY JOHN TAVERNER

The fact that Davies' *First Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner parodies the music of Taverner's 'In Nomine' is made clear not only in the title of the work, but also by the fact that Davies precedes his composition with a woodwind arrangement of Taverner's original. Davies clearly intends the listener to have a knowledge of the source material of the *First Fantasia*. There are, however, no easily audible references to the original 'In nomine' in Davies' composition. Most of the material which can be identified as having come from Taverner's 'In nomine' is modified and altered to such an extent that it is hardly recognisable. Identifiable references to the source material do nevertheless occur at structurally important points, providing a framework within which the remaining content of the *First Fantasia* is presented.

The first reference to Taverner's 'In nomine' appears in the three-bar introduction, where the 'In nomine' treble fragment is subjected to pitch displacement and shared between two trumpets. (See Example 1.)

**Example 1 : Bars 1 to 3**

1. *p* *f* *p* *p* *fp* *pp*

2. *sfp* *sfz* *p* *sfz* *f* *pp*

Although Paul Griffiths claims that the introductory statement of the 'In nomine' treble line "is given a further twist and inverted to provide the strings with a principle theme" in the section that follows, there is, in fact, no aural or calculable relationship between the 'In nomine' derived introduction and the melodic lines of the string section.<sup>1</sup> 'In nomine' material does not appear to have been developed thematically, canonically or according to any kind of set operations in the opening section of the *First Fantasia*.

The next clear statement of material derived from Taverner's 'In nomine' occurs in the middle of the *First Fantasia*, in the section entitled "Recitative I". One of the principle themes of the first recitative is taken from the 'In nomine' treble line. (See Example 2.)

**Example 2 : Bars 93 to 103 (partial score)**

Allegro ♩ = 116

Fl. 1

Cl. 1

Tpt. 1

Fl. 1

Cl. 1

Tpt. 1

etc

This theme consists of a longer fragment than that used in the three-bar introduction, and chromatically alters one of the notes from the treble line so that whole-tone idea now encompasses four major seconds. By altering the original material in this way, Davies both extends the whole-tone idea of the treble line, and, by making the fragment more tonally ambiguous, makes the borrowed material compatible with his own essentially modernist style in which the whole-tone melodies and harmonies are frequently predominant.

Many of the harmonies of the *First Fantasia* are based on intervals which result from the whole-tone scale. The first recitative, in which the extension of the whole-tone fragment occurs, introduces a chord which establishes itself as an important harmonic structure not only in the *First Fantasia*, but in all of Davies' In Nomine works. This structure is a whole-tone chord consisting of two major thirds whose roots are a tone apart. The whole-tone chord D-F\*-E-G\* is stated as a harmonic pedal in the first ten bars of the *First Fantasia* (bars 67-76). In bar 73, another major third (B<sup>b</sup>/D) is added to the D-F\*-E-G\* chord, appending one more tone to the whole-tone construction. Where the whole-tone chord is no longer sustained as a harmonic pedal, the harmonies of the introductory section of Recitative I are still predominantly "whole-tone harmonies". In bars 80 to 83 the bassoon sustains an augmented fourth, while the notes of the homorhythmic chords from bars 81 to 83 in the flute and oboe are derived from the original D-F\*-E-G\* whole-tone chord.

The chord that builds up in the clarinet and bassoon parts in bars 88 and 89 is yet another whole-tone chord. Although the use of whole-tone harmonies is particularly pervasive in this section, many similar examples of the use of whole-tone harmonies can be observed in the *First Fantasia* (and in the two recitatives in particular).

The use of D as a tonal centre and of B<sup>b</sup> as a secondary tonal centre is another influence of Taverner's 'In nomine' that can be discerned in Recitative I. D is the "root" of the whole-tone chord which dominates the introductory section of the recitative, and where this chord ceases from bars 77 to 90, there is still a D present through every bar but one. In the passage from bar 93 to 97, where the melodic line is derived from the 'In nomine' treble line, D is established as the tonal centre in bars 93 and 94, and B<sup>b</sup> suggests a secondary tonal centre in bars 95 to 97. (See Example 3.)

**Example 3 : Bars 93 to 97**

Allegro ♩ = 116

FL. <sup>1</sup>

Cl. <sup>1</sup>

Tpt.

Vla. <sup>9</sup> pizz. <sup>ff</sup>

Vlc. <sup>ff</sup>

Cb.



The last section of the *First Fantasia* where Davies has clearly made use of 'In nomine' material is in the coda of the work. In fact, nearly all of the musical material of the coda can be regarded as having been derived from Taverner's 'In nomine'. (See Example 4.) The oboe line from bar 225 to 229 is derived from the 'In nomine' treble fragment. It is both transposed and chromatically altered. At bar 239 the oboe begins an abbreviated statement of the treble fragment that begins on D once again.

### Example 4 : Coda

Musical score for the first system of "The Swan" from "The Nutcracker". The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Trumpet (Tpt.), Handbells, Viola (Via.), Violoncello (Vlc.), Flute (FL.), and Violin solo (Vlc. solo). The tempo is marked "Lentiss. al fine" with a metronome marking of 1 ♩ = 40. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score features various dynamics including *pp*, *f*, *p*, *ppp*, *fp*, *sempre p*, *solob.*, *mf*, *p*, *f*, *pp*, *p-f*, *p-p*, and *p-pp*. The first system ends with the instruction "Lentiss. al fine".

Example 4 cont.

The musical score for Example 4 continues with the following details:

- Flute (Fl.):** Starts with a first ending bracket (I) and a *rit.* marking. Dynamics include *mf* and *ppp*. The tempo returns to *a tempo*.
- Oboe (Ob.):** Features a melodic line with dynamics *pp*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*, *pp*, and *p*.
- Trumpet (Tpt.):** Plays a supporting line with dynamics *mp*, *p*, and *pp*.
- Handbells:** Provides harmonic support with dynamics *pp* and *ppp*.
- Violoncello (Vlc.):** Features a descending line with dynamics *p-pp* and *p-pp*. A rehearsal mark 'I' is placed at the beginning of the system.

The second system of the score includes a measure number '23' and a tempo change to *a tempo*. The *sempre più lento* marking appears above the Flute and Violoncello staves in the second system.

The final melodic line in the handbells is similarly derived from the 'In nomine' treble fragment. The descending line in the cello from bar 226 to the end of the coda imitates the descending scalar idea of the 'In nomine', and the D on which the descending line comes to rest in bar 239, forming a pedal for the last 11 bars of the *First Fantasia*, establishes D as the tonal centre. Many of the notes in the "accompaniment" parts double notes from the principle melodic lines, and since it has been shown that these are all derived from Taverner's 'In Nomine', one could perhaps regard these fragmented lines to be a more remote derivation from the source material.

The 'In nomine' material is, therefore, used predominantly at the beginning, the middle and the end of the *First Fantasia*, forming a framework which Davies expands and fills in with material of his own. Davies treatment of the parodied musical fragments - subjecting the material to pitch displacement and chromatic alteration, for example - enables the composer to blend the original, pre-Baroque material with his own twentieth-century material.

The compositional style of the *First Fantasia* reflects a post-serial influence by the presence of melodic lines which are characterised by pitch displacement, distribution between various instruments and fragmentation by rests, an emphasis on dynamic and rhythmic variation, the use of contrapuntal textures, and the occasional derivation of harmonies and melodies from the same source. In addition, Davies makes use of "sets" and "series".

In an article written in 1968, Davies stated that he had "for a few years been working with series or 'sets' ... which are in a perpetual state of transformation so that given identities such as 'straight' or 'inverted' set forms are only gradually established and disintegrated."<sup>2</sup> There are two instances in the *First Fantasia* where Davies has made some use of relatively unsophisticated sets and series.

In the first example, in the string exposition section at the beginning of the *First Fantasia*, some of the opening notes of

various entries are derived from an intervallic series first stated by the second violin part in bars 4 to 7. (See Example 5.)

Example 5 : Bars 4 to 17

Example 5 : Bars 4 to 17

Tempo:  $\text{♩} = 104$

Instrumentation: Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla., Vlc., Cb.

Key signature: Two flats (B-flat, E-flat)

Time signature: 2/4

Bar numbers: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

Dynamics: *p*, *mf*, *f*, *sf*, *fp*, *pchop*, *div.*

Articulations: *pizz.*, *arco*

Intervallic structures: *trios*, *pairs*

Table I shows the intervallic structure of some of the subsequent entries, and the manner in which they are derived from the original intervallic series presented by the second violin. The numbers represent the number of semitones

between consecutive notes regardless of octave displacement.

Table I

<u>Bar</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Intervallic series</u>								<u>Treatment</u>
4-7	Vln II	3	7	5	7	10	2	7		Original.
4-	Vln I	2	6	4	6		5	6		Each interval 1 semi-tone smaller.
8-	Vln I	1	5	3	5		5	5		Each interval 2 semi-tones smaller.
8-	Vln II	3	7	5	5	9	3	11		Modified intervallic version of original, but rhythmically almost identical.
12-	Vln I	1	5	2	5		6	2		Modified version of series in Vln I from bar 8.

This intervallic series only determines the head-motif of a few entries, and is not always modified consistently. Since such a small percentage of musical material is actually derived from the intervallic series, the use of a series does not have a particularly pervasive influence in this example.

Recitative I makes fairly extensive use of a set in bars 151 to 191. In this section, the pitches of the woodwind motifs are generated from one of four basic sets, or groups of pitch identities. The notes of these sets are used in any order, and Davies frequently modifies the set slightly by adding a note, substituting a note, or leaving out a note. The original statements of the four basic sets are as follows:

1 in the oboe at bar 153,



2 in the clarinet at bar 154,



3 in the flute at bar 156,



and 4 in the oboe at bar 166.



Table II illustrates Davies' use of the sets in Recitative I. The table shows that Davies uses these sets more consistently than he used the series at the beginning of the *First Fantasia*. Nevertheless, these sets remain fairly unsophisticated since there is no principle governing the order in which the pitches of each set are used, or even which set is used. In addition, Davies does not maintain the

identity of each set rigorously.

Table II : Sets used in bars 153-175 of Recitative I .

<u>Bars</u>	<u>Instrument</u>	<u>Notes used</u>	<u>Set</u>
153	Oboe	F# D C B E	1
154	Clarinet	C <sup>b</sup> B <sup>b</sup> G <sup>b</sup> F <sup>b</sup> D <sup>b</sup> D	2
156	Flute	D C# A G F E B	3
158	Flute	D A C# F G E	3 (B omitted)
162	Oboe	A <sup>b</sup> F# C D B E	1 (A <sup>b</sup> added)
166	Oboe	G# B <sup>b</sup> E <sup>b</sup> F C A <sup>b</sup>	4
168	Clarinet	C <sup>b</sup> B <sup>b</sup> F <sup>b</sup> G <sup>b</sup> D <sup>b</sup> D	2
170	Flute	D A F C# E G#	3 (G# replaces G)
172	Oboe	E D B F# C G# A	1 (G# and A added)
		etc.	

Besides the parodying of musical material from a pre-Baroque composition, the fact that Davies has called this work a "fantasia" suggests that it can be considered as a parody of a musical form of early music. Davies' *First Fantasia on an In Nomine by John Taverner* makes use of the principle of the "parody fantasia" which was popular in the 16th and 17th centuries. The parody fantasia "took as its starting point material from a polyphonic model."<sup>3</sup> Purcell often called his *In Nomine* works fantasias.<sup>4</sup> Formally, fantasias of the Renaissance period tend to exhibit a "definite sense of structure, but the absence of fixed forms."<sup>5</sup>

This proves to be an apt description of Davies' *First Fantasia*. The work divides clearly into three sections, the first being untitled, and the last two labelled Recitative I and Recitative II respectively. Despite the clear division into three segments, it is unclear as to whether these sections are to be understood as individual movements in their own right, or whether they are intended to be perceived

merely as segments of a single-movement structure.

On the one hand, the three sections are defined distinctly by their varied treatment of the various musical parameters. For example, the opening section of the *First Fantasia* has a tempo indication of 104 crotchets per bar, the texture is contrapuntal, the melodic lines are highly fragmented, and the section is scored for strings only. Recitative I, which follows this section without a break, is differentiated by beginning with a tempo of 48 crotchets a bar and having a more homophonic texture in which a single melodic idea tends to predominate. It is also scored for full orchestra and introduces new melodic and harmonic material. There is less of a contrast between Recitative I and II, but the second recitative is differentiated once again by the introduction of new thematic material.

On the other hand, the statement of 'In nomine' material at the beginning, middle and end of the work tends to suggest that the composition is to be understood as an entity. In addition, the coda of Recitative II is 26 bars long for a section that has a total length of 44 bars. The coda is, therefore, too long to be the coda of Recitative II alone, and would seem rather to function as the coda of the fantasia as a whole.

Despite the clear structural divisions exhibited by the *First Fantasia*, the work does not fall readily into any established



form. Paul Griffiths states that the *First Fantasia* "has as its groundplan that of a sonata-allegro, with repeated exposition, development, recapitulation and coda."<sup>6</sup> This description is rather contrived, however, since Griffiths has had to disregard the substantial string section that precedes the first recitative in order to accommodate the work in a familiar form. It is far more accurate to regard the *First Fantasia* as a parody of the fantasia form of the Renaissance, exhibiting clearly demarcated sections (which do sometimes show the sonata principle at work), but failing to fit into any established form.

It is significant that Davies has labelled the second two sections of the *First Fantasia* 'recitatives'. The term recitative has dramatic connotations and the music of these two sections does contain dramatic suggestion. John Waterhouse explains this by saying:

[T]he extreme flexibility of tempo, texture and dynamics [of the recitatives] seems to be closely following some unspecified stage action. The second recitative begins with a sudden flurry of four wildly circling ostinati in the woodwind, and is punctuated at intervals by loud bell-chimes - both devices with obvious theatrical possibilities.<sup>7</sup>

The style of the two recitatives is far simpler and clearer than the dense, contrapuntal style of the first section of the fantasia. Waterhouse points out that a style which is "intricate" and "fragmented" "seems singularly unsuited to the opera house, where subtleties ... are all too likely to lose their effectiveness, because the listener's attention is focussed on the drama and the singers."<sup>8</sup> Waterhouse is of

the opinion that "truly operatic music in any style must depend largely on broad, strong dramatic gestures, direct creation of atmosphere, and simple eloquent lyricism."<sup>8</sup> The music of the second two sections of the *First Fantasia* fulfils these requirements, with its clear, lucid texture, and its simple exposition and repetition of thematic material. This would seem to point to the appropriateness of Davies' entitling these sections recitatives.

### Summary

The parody of Taverner's 'In nomine' is made clear, firstly, by the fact that Davies precedes his composition with a woodwind arrangement of the original, and secondly, through the use of melodic features derived from the source composition and its D tonal centre at structurally important points in the *Fantasia*. Although melodic lines derived from the 'In nomine' are usually made predominant by virtue of their soloistic treatment, the material is aurally unrecognisable, since it has been modified either by pitch displacement, or by chromatic alteration, or both. The modification of the "old" material makes it possible for Davies to integrate the parodied material with his own, twentieth-century material.

Besides parodying musical material from the Renaissance, Davies has also parodied the fantasia form that was popular

during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The fantasia form provided Davies with a loose, unrestrictive structural idea.

The *First Fantasia* can be regarded as a "test-piece" for the opera *Taverner* not only because it experiments with methods of treating material derived from Taverner's 'In nomine', but also because the two recitatives introduce a concern for music with a dramatic quality.

#### Notes

1. Paul Griffiths, Peter Maxwell Davies (London: Robson Books, 1981), p. 44 (hereafter referred to as Griffiths, Davies).
2. Peter Maxwell Davies, "Sets or Series", The Listener 79 (22 February 1968), p. 250.
3. The New Grove, s.v. "Fantasia", vol. 6, p. 381.
4. Ibid.
5. Gustave Reese, Music in the Renaissance (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1959), p. 539.
6. Griffiths, p. 44.
7. John Waterhouse, "Towards an Opera", in Stephen Pruslin, ed., Peter Maxwell Davies: Studies from Two Decades (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1979), p. 18.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.

### 2.3 SEVEN IN NOMINE

The *Seven In Nomine* is a group of seven short In Nomine compositions. Of the seven pieces, one is a string arrangement of Taverner's 'In nomine', two are arrangements of In Nomines by the late sixteenth-century composers Bull and Blitheman, and four are original works by Davies.

The *Seven In Nomine*, like the *First Fantasia*, begins with an arrangement of Taverner's 'In nomine' (this time scored for strings), once again providing listeners with the opportunity of gaining an impression of the original. The association of Taverner's 'In nomine' and the In Nomines by Bull and Blitheman with his own In Nomine compositions makes it clear that Davies considers his works to be twentieth-century additions to the In Nomine genre.

Attempts by early music revivalists to perform the music of the Renaissance as "authentically" as possible are fraught with problems. Two examples of problems associated with the performance practice of pre-Baroque music are, firstly, that instrumentation was not always specified, and it is therefore difficult to ascertain on which instruments a particular work should be played; and, secondly, that it is uncertain whether reconstructions of pre-Baroque instruments produce a tone-quality similar to that of the original instruments. Davies avoids such problems connected with performance practice of early music by orchestrating the Bull

and Blitheman works in a manner that makes no attempt to recreate a sound idiomatic of the Renaissance period. For instance, in the adaptation of the Bull In Nomine, the cantus firmus is given to the flute and harp, while Bull's imitative contrapuntal lines are stated by cello and viola. In the Blitheman arrangement Davies doubles some of the voices at the twelfth in order to imitate a stop on an eighteenth-century chamber organ.<sup>1</sup> As Harry Haskell states, Davies' "none-too-scrupulous arrangements are his way of thumbing his nose at the puritans in the early music movement."<sup>2</sup>

It has been mentioned previously that Davies considered his four original contributions to the *Seven In Nomine* as studies for the *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner. Davies' experiments are cast in three distinct compositional styles: pieces II and III are written in a polyphonic, highly fragmented style (similar to that of the opening string section of the *First Fantasia*), V is a strict canon, and VII lays emphasis on harmonic writing (and is reminiscent of the recitatives of the *First Fantasia*).

Davies gives a brief account of the compositional techniques employed in each of his original In Nomines in an article entitled "Seven In Nomine".<sup>3</sup> Despite the explanations contained in this article, the techniques which Davies has used to construct some of these pieces remain hidden. Because the compositional techniques underlying each composition are frequently obscure, it is often also

difficult to see how Davies' *In Nomines* parody Taverner's original work.

Davies states that the second piece of the *Seven In Nomine* "subjects the plainsong to a transformation/development process involving complex mensuration-canonic techniques", and describes the third as "a 'double' of the previous piece in that the processes are the same, though much condensed."<sup>4</sup> Although various methods of analysing pitch and rhythm were applied to II and III, no evidence of the "mensuration-canonic techniques" mentioned by Davies could be found. No trace of the use of sets or series could be discerned either.

The second *In Nomine* begins with a statement of the 'In nomine' treble line very similar to that found in Recitative I of the *First Fantasia*. (See Example 1.) The 'In nomine' treble line (not the plainchant as Davies states), is subjected to pitch displacement and has been chromatically altered.

Example 1 : II - bars 1 to 5

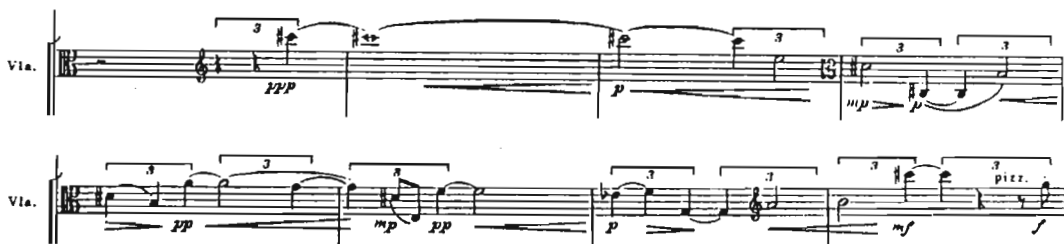
The musical score for Example 1, bars 1 to 5 of *In Nomine* II, is written for Flute and Clarinet. The tempo is marked 'Lento' and the time signature is 4/8. The Flute part begins with a half note G4 (p-pp), followed by a half note A4 (p), then a half note B4 (pp), and ends with a half note C5 (mp-pp). The Clarinet part begins with a half note G3 (pp), followed by a half note A3 (p), then a half note B3 (mp), and ends with a half note C4 (mp-pp). The score is marked with a box containing the number 5 at the end of the first staff.

The post-serial style which characterises II, with its highly fragmented melodic lines, its use of pitch displacement, and its emphasis on rhythmic and dynamic variation is established in this statement of 'In nomine' material. Davies' extension

of the 'In nomine' treble line (from bar 8 onwards in both flute and clarinet) appears to be unrelated to the original material, and it is not possible to show how the extension might be generated from ideas inherent in the 'In nomine' part of the melody.

The next clear reference to 'In nomine' occurs in bar 13 in the viola part. Here the 'In nomine' treble line is further transformed. Besides being subjected to pitch displacement and chromatic alteration the treble line is also slightly embellished. (See Example 2.) The fact that this line uses consistent triplet division of the bar against the regular division of the four-four bar suggests the application of a mensural device, although it is not possible to state how Davies has calculated the rhythmic values or why this mensuration should be used at this point.

Example 2 : II - bars 12 to 19 (partial score)



After the viola statement of 'In nomine' material, references to Taverner's composition become more distorted and the relationship to the original more and more tenuous, until it is obscured altogether and therefore impossible to say which material is derived from the Renaissance source and which is newly composed. Observation of the instances in which the

'In nomine' material is recognisable does not reveal any systematic method of transformation. It would seem, therefore (assuming that Davies does employ the compositional devices to which he lays claim), that the techniques are either so complex that they remain hidden, or that they are perhaps used unsystematically and inconsistently so that their use cannot be traced. That the latter suggestion might be appropriate is supported by Davies' unsystematic and arbitrarily imposed use of sets and series in the *First Fantasia*.

Example 3 : II - bars 56 to 61

Fl.  
Cl.  
Bsn.  
Hn.  
Via.  
Vc.

Fl.  
Cl.  
Bsn.  
Hn.  
Via.  
Vc.

sempre più pianissimo.  
sempre più pianissimo.

pp  
p  
pp  
pp  
pp  
pp

a niente  
a niente

60

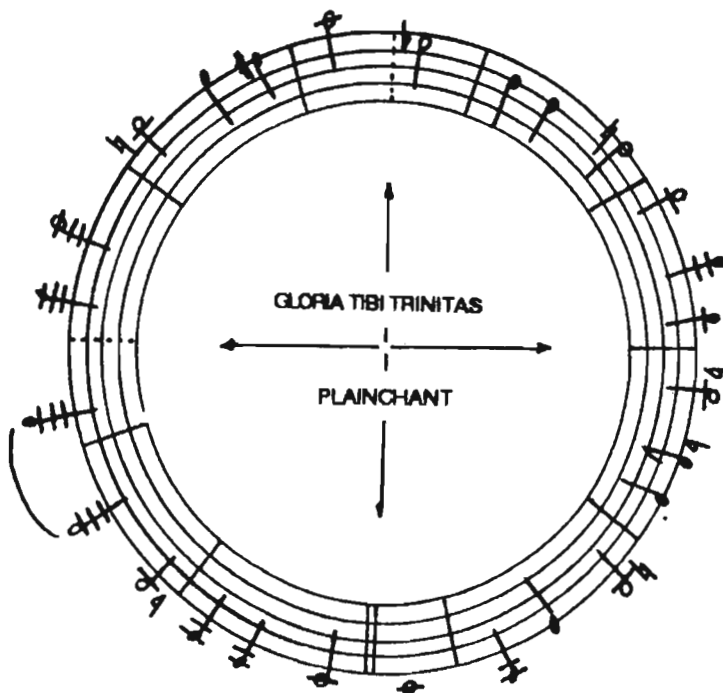


The relationship between the second of the *Seven In Nomine* and Taverner's 'In nomine' is revealed not only through the appearance of a few fragments derived from the source composition, but is confirmed by the presence of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant in the horn part of the last five bars of the piece. (See Example 3.) The third In Nomine, however, contains no melodic features which bear any resemblance to the original 'In nomine'. The only feature of III which perhaps suggests an influence from the original is the D/B<sup>b</sup> on which the piece ends, as the D tonal centre and the B<sup>b</sup> "dominant" tend to be characteristic of sections of Davies' In Nomine compositions. Such an insignificant reference to the original provides a rather insubstantial link to Taverner's 'In nomine'. The relationship of III to Taverner's original 'In nomine' appears to rest entirely on its inclusion in the group of In Nomine compositions. It would seem, for the most part, that Davies' processes of transformation in II and III alter the original material to such an extent that it is no longer recognisable, either aurally or even on the written page.

Although the compositional techniques that have been used to generate the music of the fifth of the *Seven In Nomine* are extremely clear, since this piece is a strict canon, the relationship of this In Nomine also appears to depend on its being grouped with other In Nomine works. Davies describes V as "one possible realisation of a circular canon, with the notes of the In nomine plainsong on a cross inside the

circle. The notes around the circular stave can be read, from the bottom of the cross, from outside and/or inside the circle, clockwise and/or anticlockwise, in 1:1 proportion and/or 2:3 proportion in various clefs."<sup>5</sup> Davies' description merely means that the dux can be read in its original form (from outside the circle in clockwise motion), in inversion (from inside the circle in clockwise motion), in retrograde (from outside the circle in anticlockwise motion), in retrograde inversion (from inside the circle in anticlockwise motion), or in transposition (in various clefs). (See the circular reconstruction of the canonic theme in example 4.) The canon is only "one possible realisation" of the canon since other solutions can be derived by altering variables such as the number of parts, distances between the entries of the dux and the treatment of the dux.

**Example 4 : Circular reconstruction of Davies' canonic theme**



Although circular canons were popular in the Renaissance, the melodic intervals of Davies' canonic theme reveal that it is of his own invention rather than borrowed from the pre-Baroque. (See Example 5.) The theme of the canon contains four augmented fourths, intervals which were referred to as the *diabolus in musica* and banned from use in compositions of the period.

Example 5 : Canonic theme of V



Davies states that the 'In nomine' plainchant lies on a cross within his circular canon, yet the plainsong seems to have no perceptible influence on the theme. Despite the lack of any tangible reference to Taverner's 'In nomine' in the canon, the piece will be discussed in some depth, in order to give some insight into Davies' use of canonic techniques which are also occasionally employed in the other In Nomine compositions.

Davies' canon is a perpetual canon in the sense that the ten-bar dux is repeated continually in various forms, and so provides the only melodic material for the entire composition.<sup>8</sup> The canon is fairly complex, as Davies makes

use of all the traditional canonic techniques such as retrograde, diminution, inversion, retrograde, retrograde inversion and mensuration as well as varying the time intervals between the various entries of the dux. The following table (which is an analysis of the first section of V) shows how the composer has treated the dux by making use of a variety of canonic techniques.

Table I : Opening section of V (bars 1 - 37)

<u>Bar</u>	<u>Instrument</u>	<u>Canonic devices employed</u>
1-10	Clarinet	Solo statement of the dux in simple duple meter.
11-17	Oboe	Transposed retrograde inversion. Stated in 6/4 meter so rhythmic values are in proportion of 3:2 to the original, and rhythmic emphasis different. Individual notes sometimes subjected to pitch displacement. (Oboe doubled at the 12th by violin I.)
12-18	Clarinet	Inversion of the dux in 6/4 meter. Rhythmic values diminished at the ratio 2:3. This entry begins a semibreve after the clarinet entry in bar 11.
18-37	Cello	Transposed inversion of dux in 2/2 meter and rhythmic values augmented in the proportion 2:1.
20-29	Clarinet	Dux in original form. (Clarinet doubled by violin at the 24th and the piccolo at the 12th.)
30-36	Oboe	} Repeat of the canon of bars 11 -18 above } the final portion of the cello line. Oboe } doubled at 12th by violin, and clarinet } doubled at 5th by violin II.
31-37	Clarinet	

---

The repeat of the canon in 6/4 meter between clarinet and oboe (bars 11 to 18) in bars 30 to 37 occurs above part of

the augmented statement of the theme in the cello line which is stated in 2/2 meter. The result is a mensural canon between clarinet and oboe on the one hand and cello on the other in the proportion 4:3.

The final section of this canon is a six-part canon which demonstrates Davies' tendency in canonic writing to begin entries in various voices simultaneously. (See Table II.)

Table II : Final section of V (bars 58 to the end.)<sup>7</sup>

<u>Bar</u>	<u>Instrument</u>	<u>Canonic treatment of dux.</u>
58-end	Cello	Transposed inversion in 2/2 meter. Rhythmic values augmented in the ratio 2:1.
58-end	Viola	Transposed retrograde in 2/2 meter. Rhythmic values augmented in the ratio 2:1.
58-end	Clarinet	Dux in original form.
58-end	Violin II	Transposed retrograde inversion in 2/2.
61-end	Bassoon	Retrograde in 6/4 meter. Rhythmic values therefore diminished at the ratio 2:3.
61-end	Horn	Transposed inversion in 6/4 meter.

---

The tendency to begin canonic entries without an intervening time-lapse is one of the factors which accounts for Davies' exploitation of so many different canonic devices in a single canon. Voices which begin simultaneously need to be differentiated by the use of different canonic treatment. Mensural canonic techniques which are demonstrated once again in the final section of V are a means by which Davies is able

to create a time-lapse between statements of the dux which either begin or (as in this example) end simultaneously.

The instrumentation that Davies employs in this canon is a feature which provides a link between this twentieth-century composition (in which there is no tangible use of 'In nomine' material) and the arrangement of the Blitheman In Nomine which follows it. In both works contrapuntal voices are doubled at the twelfth or octave. Paul Griffiths states that the use of "bizarre instrumentation" in the *Seven In Nomine* "looks forward to many later grotesques and marks the clearest expression so far of a tension between substance and appearance."<sup>8</sup>

Davies describes the final piece of the *Seven In Nomine* as "a short recitative, summing up the harmonic implications of No.s [sic] 2, 3 and 5".<sup>9</sup> The relationship between this In Nomine and its source is clear.

The four-bar "introduction" to the piece begins with the first two notes of the 'In nomine' treble line or the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant stated as a sustained dyad. The notes E, G<sup>\*</sup> and F<sup>\*</sup> are gradually added to this dyad so that the resulting harmonic structure is the whole-tone chord (plus an F natural) that played an important role in the *First Fantasia*. D is established as the tonal centre. The sustained dyads in the bassoon and viola, from bars 5 to 14, are based on a vertical arrangement of the *Gloria tibi*

*Trinitas* fragment. (See Example 6.) This method of deriving harmonic structures from a plainchant fragment was similarly used in the first instrumental verse of *Te Lucis ante Terminum*, a choral work written by Davies in 1961.

Example 6 : *Gloria tibi Trinitas* opening phrase

VII - bars 5 to 14 (partial score)

Bsn

Vla

etc.

The plainchant fragment is later stated as a cantus firmus in long sustained notes in the bassoon from bar 17 to 23. A sustained G<sup>#</sup>, which is sounded from bar 19 to bar 22, and an E, which is sustained in the clarinet from bar 20 to bar 23, make up one of the major thirds of the original whole-tone chord. The two-bar coda of VII concludes the piece with a different whole-tone chord to that presented in the introduction. The final whole-tone chord contains the E/G<sup>#</sup> of the original whole-tone chord, but the D/F<sup>#</sup> is replaced by the major third B<sup>b</sup>/D. The "root" (or lowest note) of this chord is B<sup>b</sup>. Remembering that B<sup>b</sup> is the note which Davies

sometimes uses as a secondary tonal centre, it could perhaps be said that VII ends on a dominant.

Davies has not only parodied musical material from a pre-Baroque source in VII, but has also parodied the cantus firmus technique which was popular in the Middle Ages. The whole piece except for the two-bar coda is built on a cantus firmus comprised of two statements of the opening phrase of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant. The first half of the cantus firmus is fairly unconventionally handled, since Davies has superimposed the notes of the plainchant so that pairs of notes from the original are sounded simultaneously. That the pitch sequence of the plainchant can be used both vertically and horizontally suggests a serial influence and hence this example shows the fusion of pre-Baroque and twentieth-century techniques. In the second half of the piece, from bar 17 to bar 23, the cantus firmus is handled in a manner that is typical of composers of Taverner's time, since the notes of the plainchant are all sustained in equal note-values. The overall style of this *In Nomine* is reminiscent of the instrumental writing of some of Davies' works for children, such as is found in *O Magnum Mysterium* and *Te Lucis ante Terminum*. The lucid, homophonic texture of the last of the *Seven In Nomine* is also very similar to that of the two recitative sections of the *First Fantasia*.



### Summary

In pieces II, III and V Davies has made use of material from Taverner's 'In nomine' in a very cerebral manner. This results in abstract music in which the parodied material is rendered totally unrecognisable both aurally and visually. The compositional style of II, III and V is therefore similar to that of early works by Davies such as the *St Michael Sonata* and *Prolation*.

VII, on the other hand, reveals the simplification of style that resulted from Davies' writing music for children. The manner in which Davies has made use of parodied melodic material is most obvious in this *In Nomine*.

In the *Seven In Nomine* Davies parodies both the cantus firmus technique and canonic devices from the pre-Baroque. In both instances, the "borrowed" techniques are modified by using them in a novel manner, uncharacteristic of the way they would originally have been used.

### Notes

1. Davies, "Seven In Nomine", p. 140.
2. Harry Haskell, The Early Music Revival: A History (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988), p. 173.
3. Griffiths, Davies, pp. 139-40.
4. Ibid., p. 140

5. Ibid.
6. The Harvard Dictionary (s.v. "Canon", p. 125) describes a perpetual canon as "one that leads back to the beginning and that may therefore be repeated several times." This implies that all the imitating voices lead back to the beginning as well, and that the entire canon is repeated exactly as it was stated the first time. This is not the case in Davies' canon. An example of a true perpetual canon is No. 7 ("Canon a 4") in Bach's *Musical Offering*.
7. The doubling voices are not accounted for in this table.
8. Griffiths, p. 45.
9. Ibid., p. 140.

#### 2.4 SECOND FANTASIA ON AN IN NOMINE BY JOHN TAVERNER

The *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner is the longest of Davies' instrumental In Nomine works. "The work grew out of the completed first act of *Taverner*, during the writing of which [Davies] felt that many ideas were capable of a more symphonic development than was possible within the confines of the dramatic context."<sup>1</sup> The *Second Fantasia* is therefore the instrumental work in which dramatic musical writing is most evident. The composition also exhibits the development and fuller realisation of several ideas with which Davies had already experimented in the *First Fantasia* and the *Seven In Nomine*. As the title suggests, the *Second Fantasia* reveals a strong relationship to the *First Fantasia*, and can be shown to have grown out of several prototypical ideas contained in the earlier In Nomine work.

Like the *First Fantasia*, the *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner can be regarded as employing the fundamental ideas of the 'parody fantasia' popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the first instance, the *Second Fantasia* takes the polyphonic 'In nomine' by Taverner as its starting point. Secondly, Davies' "main compositional concern [in the *Second Fantasia*] was to explore the possibilities of continuous thematic transformation so that the material is in a continual state of flux."<sup>2</sup> Davies' use of continual transformation techniques results in the *Second Fantasia* having an improvisatory, freely-evolving nature

which is a characteristic of the fantasia genre.

Although the *Second Fantasia* contains no exact repetition and has an improvisatory appearance, the work can be considered in terms of symphonic form without too much difficulty. The thirteen formal divisions of the fantasia can be grouped together to form three symphonic movements.<sup>3</sup> The three movements of the fantasia are linked by transition passages so that it is played without a break, resulting in a continuous musical discourse of approximately 40 minutes.

The three symphonic movements of the fantasia are as follows: bars 1 to 548 comprise the first movement which Davies describes as "roughly a sonata-form movement with introduction and coda"; bars 549 to 580 form a transition into the second movement; bars 581 to 1008 constitute a central "scherzo and trio" movement; bars 1009 to 1021 provide the transition into the third movement which lasts from bars 1022 to 1215.<sup>4</sup>

Like the *First Fantasia*, the three movements of the *Second Fantasia* are unified by their use of material from Taverner's 'In nomine'. Once again, material parodied from the original 'In nomine' provides a framework for the *Second Fantasia* within which Davies' newly composed material is presented. Some of the ways in which Davies handles the 'In nomine'-derived material in the *Second Fantasia* are similar to those which have already been observed in the *First Fantasia* and

the *Seven In Nomine*. The *Second Fantasia* also introduces new methods of treating the 'In nomine' material. These new techniques expand the concept of parody further, and tend to reveal the influence of dramatic musical writing from the opera *Taverner*. Since the melodic lines of the *Second Fantasia* as a whole tend to be long and florid, it is often difficult to pick out instances in which Taverner's 'In nomine' might have influenced Davies' melodies. Despite the fact that the distinction between "old" and newly-composed material may in some cases be impossible to hear, due to Davies' use of transformation techniques, the 'In nomine' framework of the *Second Fantasia* is relatively clear to the analytical eye.

The opening section of the *Second Fantasia* (bars 1-116) can be regarded as an exposition of the first subject area of the sonata-form first movement. The principle theme of the first subject area is a nineteen-note pitch sequence which is first stated in the introduction, divided between cello and first violin. This melodic line is derived from the opening motif of Taverner's 'In nomine' treble line. (See Example 1.)

Notes 1 to 4 of the pitch sequence are an inverted transposition of the first four notes of the 'In nomine' treble line; notes 6 to 9 are an inverted version of the same four notes but at a new transposition; and notes 15 to 18 are a retrograde statement of the beginning of Taverner's treble line. Notes 8 to 13 can also be considered to be a

derivation from the same source material, with the minor third filled in and the descending scalar line chromatically altered. The pitches of this theme are frequently subjected to octave displacement which further removes the transformed material from the original.

**Example 1: Nineteen-note pitch sequence**

The musical score for Example 1 consists of three staves. The first staff is for Cello I (bass clef) and contains notes 1 through 7. The second staff is for Violin I (treble clef) and contains notes 8 through 16. The third staff (treble clef) contains notes 17 through 19. The notes are: 1 (C2), 2 (B1), 3 (A1), 4 (G1), 5 (F1), 6 (E1), 7 (D1), 8 (C2), 9 (B1), 10 (A1), 11 (G1), 12 (F1), 13 (E1), 14 (D1), 15 (C2), 16 (B1), 17 (A1), 18 (G1), 19 (F1).

Paul Griffiths and Arnold Whittall describe the derivation of the nineteen-note pitch sequence from the 'In nomine' treble line in slightly different ways. Paul Griffiths states that the theme "begins as a transposed inversion of the Taverner treble D F E D to E<sup>b</sup> C D<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>, and then, where Taverner continues with a falling whole-tone scale, D C B<sup>b</sup>, Davies' theme surveys another tonally ambiguous element, the diminished seventh chord, E<sup>b</sup> G<sup>b</sup> C A."<sup>5</sup> Whittall states: "This phrase can be seen as a distortion and derivation of the Taverner motif, both in its emphasis on the minor third, and in the manner that Taverner's initial D natural is enclosed by the first four notes of the cello phrase without actually being stated."<sup>6</sup>

That this melody bears some relationship to Taverner's 'In nomine' seems clear, but the fact that this relationship can be explained in three different ways illustrates the manner in which Davies' transformation of parodied material often makes the recognition of the source material difficult and sometimes speculative. By altering Taverner's original melodic line to produce a theme the origin of which is aurally obscured, Davies makes material from the pre-Baroque compatible with his newly-composed, twentieth-century material. Davies' parody of material from early music can, therefore, be said to achieve a sense of fusion, an aspect which is essential to the concept of Mediaeval parody.

Not all of the 'In nomine' framework of the *Second Fantasia* distorts the original material to such an extent. In the first movement there are a number of places where 'In nomine' material appears in relatively unaltered forms. The first clear appearance of 'In nomine' material occurs in the "development" section, in the trombones from bar 386 to bar 405. The trombone line is modelled on the 'In nomine' treble fragment, with the A flattened. (See Example 2.)

Example 2 : Trombone line bars 386 to 405



Near the end of the development section the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant fragment is stated in an unaltered form in the oboe, but is divided into two halves. The first half is stated from bar 415 to bar 429, and the second from bar 434 to bar 442. Despite the fragmentation of this quotation, the fact that the 'In nomine' material is not subjected to octave displacement means that it is aurally recognisable. The statement of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant in the tubas from bar 516 to bar 538 is distorted in that it is generally doubled at dissonant intervals; nevertheless, this statement of the plainchant fragment is also not subjected to octave displacement and it is therefore also aurally recognisable.

The coda of the first movement, which Davies describes as an amplification of the introduction, uses a statement of the 'In nomine' treble line followed by the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant to underpin the "whirling" improvisation in the woodwind section. The 'In nomine' material is stated in the violas and horns from bar 539 to bar 545 and is aurally disguised due to the presence of a more prominent cantus firmus stated by the bassoon, double bassoon, tubas, cellos and double basses. Since it was shown that the principal melody of the introduction was derived from 'In nomine' material, and since all the other melodic material of the coda is new, the presence of 'In nomine' material in the coda actually forms the link between the two sections.



The treatment of the 'In nomine' material in the Scherzo of the *Second Fantasia* suggests the use of parody in the satirical sense as well as its Mediaeval sense. The first section of the Scherzo (bars 581 to 759) subdivides into seven smaller sections. Sections in which florid woodwind lines predominate alternate with "interludes" in which the bulk of the musical argument is presented by the lower strings. The most prominent feature of the interludes is the statement of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant by solo violin. Davies parodies the 'In nomine' treble line in the Mediaeval sense by presenting the material in the manner of a cantus firmus, in long sustained notes, while the instruction that each sustained note is to be played "starting 'pp' with no vibrato, increasing the crescendo until it is exaggerated at the end of the note (*f* molto)" suggests that Davies simultaneously parodies the 'In nomine' treble line in a satirical sense. The caricatured presentation of the source material has a distinctly dramatic flair, and is in fact a device borrowed from Act I, scene iv of *Taverner*.<sup>7</sup> The use of satirized material in the Scherzo befits the traditional "joke-like" or light-hearted nature of this form.

The final Lento movement of the *Second Fantasia* contains two (visually) clear statements of 'In nomine' material. The cellos from bar 1125 to bar 1134 state the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant altered only by octave displacement, and in the coda the flute states a condensed version of the plainchant in which all repeated notes are omitted. (See

Example 3.)

Example 3 : Bars 1206 to 1215 (see flute)

1210

1215

lunga

lunga

lunga

lunga

lunga

lunga

1964

In all the above instances where Davies has used the 'In nomine' material in a relatively unaltered way, the 'In nomine' fragments are stated in prolonged note-values and the statement acts as a cantus firmus for a small section. Davies' miniature canti firmi function in much the same way as a fifteenth-century cantus firmus does, providing a stabilizing foundation for the faster-moving polyphonic transformations around it, and providing a unifying and structurally-defining element. The canti firmi generally provide the listener with a slower line that is easier to

follow than the lines surrounding it which are being rapidly transformed.

The manner in which Davies' canti firmi provide points of reference in busy polyphonic passages, where change occurs at a relatively fast pace, is best illustrated by the coda of the first movement, where Davies uses canti firmi to support the "whirling" improvisation in the woodwind parts. The woodwind, which improvise "as quickly as possible, fuori tempo", are supported by two canti firmi. The one stated in the horns and violas is based on material from Taverner's 'In nomine' and is not really audible. The other is comprised of newly-composed material and is stated in long notes in bassoon, double bassoon, tubas, trombones, cellos and double basses. The listener's attention is immediately drawn to this line, which thus facilitates the following of the musical argument where much of the remaining musical activity seems chaotic.

It is interesting to note that Davies, like Taverner (the composer whose work Davies uses as a source of parody), also re-uses his own work. The first 127 bars of the *Second Fantasia* are taken from the transition between the second and third scenes of the first act of *Taverner*. The following passage by Hugh Benham suggests that the concept of parody can, for the purpose of this study, be extended to include Davies' use of material from one of his *In Nomine* works in another:

In writing a parody Mass, the Continental composer ... borrowed from someone else's music, but he was not guilty of plagiarism because he normally altered what he borrowed ... Taverner and Tallis, on the other hand, re-used their own work, and did not as a rule change the borrowed material much beyond what was necessary to accommodate new words; consequently their practice appears to be largely independent of Continental parody method. A parallel might be seen with 'contrafactum' technique where a piece has a new text substituted for the original yet suffers no significant alteration musically .... But the comparison is of limited use, because while a contrafactum and its original have the same number of sections and use them in the same order ... [the works of Taverner and Tallis] have some material not found in their parent works and do not necessarily incorporate borrowed sections in the correct order.<sup>8</sup>

It would seem, therefore, that one can consider Davies' re-use of his own material as an example of the type of parody peculiar to Tudor composers.

The *Second Fantasia* has been influenced by Taverner not only by virtue of its including material from the opera, but also in that there are several musical sections or features in the *Second Fantasia* which have a distinctly dramatic quality. The satirical parody of 'In nomine' material in the Scherzo is one such feature, and is in fact an idea taken from Act I, scene iv of the opera. The whirling improvisatory section in the coda of the first movement and the fanfare sections (from bar 117 to 127, for example) are also of a dramatic nature. The section from bar 1009 to bar 1021, with a trumpet fanfare motif (not unlike that which opens Act I, scene ii of Taverner) and its prominent use of handbells, is a particularly good example of the type of music with inherent dramatic possibilities that is contained in the *Second Fantasia*. (See Example 4.) The fact that Davies makes a

greater use of material which is more obviously derived from Taverner's 'In nomine' can perhaps also be regarded as indicative of the dramatic tendencies of the *Second Fantasia*. That Davies himself considered some of the music of the *Second Fantasia* to be of a dramatic nature is borne out by his subsequent use of sections from the fantasia in the second act of *Taverner*.

Example 4 : Bars 1009 to 1012

1009 ritard. 1010

Picc. *d.s.d*

Fl. 1

Ob. 1

1 *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *f*

2 *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *f*

3

4

1 *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *f*

2 *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *f*

Tr. 3 *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *f*

4 *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *f*

Perc. *sfz*

Example 4 cont.

Several features of the *Seven In Nomine* and the *First Fantasia* also appear in the *Second Fantasia*. Two examples are the whole-tone chord and the use of sets and series. The D-F\*-E-G\* chord which established itself as the most important harmonic structure in both the *First Fantasia* and the *Seven In Nomine* emerges once again as the most important harmonic entity in the *Second Fantasia*. The whole-tone chord appears at intervals throughout the *Second Fantasia*, often in the form of a sustained chordal pedal. This happens, for example, in the third movement. The third statement of the long Lento theme is underpinned by the longest whole-tone chord of the whole fantasia. The D-F\*-E-G\* chord is gradually built up in the brass section from bar 1158, and is sustained from bar 1168 to bar 1179.

Davies makes use of a seven-note pitch set in the exposition of the first movement of the *Second Fantasia* in order to

generate the woodwind parts. Of the total of 14 sets (of seven notes each) that are used in this section, the notes of eleven can be arranged in rows of adjacent semitones. Besides this common element, Davies' use of the seven-note sets reveals no intervallic consistency, no principle governing rhythmic permutation and no factor which determines the notes of each successive set or the order of the pitches of each set. It appears that Davies uses the seven-note sets of the *Second Fantasia* with the same lack of rigour as in the *First Fantasia*.

### **Summary**

The *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner makes use of several types of parody, some of which Davies had not previously employed in the other instrumental In Nomine works. The composer still parodies 'In nomine' material in the Mediaeval sense, sometimes altering and distorting the melodic fragments beyond recognition, and at other times stating them so that they are aurally recognisable. The structural framework of the *Second Fantasia* is (as in the *First Fantasia*) made up of material derived from Taverner's 'In nomine'. Although Davies' alteration of the original material frequently renders it unrecognisable, it does allow him to obtain a fusion between the parodied material and his own newly-composed material.

Davies parodies the Mediaeval cantus firmus technique in the *Second Fantasia* in much the same way as in the earlier In Nomine works, although the device is used somewhat more frequently in this composition. He also employs the basic parameters of the parody fantasia form and the symphony in order to devise a structural skeleton for his composition.

The *Second Fantasia* also makes use of parody in a satirical sense (an influence acquired from the opera *Taverner*), and of the parody by Davies of one of his own compositions. Both of these types of parody appear in the group of instrumental In Nomine compositions for the first time.

Besides introducing types of parody of which Davies had not yet made use in the instrumental In Nomine works, the *Second Fantasia* also contains the most intrinsically dramatic music. The appearance of music with a dramatic quality in the *Second Fantasia* can probably be attributed to the fact that the work was written after Davies had completed the first act of *Taverner*.

#### Notes

1. Peter Maxwell Davies, "Second Fantasia", p. 141.
2. Ibid.
3. The *Second Fantasia* divides into thirteen formal sections which are clearly differentiated by their contrasted use



of the various musical parameters. Davies has indicated the beginning of each of the thirteen formal sections in the score. In his article on the *Second Fantasia* (see note 1) the composer states that "sections 1 to 6 make roughly a sonata-form movement, with an introduction and coda; Sections 8 to 10 make a scherzo and trio; and section 12 is a closing extended slow movement." Section 13 forms a coda.

4. Davies, *ibid.*, p. 141.
5. Griffiths, p. 46.
6. Arnold Whittall, "Post Twelve-Note Analysis", Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association 94 (1967-68), p. 9.
7. Peter Maxwell Davies, Second Fantasia on an In Nomine by John Taverner (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1968), p. 76.
8. Hugh Benham, Latin Church Music in England 1460-1575 (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1977), p. 55.

### CHAPTER 3 : TAVERNER

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION TO TAVERNER

The opera *Taverner* is Davies' first opera and the earliest dramatic work in conception, even if it was not the first to be completed and publicly performed.<sup>1</sup> Davies began work on the libretto for *Taverner* in 1956. Studying at Princeton from 1962 to 1964 provided the composer with an ideal opportunity to further his work on the opera for two reasons. Firstly, all the necessary source materials were available in the Princeton University Library and this enabled the composer to do the research for his libretto; and secondly, the Princeton environment gave Davies the time he needed in which to compose.<sup>2</sup> By the time Davies returned to Britain in 1964 he had finished composition of the first act of the opera. *Taverner* was completed in 1968, partially reconstructed in 1970, and received its premiere at Covent Garden in 1972, sixteen years after Davies had first started his sketches for the libretto.

Davies prepared his own libretto for *Taverner* by drawing on all manner of contemporary sources such as state papers, records of heresy and witch trials, individual studies of Tudor statesmen and clergymen, letters, sermons, religious pamphlets and the Bible.<sup>3</sup>

*Taverner* is based on the life of John Taverner, an English

composer of the sixteenth-century (c.1490 - 1545). Davies based his opera on the biographical account of Taverner written by Edmund Fellowes, contained in the first volume of the Tudor Church Music series as an introduction to the works of Taverner.<sup>4</sup> Fellowes' account of Taverner's life states that while he was at Cardinal College the composer became embroiled in a Lutheran heresy, for which he was imprisoned. During his imprisonment Taverner was converted to the Protestant faith with the result that, when he was released, he left the college and renounced composition. He returned to his home town of Boston where he became a fanatical persecutor of the Roman Catholic faith in the pay of Thomas Cromwell.

Fellowes' account of Taverner's life is based largely on a marginal note in a writing by John Foxe which stated that Taverner was "'a man very singular in musick, a good musician'" who had "'repented him very much that he had made Songs to Popish Ditties in the time of his blindness'".<sup>5</sup> This reference made by Foxe was accepted despite the fact that there was nothing in the body of his writing to substantiate the claim. It is only recently that scholars have begun to look at documentary evidence rather than the accounts of writers like Foxe in their attempts to reconstruct the life of John Taverner, and have now discredited biographies such as that by Fellowes.

David Josephson is one such writer. In his work John

Taverner: Tudor Composer, Josephson rejects previous accounts of Taverner's life, saying that there is no evidence to support the assumptions that: Taverner's involvement in the heresy trial was anything but very minor; that Taverner gave up composition once he had left Cardinal College; and that Taverner became a radical persecutor of Roman Catholicism.<sup>6</sup>

Josephson concludes his work by saying:

Taverner was not the dramatic material of which myths or operas are made. He was a decent and practical man living in times of turmoil and adjusting to them with reasonable success ...".<sup>7</sup>

Basing his opera *Taverner* on an historical figure (and a composer at that) and setting the opera in a period in which English music was at a peak not only enabled Davies to base his libretto on quotations from historical documents, but also provided an ideal opportunity for the use of musical material from the past. Using the device of musical parody, popular in the Renaissance, Davies has based much of the music of *Taverner* on material from the 'In nomine' section of the Benedictus from John Taverner's *Gloria tibi Trinitas* Mass.

Parody is a concept central to the opera *Taverner* and is embodied in the work in a number of different ways. Davies makes use of parody in the Renaissance sense, reworking and incorporating musical materials derived from Taverner's 'In nomine'; he uses the parody of musical techniques, styles or forms from earlier periods of musical history; he employs satirical parody in the music and the drama; and the composer

also parodies sections from his own works.

*Taverner* is divided into two acts of four scenes each. Each of the eight scenes of the opera employs the various types of parody to a different extent and with different degrees of obviousness. The type of parody predominant in each scene, the amount of parody used and whether the parody is used overtly or covertly, are all factors which help to shape the resulting dramatic and musical effect. Each of the eight scenes of *Taverner* will therefore be studied in detail in order to facilitate the investigation of the use and function of parody in the opera.

A comparison of the dramatic action, the characters that appear and the settings of each scene reveals pairs of parallel scenes: Act I, scene i corresponds to Act II, scene i; Act I, scene ii corresponds to Act II, scene iii; Act I, scene iii corresponds to Act II, scene ii; and, Act I, scene iv corresponds to Act II, scene iv. The scenes of Act I and Act II will be considered in their corresponding pairs so as to highlight the parallels that can be drawn between the two acts.

#### Notes

1. *Revelation and Fall* was written from 1965 to 1966, and received its premiere before the completion of *Taverner* in February of 1968. *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, *Notre Dame des Fleurs*, *L'homme Armé*, *Vesalii Icones* and *Blind Man's Buff* were all completed and premiered between the completion of *Taverner* (1968) and the first performance of the opera in 1972.

2. Griffiths, Davies, p. 17.
3. Peter Maxwell Davies, "Taverner: Synopsis and Documentation", Tempo 101 (1972), p. 4.
4. Edmund Fellowes, "John Taverner", in P. C. Buck, et al., eds., Tudor Church Music (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1923), vol 1: John Taverner Part I, ed. E. H. Fellowes, pp. xlviii-liii.
5. Friedrich Blume, ed., Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1949-51), s.v. "Taverner" by Denis Stephens, pp. 152-56.
6. David Josephson, John Taverner: Tudor Composer (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1979).
7. Ibid., p. 198.

### 3.2 ACT I. SCENE 1 - ACT II. SCENE 1

#### 3.2.1 Act I. scene i

##### Synopsis

In Act I, scene i John Taverner, a musician, is being tried for heresy by the White Abbot. Taverner's father (Richard), his mistress (Rose Parrowe), his Priest Confessor, and a boy from his choir are called to witness against him, while the learned council occasionally voices some fragment of church dogma. The White Abbot condemns Taverner to be burned at the stake, but at the last minute the Cardinal arrives and reprieves Taverner on the grounds that he is "but a poor musician" and that he must be "furnish[ed] with the opportunity of arriving at truth, and not handle[d] ... unkindly with sharp inquisition, for his blind folly."<sup>1</sup>

##### Music and drama

Act I, scene i uses parody in its Renaissance sense, reworking elements from Taverner's 'In nomine' and incorporating them into the musical fabric of the scene. As in the instrumental In Nomine compositions, the opening pitch sequence of the 'In nomine' treble line, the first fragment of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant, and the D tonal centre of the original work emerge as the predominant

parodied elements. Since Davies has used parody in Act I, scene i primarily as a compositional device, its presence is often disguised, and hence material from the 'In nomine' is usually aurally imperceptible.

The musical introduction to *Taverner* consists of a three-note motif stated by two trumpets. (See Example 1a.) This motif is fanfare-like and provides an appropriate opening for the court scene.<sup>2</sup> The notes of this fanfare-motif can be regarded as being derived from John Taverner's original 'In nomine', as the notes correspond to notes 2, 3 and 4 of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant transposed up a semitone and subjected to octave displacement. (See Example 1b.) The relationship between the introductory trumpet motif and the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* fragment is far from obvious. If, however, Davies did consciously derive this motif from the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant then this would be an example of parody used purely as a compositional device.

Example 1a : I/i - bars 1 to 3 (partial score)



Example 1b : Opening phrase of *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant



The three-note introductory motif is used at various other points in Act I, scene i, although it does not always appear



in its original form. Immediately after the first statement of the motif in the trumpets (bars 1-4), the motif is used and developed in the instrumental section from bars 5 to 14. In bars 5 to 8 the clarinets state an expanded version of the motif. (See Example 2.)

**Example 2 : I/i - bars 1 to 10 (partial score)**

Example 2 is a partial score for bars 1 to 10. It features four staves: Flute 1 & 2, Oboe 1 & 2, Clarinet 1 & 2, and Bassoon 1 & 2. The tempo is initially Lento (J = 72) and changes to Allegro (J = 120) at bar 5, marked 'Curtain'. The key signature changes from C major to B-flat major at bar 10. The score shows the development of a motif across these instruments, with the clarinet playing an expanded version of the motif in bars 5 to 8.

The flutes take up the clarinet motif in bar 11, transposing it up a perfect fifth and expanding it further. The harmonies in bar 17 are also derived from the expanded form of the fanfare-motif, as this chord consists of the notes of the expanded motif with an added C. (See Example 3.)

**Example 3 : I/i - bars 17 to 19 (partial score)**

Example 3 is a partial score for bars 17 to 19. It features five staves: Violin I (Vl. I), Violin II (Vl. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.). The key signature is B-flat major. The score shows the development of a motif across these instruments, with the violins playing a divided part (div.) in bar 19.

This example of how Davies has expanded and transformed a three-note motif, using it melodically and harmonically is typical of the composer's tendency to take a small melodic cell and use it as a basis from which he can derive or generate much of the material of a musical section. For instance, Davies uses a three-note tone - semitone cell to generate most of the musical material of *O Magnum Mysterium*, and the origin of most of the music of *Prolation* can be traced back to a five-note series presented at the beginning of the work.

The White Abbot's first entry at bar 17 is based on the first three notes of the 'In nomine' treble line. (See Example 4.)

Example 4 : I/i - White Abbot bars 17 to 21 (partial score)

WHITE ABBOT *ff*

Call John Ta-ver-ner, mu - si-cian.

Wh. Ab.

blas-phe-mer, cor-rup - tor, he - re-tic.

The White Abbot's vocal line from bar 39 to bar 53 is also derived from the 'In nomine' treble line, but the material is so expanded and transformed that the source of the parody is not aurally recognisable.

The influence of the D tonal centre of Taverner's 'In nomine' is also apparent in the vocal lines of the White Abbot. The

White Abbot's lines are characterised by their tendency to establish a tonal centre by the frequent repetition of, and centring around, a single tone. In the majority of Act I, scene i the tonal centre established by most of the White Abbot's vocal lines is D. Since the White Abbot's lines are interspersed between the "arias" of other characters, they function to promote D as the tonal reference for Act I, scene i, from bars 1 to 526.

In the final section of Act I, scene i, from bar 527 to bar 617 (the section where the Cardinal enters and exonerates Taverner), the tonal centre oscillates between D and B<sup>b</sup>. B<sup>b</sup> therefore functions as a secondary tonal centre or "dominant" in Act I, scene i in much the same way as was observed in sections of the *First Fantasia* and the *Seven In Nomine*. In this section the tonal centres are no longer established by the vocal lines of any one character, but rather suggested by cantus firmus statements of material from Taverner's 'In nomine' which begin either (as in the original) on D, or are transposed to begin on the secondary tonal centre B<sup>b</sup>.

The first appearance of a more substantial motif which can clearly be seen to have been derived from Taverner's 'In nomine' accompanies the entrance of John Taverner at bar 22, where the oboe states a modified version of the 'In nomine' treble line. (See Example 5.)

Example 5 : I/i - Oboe bars 22 to 27



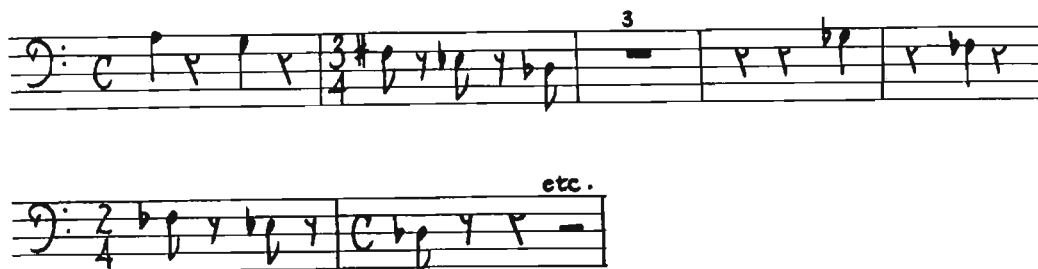
Because the 'In nomine' fragment is chromatically altered and subjected to pitch displacement, it is not immediately aurally recognisable, and is, therefore, another example of parody used purely as a compositional device. The point at which the first comparatively visually clear parody of 'In nomine' material occurs is, however, significant, as it is used at the point where Taverner (composer of the original 'In nomine') enters into the dramatic action. This modified version of the 'In nomine' treble line is one of the reworkings of 'In nomine' material which Davies uses most frequently in *Taverner*, and which has already been observed in the instrumental In Nomine works. Besides the parody of 'In nomine' material in the oboe, much of the rest of the instrumental music that accompanies Taverner's entrance is based on versions of the introductory fanfare motif, which could possibly also have been derived from Taverner's 'In nomine'.

Taverner's first aria similarly contains parodies of the 'In nomine' material which the listener would not be able to identify. For example, the oboe states the modified 'In nomine' treble line twice, from bar 81 to 84, and from bar 91 to 95, and Taverner's vocal line at bar 78 begins with the

first five notes of the 'In nomine' treble line. Once again, despite the fact that parody is being used purely as a compositional technique, it is perhaps significant that Davies uses material that is clearly derived from the 'In nomine' at this point, as in this "aria" Taverner is standing up for his "heretical" beliefs. Davies' use of material from Taverner's 'In nomine' appears to take on the function of a leitmotif in *Taverner*, representing or alluding to Taverner and his religious beliefs before his conversion by Death. It will be seen that most of the appearances of 'In nomine' material can be explained in terms of the leitmotif idea. Davies use of 'In nomine' material as a leitmotif in Act I, scene i is not, however, apparent to the listener, since features of Taverner's 'In nomine' are not used in an aurally recognisable form. Nevertheless, Davies' use of a "visual leitmotif" shows that the composer does not merely use borrowed material indiscriminately, but rather justifies its use by utilizing it at dramatically relevant points.

An example of Davies' use of a musical feature of the 'In nomine' rather than a particular melodic fragment can be observed in the accompaniment to the choir boy's vocal line (bar 412 onwards), where the descending scalar lines in the cello and double bass reflect the emphasis on descending scalar lines in the original 'In nomine'. (See Example 6.)

Example 6 : I/i - Cello and double bass bars 412 to 420



The examples cited thus far are all instances where Taverner's 'In nomine' has been parodied as a method of generating basic compositional ideas: it is not intended that the listener should identify the original material. At the end of Act I, scene i, where the Cardinal enters and reprieves Taverner (bars 527 to 620), material from the 'In nomine' is used extensively in such a way that a listener familiar with the original composition might be able to recognise the reference. For example, in bar 527, tuba 2 begins a statement of the opening portion of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant transposed to B<sup>b</sup>. The trombone joins tuba 2 in bar 528 so that the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant is stated in octaves. The *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant is stated again by bassoon and double bassoon at bar 566, and at bar 582 in sustained notes of equal length suggesting that Davies uses the plainchant as a cantus firmus. The modified 'In nomine' treble line is also used extensively within the final section of Act I, scene i. 'In nomine' material provides a cantus firmus for more than half of this section (bars 527 to 620). The Cardinal's vocal line also

occasionally contains brief references to the 'In nomine'.

The predominant use of parody of Taverner's 'In nomine' at this particular dramatic point can be considered meaningful for two reasons. Firstly, it is appropriate that the music should contain audible references to Taverner's music at this moment since Taverner's music is the very reason that he is exonerated: the music aurally supports the Cardinal's discussion of Taverner's skill as a musician. Secondly (and more abstractly), one could perhaps say that the Mediaeval-Renaissance idea that the use of a plainchant was the "authority" which validated a new composition reflects the authority of the Cardinal to rescind the White Abbot's judgement.

Besides the parody of material from Taverner's 'In nomine' in Act I, scene i, Davies also parodies a pre-Baroque device and a Baroque form. Davies frequently states material derived from the 'In nomine' in long notes, often of equal note-values. This suggests the parody of the technique of cantus firmus in a manner similar to that already observed in the Second Fantasia. The short canti firmi fragments are used to underpin sections where there is a complex polyphonic texture and where rapid melodic transformation is taking place in the other voices, thus providing the listener with a musical line that is can be more easily followed than any of the other melodic material at that point.

One of the primary factors contributing to the musical organization and structure of Act I, scene i is Davies' parody of the ternary form exhibited by the Baroque *da capo* aria. The arias of all of the characters except Rose Parrowe and the White Abbot fall into an A B A form.<sup>3</sup> Although Davies never repeats musical material exactly, the musical ideas of the first A section are re-used in the second A section in a fairly clear manner, and the ternary structure of most of the arias is definitely audible.

As is typical of Davies' treatment of borrowed forms, the *da capo* arias of *Taverner* are presented in a manner which clearly reveals the influence of the composer's essentially twentieth-century style. One of the features of Davies' arias which reveals a twentieth-century influence is that each of the sections of the arias of Act I, scene i become progressively shorter instead of being balanced sections of roughly equal length, like those of the Baroque. The only aria which does have sections of a comparable length is that of the Cardinal in bars 541 to 617.

### Summary

The type of parody which is predominant in Act I, scene i is parody in its pre-Baroque sense, in which an existing composition is used as a source of building material for the



creation of a new work. Davies has used material derived from Taverner's 'In nomine' in two ways in Act I, scene i.

Firstly, and predominantly, Davies has used small melodic fragments from the 'In nomine' which he has modified and used to generate much of the music of the first scene of *Taverner*. The transformation of the melodic material from the 'In nomine' generally renders it aurally unrecognisable. Davies has used longer, less distorted fragments from the 'In nomine' at points where their dramatic significance can be shown. This suggests that, although 'In nomine' material is generally aurally imperceptible, Davies uses material from Taverner's composition in the manner of a leitmotif.

Secondly, Davies has used material from the 'In nomine' in an unaltered form, so that the listener who was familiar with the parodied work would possibly be able to detect the reference. In this way, the parodied material functions not only as a compositional device, but also provides a musical enhancement of, and comment on, the dramatic action.

Act I, scene i also employs the parody of a pre-Baroque compositional device - the cantus firmus. Although Davies' canti firmi are only used to underpin short sections of Act I, scene i rather than to support an entire musical area or composition, as pre-Baroque canti firmi would have done, his canti firmi function in much the same way as their Mediaeval or Renaissance models. Davies' canti firmi provide a stable

melodic foundation for the faster moving and rapidly transforming lines around it.

#### Notes

1. Peter Maxwell Davies, Taverner (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1980), pp. 59-60.
2. The newly-composed material of Davies' *First Fantasia* similarly begins with a fanfare-like motif stated by two trumpets. The opening trumpet motif in the *First Fantasia* is, however, more closely related to Taverner's 'In nomine' than the introductory motif of Act I, scene i.
3. Rose's aria also exhibits clear A and B sections, but both the A and the B sections are repeated. The vocal lines of the White Abbot are spread throughout Act I, scene i and function more like recitatives, linking the arias of the various other characters.

### 3.2.2 Act II, scene i

#### Synopsis

The stage directions of Act II, scene i state that "the whole [scene] is conceived as a parody of Act One, Scene I."<sup>1</sup> Dramatically the outline of the action of Act II, scene i is almost identical to that of Act I, scene i. The scene is again set in the courtroom where a trial is taking place. The witnesses from Act I, scene i are called to give evidence in the same order and the learned council interjects with statements of church doctrine. The roles of Taverner and the White Abbot are, however, reversed in this scene: Taverner is now trying the White Abbot for "idolatory, refusal of submission to His Majesty, the King, perversion of the Holy Scripture and rank heresy."<sup>2</sup> The dramatic action of Act II, scene i diverges from that of Act I, scene i only after the judgement is given. Instead of the Cardinal entering to exonerate the White Abbot, a Wheel of Fortune appears with Death "seated at its centre and controlling its spinning."<sup>3</sup>

The manner in which Act II, scene i satirically parodies Act I, scene i is made clear dramatically in three main ways. Firstly, the scene (as outlined above) presents an ironic reversal of the action of Act I, scene i. Not only are the roles of Taverner and the White Abbot reversed, but the evidence given by the witnesses and the statements made by the learned council reveal beliefs contradictory to those

held in Act I, scene i. Secondly, stage directions demand that "except for the White Abbot, the actors throughout this are somnambulistic, with jerky movements, as in early cinema film."<sup>4</sup> Thirdly, the trial scene is an abbreviated form of the trial of Act I, scene i, with evidence being given in a very laconic, careless manner which suggests that the entire trial is a farce.

#### Music and drama

All the musical parameters of Act II, scene i are used to reflect the sardonic parody of Act I, scene i that the libretto exhibits. The satirical nature of the plot and dramatic action of this scene is further emphasised by the exaggerated restatement of musical material from the corresponding act.

In general, the tempi of Act II, scene i are much faster than those of Act I, scene i. The tempi of Act II, scene i range from ♩ = 72 for a few bars only, to ♩ = 144 for the majority of the scene, and small divisions of the beat (semi-quavers for the most part) and rapid melodic ornaments are emphasised. In Act I, scene i the fastest tempo is also ♩ = 144 (but this is sustained for a few bars only), the slowest tempo is ♩ = 60 and the crotchet is the most common division of the bar. In addition to the fact that Act I, scene i is musically much slower than Act II, scene i, the action of Act II, scene i takes place within 296 bars compared with the 680 bars it takes for the action of Act I, scene i to unfold.

The faster tempo of Act II, scene i musically supports the idea that the White Abbot's trial is extremely rushed, and eliminates any vestige of the serious character of Taverner's trial in the earlier scene.

The grave nature of the trial in Act I, scene i is also reflected musically by the fact that instruments with dark, sombre tone-colours and lower pitch predominate. Conversely, the orchestration of Act II, scene i emphasises instruments with a high pitch and a shrill or harsh timbre, and there is a continual cacophony of sound that issues from the percussion section. John Taverner's uncontrolled fanaticism is reflected musically by the fact that his vocal lines are accompanied by freely improvising percussion instruments of indefinite pitch.

Dynamically, most of Act II, scene i is performed at a volume that ranges between *f* and *fff*; there is none of the subtle shading of dynamics found in Act I, scene i. The texture of Act II, scene i is far more dense than that of Act I, scene i for several reasons. There are generally more parts being played simultaneously; unusual subdivisions of the bar often result in complex cross-rhythms between the parts; and much use is made of trills, glissandi and tremoli which thicken the texture still further. The consistently loud dynamic level of Act II, scene i makes the music sound forced as well as hurried. This, as well as the complex texture in which each part seems to be relatively independent, further

emphasises the idea that the whole trial is absurd and chaotic.

A comparison of musical material from Act I, scene i, and its imitation in Act II, scene i illustrates some of the above-mentioned parody effects and provides examples of other parodistic devices. For instance, Act II, scene i opens with the same fanfare-motif with which Act I, scene i began. (See Example 1.)

Example 1 : I/i - bars 1 to 8

Example 1: I/i - bars 1 to 8

Tempo markings: Lento  $J = 72$ , Curtain, Allegro  $J = 120$

Instrument parts shown:

- Flute 1. 2.
- Oboe 1. 2.
- Clarinet 1. 2.
- Bassoon 1. 2.
- Horn 1. 2.
- Trumpet 1. 2.
- Trumpet 3. 4.
- Trombone 1. 2.
- Tuba 1. 2.
- Timpani
- Percussion
- Harp
- Violin I
- Violin II
- Viola
- Violoncello
- Double Bass

The score illustrates the transition from Lento to Allegro, marked by the "Curtain" section. The music features various dynamics (e.g.,  $f$ ,  $sf$ ,  $sfz$ ) and articulations (e.g.,  $acc.$ ,  $stacc.$ ,  $pizz.$ ).



Example 1 cont. : II/i - bars 1-6

is conceived as a parody of Act One, Scene I.

Allegro molto  $\text{♩} = 126$  CURTAIN ritmico  $\text{♩} = 132$

1. Piccolo

2. Piccolo

1. Oboe

2. Oboe

1. Clarinet (in E)

2. Clarinet (in E)

1. Bassoon

2. Bassoon

1. 2. Horn

3. 4. Horn

Percussion

Wood Block

2 Highest Temple Blocks (together)

Very High Wooden Claves

Allegro molto  $\text{♩} = 126$  Piano ritmico  $\text{♩} = 132$

Violin I div.

Violin II div.

Viola

A comparison of these two extracts immediately reveals several of the parody effects discussed above. The opening fanfare motif is stated by the trumpets in middle range, at a sedate pace in Act I, scene i, but by the high-pitched, shrill piccolo and violins, Allegro molto, in Act II, scene i. The fanfare motif of Act II, scene i is followed immediately by busy woodwind motifs in which cross-rhythms arise between piccolo and clarinet on the one hand, and

bassoon and oboe on the other. The thicker, more complex texture and the absence of lower pitched instruments in the Act II, scene i example is noticeable.

Although the roles of Taverner and the White Abbot have been reversed, the White Abbot's beliefs have not altered. He is being tried for the same convictions that he held in Act I, scene i. Davies demonstrates this not only by specifying that the White Abbot is the only character who does not move with awkward, jerky movements, but also by maintaining the musical features which characterised the White Abbot's vocal lines in the former scene. The White Abbot's vocal lines in Act II, scene i have a similar melodic contour to those in Act I, scene i, and still centre around and emphasize one particular tone. The tone-colour of the White Abbot's accompaniment is also maintained in Act II, scene i where he is accompanied by brass and string instruments in a style not very different from that in Act I, scene i.

John Taverner's character, on the other hand, has undergone a transformation since Act I, scene i: he has rejected both his music and his humanity, and dedicated himself to the persecution of "heretics". Taverner's conversion to a fanatical persecutor is emphasised musically in Act II, scene i in that he is accompanied by unpitched percussion instruments which improvise freely. His role as inquisitor in Act II, scene i is reflected by the fact that many of his vocal lines now centre around a particular tone, establishing



a tonal centre in much the same way as the White Abbot's vocal lines as judge in Act I, scene i did. Where there are textual correspondences between Act I, scene i and Act II, scene i, the melodic lines are often extremely closely related. (See Example 2.)

Example 2a

I/i - White Abbot bars 248 to 250



Rose — Par - rowe, mis - tress of the ac - cused...

II/i - Taverner bars 92 to 96



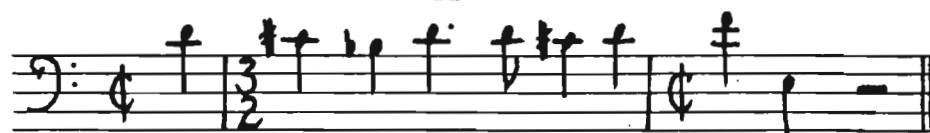
Call the wo - man Rose Par - rowe to pro - claim -



his — scan - - - - - dal.

Example 2b

I/i - White Abbot bars 51 to 53



How make you an - swer to these char - ges?

II/i - Taverner bar 22



How make you an - swer to these char - ges?

The music used to communicate Richard Taverner's evidence against the White Abbot contains the vocal line from his testimony in Act I, scene i in the instrumental accompaniment. (See Example 3.) This re-use of material from Act I, scene i is an example of satirical parody, since the melody of the vocal line is given an exaggerated

imitation in Act II, scene i. The melody from Act I, scene i is made even more jagged by subjecting it to pitch displacement and by fragmenting it further in Act II, scene i. Davies has indicated that the vocal line borrowed from Act I, scene i is to be played "molto *f* esaggerato il vibrato ed i glissandi", which gives the music a sharp, mocking character.

**Example 3 : II/i - bars 68 to 73 (partial score)**

The musical score for Example 3 consists of two systems. The first system shows the vocal line (R. Tav.) and the violin solo (Vc. Solo) for bars 68 to 73. The vocal line is in G major, 2/4 time, and the violin solo is in G major, 2/4 time. The vocal line has lyrics: 'ma - jes - ty. and con - tin - ue not - with -'. The violin solo has markings: 'f molto', 'pizz.', 'arco', 'gliss.', 'sim.', and 'etc.'. The score is marked with a box containing the number 70. The second system shows the vocal line (R. Tav.) and the violin solo (Vc. Solo) for bars 74 to 79. The vocal line has lyrics: '- stand - ing to the death our al - leg - lance to the', and 'etc.'. The violin solo has markings: 'gliss.', '3/8', 'sim.', and 'etc.'. The score is marked with a box containing the number 70.

A comparison of the treatment of the Priest-Confessor's part in Act II, scene i reveals other means by which Davies achieves satirical parody musically. The stuttering effect with which the Priest-Confessor delivers his evidence in Act II, scene i is even more exaggerated than in Act I, scene i. The Priest-Confessor is once again accompanied by sustained chords, but in Act II, scene i, a harmonium is added to the orchestration, and the string players are directed to play their pitches a quarter of a tone higher or lower, which results in a dissonant clash with the harmonium, and makes the already abrasive sonority even harsher. The use of the

harmonium also adds a parodistic element, as one associates its timbre with the type of music one often hears accompanying silent horror films. The use of music which suggests the type of music used in old films complements Davies' stage instructions which indicate that the movements of the actors are to be "jerky" as in "early cinema film."

Bars 204 to 230 (where Taverner is delivering judgement on the White Abbot) correspond exactly to bars 483 to 526 of Act I, scene i (where Taverner was being condemned by the White Abbot) with some passages condensed and extra voices added to the texture occasionally. Among the added voices are statements of material derived from Taverner's 'In nomine'. 'In nomine' material is parodied in two senses in this section. For example, at bar 204 there are additional bassoon, timpani and tuba parts which state the 'In nomine' treble line homorhythmically. At bar 218 the 'In nomine' treble line is restated, but, this time, all three instruments trill their melodic lines. The awkward, clumsy effect of the tuba trills in particular suggests a musical burlesque.

The final section of Act II, scene i (bars 239 to 286) and the transition (bars 287 to 296) are particularly rich in examples of the various types of parody. The section from bar 239 to bar 286 dramatically replaces the Cardinal's entry and exoneration of Taverner in Act I, scene i, but the two sections remain related, nevertheless, through the emphasis

on the use of material from the 'In nomine'. Musical fragments from the 'In nomine' are used both purely as a compositional device, and in a form that is aurally recognisable.

The two statements of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant from bar 239 to 249 and from bar 251 to 257, for example, provide both an overt reference to the source material as well as a distortion of the original material that results in sardonic parody. Clarinet 1 states a straight-forward version of the plainchant, while Clarinet 2 doubles clarinet 1 an octave lower but distorts every third note of the chant by playing a note that creates a sharp dissonance with clarinet 1. (See Example 4.)

Example 4 : II/i - Clarinet bars 239 to 253



None of the other statements of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant in the final section of Act II, scene i are distorted in any way. For example, the plainchant occurs in bars 291 to 293 in the horns and violas in its original form, merely transposed up a minor third to begin on F. Davies'

prominent use of 'In nomine' material in bars 239 to 296 is ironic, since Taverner, who was reprieved by virtue of his skill as a musician, has now rejected his music and is showing no mercy on the White Abbot. The music therefore would seem to suggest that Taverner's rejection of his music goes hand in hand with his loss of humanity. This example supports the idea that Davies' makes use of material from Taverner's 'In nomine' in the manner of a leitmotif.

The opening melodic fragment of the 'In nomine' treble line is also parodied in the final section of Act II, scene i. Whereas the statements of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant are aurally identifiable, the parody of the 'In Nomine' treble line is unrecognisable and is used merely as a compositional device. In both statements of the 'In Nomine' treble line material (bars 262 to 266 in the bassoon and double bassoon, and bars 287 to 290 in the violas and horns), the fragment is subjected to pitch displacement and chromatically altered.

The section from bar 239 to bar 293 can further be regarded as an example of Davies' earnest parody of a compositional technique of the Renaissance: that of cantus firmus which was popular from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century. The term "cantus firmus"

has come to refer to any type of antecedent melody used as a basis for a later polyphonic composition regardless of whether it is taken from plainsong or from a pre-existent polyphonic part, whether sacred or secular in origin, whether used in undifferentiated long note values or integrated into the polyphonic

texture, and whether presented unadorned or embellished.<sup>5</sup>

The New Harvard Dictionary of Music adds that the cantus firmus melody may also be newly invented and, therefore, need not necessarily be borrowed from another composition.<sup>6</sup>

That Davies has made use of the cantus firmus technique is suggested by the fact that throughout this section the statements of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant or of the 'In nomine' treble line all occur in long, sustained note-values to which various other, more florid, parts have been added. The cantus firmus of this section is made up of both borrowed fragments and newly-composed material. The two statements of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant in the clarinets form the cantus firmus from bars 239 to 257. In these bars the original material is not elaborated very much. Four bars of material which could either be newly composed or perhaps derived from the 'In nomine' follow in the bassoon and double bassoon, before the bassoon statement of the 'In nomine' treble line which forms the cantus firmus from bar 262 to 266. The cantus firmus from bar 267 to 280 is formed by three statements of a pitch sequence. Although the three pitch sequences appear to be newly invented, they are nevertheless intervallically related to the melodic intervals predominant in the 'In nomine'. (See Example 5.)

Example 5 : II/i - Cantus firmus of section from bar 239 to 280

239 to 257 - *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant

258 to 261 - newly-composed material

262 to 266 - 'In nomine' treble line

267 to 280 - newly composed pitch sequence stated three times

Cl.1&2

D.Ban; Ban

Ban

From the beginning of the transition (bar 287), the 'In nomine'-based cantus firmus (stated in horns and violas) tends to be more integrated with the other melodic lines, and is no longer always in the voice with the longest note values, or stated in notes of equal length. The importance of the 'In nomine' cantus firmus is lessened due to the fact that there is a second cantus firmus which is stated by bassoon, double bassoon, tubas, cellos and double basses and

thus attracts the attention of the listener.

Unlike Act I, scene i, the form of Act II, scene i is not structurally organized by the parody of the Baroque *da capo* aria form. The evidence given by each of the characters in their respective arias is truncated, and the arias exhibit no particular organizational principle. The musical organization of Act II, scene i as a whole is mostly dependent on the imitation of the sequence of events in Act I, scene i.

Another type of parody that can be observed in Act II, scene i is Davies' quotation of material from his own compositions in much the same manner that Taverner used to parody his own works: re-using a substantial amount of material without changing it much at all. Bars 287 to 296 are taken from the *Second Taverner Fantasia*, bars 539 to 548. Only bar 296 has been slightly altered in order to facilitate the transition to Act II, scene ii.

The rhythmic improvisation found in bars 287 to 293 of the transition is another means by which the chaotic, nightmarish quality of Act II, scene i is portrayed musically. The extremely dense, uncontrolled-sounding texture that results from six instrumentalists repeating a flourish at different tempi can therefore be considered as one of the musical features which contributes to the satirical parody in this scene.



### Summary

Davies makes use of several different types of parody in Act II, scene i. Since Act II, scene i has been conceived as a burlesque of Act I, scene i the use of satirical parody is paramount. Each of the musical parameters is treated in such a way that it contributes to the creation of the caricature of Act I, scene i. The following musical features emerge as indications of satirical parody: fast, "rushed" tempi; consistently loud dynamics; dense, complex textures where each line appears to behave independently; the use of improvisation which adds to the impression of chaos; the use of shrill-timbred instruments with a high tessitura; and the continuous use of unpitched percussion instruments.

Davies' use of satirical parody in Act II, scene i does not exclude the use of parody with a serious intent, although parody in its Renaissance sense does not play as important a role as in Act I, scene i. Davies has once again made use of material from Taverner's 'In nomine' and borrowed compositional techniques from the pre-Baroque.

### Notes

1. Davies, Taverner, p. 217.
2. Ibid., p. 220-221.
3. Ibid., p. 246.

4. Ibid., p. 217.
5. The New Grove, s.v. "Cantus firmus", vol. 3, p. 738.
6. Don Randel, ed., The New Harvard Dictionary of Music (London: The Belknap Press, 1986), p. 135.

### 3.3 ACT I. SCENE 2 - ACT II. SCENE 3

#### 3.3.1 Act I. scene ii

##### Synopsis

Act I, scene ii is set in a chapel, where a chorus of monks sing of John Taverner's life before the heresy trial and foretell his eventual betrayal. Taverner, seated at his desk, occasionally interjects with statements which reveal that he is weighing and reconsidering the basic tenets of his faith.

##### Music and drama

As in Act I, scene i, the parody in Act I, scene ii is restricted to two types: the use of material parodied from Taverner's 'In nomine' purely as a compositional device; and the serious parody of forms and styles from the pre-Baroque. Of these two types of parody, the latter has the greatest influence on the music of Act I, scene ii.

The music of Act I, scene ii has many of the characteristics of a motet - the form which was the most important genre of polyphonic music in the pre-Baroque period. The motet from the sixteenth century onwards is generally defined as "a sacred polyphonic composition with Latin text, which may or may not have a *colla voce* or independent instrumental

accompaniment."<sup>1</sup> The text of Davies' motet is not truly sacred as it discusses the life of John Taverner. Nevertheless, the sacred associations are present in that the motet is sung by monks; the text is in Latin (the language one associates with the Mediaeval church and which almost no one in the audience is going to understand anyway!); and the crisis with which Taverner is faced is primarily a religious one. The Latin text, the independent and *colla voce* accompaniments, and the fact that Act I, scene ii is polyphonically written fulfil the other criteria of the definition of the motet.

The motet can be divided into an introduction, four sections and a coda as follows:

Introduction	bars 1 - 12	unaccompanied tenor and bass chorus
Section 1	bars 13 - 32	canon a 3 (tenor I, tenor II and bass)
Section 2	bars 47 - 60	canon a 3 (tenor I, tenor II and bass)
Section 3a	bars 67 - 90	canon a 4 (tenor I and II and bass I and II)
Section 3b	bars 95 - 110	canon a 4 (tenor I and II and bass I and II)
Section 4	bars 111 - 125	canon a 5 (tenor I and II and bass I, II and III)
Coda	bars 126 - 144	tenor and bass accompanied.

Three of the four sections of Davies' motet are set canonically. Although motets of the sixteenth century used what was referred to as "motet-style", or through-imitative style, where the entire composition was based on the principle of imitation between the voices, few composers actually made use of canon in their motets. On the Continent

Josquin sometimes wrote two of the voices of his motets in canon while the rest of the voices were free, and in England Taverner was the first composer to exploit imitative techniques. Davies' use of canon is, therefore, somewhat atypical of Renaissance motet writing, although the use of canon can perhaps be regarded as an extension of the idea of through-imitation.

The last four bars of Act I, scene i (bars 680-683), and bars 1 to 9 make up the introduction of the motet. The three-note introductory motif sounded by the trombones establishes D as the tonal centre. (See Example 1.) While the tonal centre of the tenor line is also D, the basses have B<sup>b</sup> as a tonal centre. The predominance of D as a tonal centre could be described as an influence of Taverner's original 'In nomine' which also has D as its tonic. The B<sup>b</sup> functions as a secondary tonal centre.

Bars 1 to 9 are sung unaccompanied and are strongly reminiscent of Mediaeval organum for several reasons. Although the intervals formed between the two parts are often dissonant and are not intervals that would be found in Mediaeval organum, the fact that the dissonances are rendered by vocal forces alone tends to soften their harshness, and the listener will possibly be reminded of Mediaeval church music. In addition, the text is in Latin, the language listeners might associate with Mediaeval church music. The melodic lines of the introduction are relatively conjunct,

and often repeat notes and suggest tonal centres. In addition, most of the notes are rhythmically equal.

Example 1 : I/ii - bars 1 to 12

SCENE 2  
1 Adagio  $\text{♩} = 80$

890 Lentiss.  $\text{♩} = 40$  Lights up

Tbne. 1.  $p$  poco sf each attack  $pp$   $\text{ppp}$

2.  $p$  poco sf each attack  $\text{ppp}$

Chorus

MONKS  
Tenors  $p$  (detached, crotchets almost stacc.)  
Hoc o - pus est Jo - han - ni Ta - - ver -  
Basses  $p$  (detached, crotchets almost stacc.)

890 Lentiss.  $\text{♩} = 40$  1 Adagio  $\text{♩} = 80$

Vc.

10

Tbne. 1.  $p$  sim.

2.  $p$  sim.

T.  $p$  sim.

Chorus  
- ni, vi - ri ar - te mu - si - ca sin - gu - la - ris.

B.  $p$  sim.

The tenor and the bass lines of the introduction are both derived from material from Taverner's 'In nomine', and so another form of parody (parody in the sense of using an existing composition as the basis of a new work) is introduced into Act I, scene ii. Both the tenor and bass lines are based on a chromatically altered version of the 'In nomine' treble line. (See Example 2.)<sup>2</sup>

Example 2

'In nomine' treble line fragment



I/ii - bars 1 to 5



The parody of John Taverner's 'In nomine' at this point is particularly appropriate as the words are: "Hoc opus est Johanni Taverni, viri arte musica singularis" (This is the work of John Taverner, a man skilled in the art of music).

The first section proper of the motet (bars 13 to 32) is a canon for three voices. The canonic theme (hereafter "A") of Section 1 is first stated by Tenor I from bars 13 to 17. The first eleven notes of the bass part in the introduction are used to provide the first eleven notes of A. The theme of the first motet section can therefore also be shown to exhibit features which are derived from the 'In Nomine' treble line. The first ten notes of A imitate the melodic contour of the 'In nomine' treble line, beginning with a minor third, continuing with a descending scalar line and then making use of the rising scalar figure which occurs a little later in the 'In nomine' treble line. In addition, the fifth to second last notes of A are an exact retrograde inversion of

the four-note head-motif of the 'In nomine' treble line.  
(See Example 3.)

Example 3 : Theme A (I/ii - bars 13 to 17)

andante ♩ = 92

Cl. I.

Tbne. 1. 2.

T.I.

Chorus T.II

B.

O - pus Jo - han - ni Ta - vor - ni in re - gio - ne Lin - di - na - ti.

The following table shows the subsequent entries of A and describes the treatment of the canonic theme.

Bar	Voice	Treatment
18	Tenor I	A is stated in retrograde, and the rhythmic values are augmented to equal twice those of the original statement.
18	Bass	Retrograde transposition of A down a minor third. The rhythmic values of the second and third notes of the sequence are switched, but otherwise the sequence is rhythmically identical to the original.
23	Bass	A is transposed up an augmented fourth.
26	Tenor II	Retrograde transposition of A down a minor third and rhythmically augmented.
28	Tenor I	Inversion of A.
28	Bass	Retrograde version of A transposed down a major 6th.

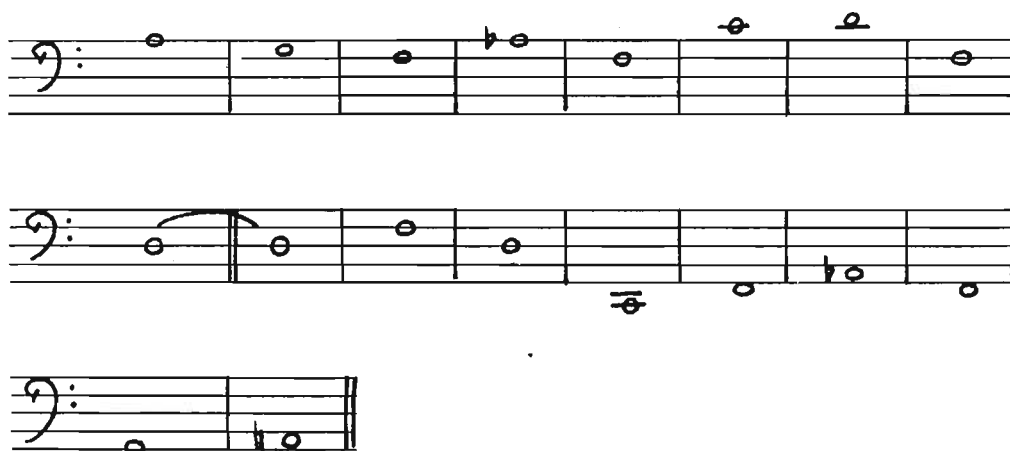
All voices end at bar 32.

Davies has made use of most of the typical canonic devices in the first polyphonic section of the "motet" that makes up Act



I, scene ii. Transposition, inversion, retrograde, retrograde inversion and augmentation are all used. Section 1 also introduces both a *colla voce* accompaniment and an independent instrumental part in the trombones. The independent accompaniment line is particularly significant because it reveals that although Davies' motet is written canonically, he does not entirely discard the cantus firmus principle. The independent line in trombone I is stated in long notes of equal length and is derived from the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant. (See Example 4.)

Example 4 : I/ii - Trombone cantus firmus bars 15 to 32



The use of the trombone for the statement of the cantus firmus also reflects Renaissance compositional practice, as the instrument was often given the long notes of the cantus firmus because of its ability to sustain notes. It is interesting to note that the cantus firmus of Davies' motet is symmetrical, since the pitch sequence of the second half is the retrograde version of that of the first half.

From bars 33 to 46, the motet is interrupted while John

Taverner makes an interjection. In contrast to the vocal lines of the first section, Taverner's vocal line is awkward and angular. His vocal line is not doubled in the accompaniment, which is also comparatively fragmented and emphasises rhythmic and dynamic variation to a greater extent than the preceding section. Furthermore, this "interruption" reveals none of the parody techniques that are used in the motet sections of Act I, scene ii.

The second section of the motet, bars 47 to 60, introduces a new, fairly disjunct canonic theme, the rhythmic pattern of which is not always strictly maintained. The new theme (B), is partly a transformation of A, as the first and last four notes of B are a retrograde inversion and an inversion respectively of the first four notes of A. (See Example 5.)

Example 5 : Theme B (I/ii - Bass bars 47 to 54)



B is divided into three segments and its second half is a transposed retrograde form of the first half. The cantus firmus in the trombone part once again uses material from Taverner's 'In nomine', but this time the material is derived

from the 'In nomine' treble line rather than the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant. (See Example 6.)

Example 6 : I/ii - Trombone cantus firmus bars 50 to 60



The interjection from John Taverner, which follows at bar 61 and lasts until bar 67 is similar in style to the first, but this time includes a cantus firmus line which states a portion of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant.

Section 3 of the motet commences at bar 67. This section is once again distinguished from the previous two sections by the use of a new, conjunct canonic theme (C) which has a consistent rhythmic pattern. Section 3 is the longest section of the motet, and is further divided into two smaller sections: bars 67 to 90, and 95 to 110. The canonic theme is handled fairly strictly in this section, and manipulated using the canonic techniques of retrograde, transposition and augmentation.<sup>3</sup> In the first sub-section, the trombone cantus firmus is more fragmented than those of the previous two sections, and is derived from C rather than from 'In nomine' material. Material from the 'In nomine' is nevertheless present in this section in John Taverner's vocal line from

bars 85 to 92. In these bars Taverner's vocal line is derived from both the 'In nomine' treble line and the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant. (See Example 7.)

**Example 7 : I/i1 - Taverner bars 83 to 93 (partial score)**

Two staves of musical notation for vocal parts. The top staff is labeled 'J. Tav.' and the bottom staff is also labeled 'J. Tav.'. The top staff has lyrics: 'work? cre - a - ted mean - ing. Now,'. The bottom staff has lyrics: 'ex - lied, I must look it out a - fresh.'

**'In nomine' treble fragment**

Andante  $\text{♩} = 66$   
p

***Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant opening phrase**

p

The second sub-section, bars 95 to 110, is also based on C, but is rhythmically far more complex than the first sub-section, making use of mensural-canonic techniques. The tenor and bass parts have different time-signatures that result in a two-against-three cross-rhythm. The time signature for Tenor I and II is 2/2, while that of Bass I and II is 6/4, with the bar lines still coinciding. Due to the change in time-signature, the rhythmic identity of C is no longer strictly maintained in the bass voices of the section from bars 95 to 110. The bass voices are stated at the ratio of 3:2 to the tenor voices.

The fourth and final section of the motet begins immediately after the end of section 3, in bar 111, and provides a summary of the thematic material used up to this point. The basses divide to form three parts here so that a five-part texture is obtained. This section is not canonic, but is constructed as follows:

<u>Bar</u>	<u>Voice</u>	<u>Treatment</u>
111	Bass I	Retrograde, transposed, and slightly altered form of A.
111	Bass III	The first 9 notes of C with the rhythmic values augmented to four times their original length.
112	Bass II	B.
116	Tenor I	A.
119	Tenor II	A in retrograde, with the note values of the rhythmic sequence augmented to twice the value of the original.
120	Bass II	Last 7 notes of B transposed up a minor sixth.
121	Bass I	A inverted.
123	Tenor I	C in retrograde with the rhythmic sequence altered.

The gradual addition of voices to the polyphonic texture in Davies' motet (which expands from two to five vocal parts) is characteristic of much motet writing.

The coda, bars 126 to 144, returns to the two-part texture of the introduction, and re-establishes D as the tonal centre of the motet, as tenors and basses sing the entire coda on D. The use of D as a tonal centre is again an influence that can be ascribed to Taverner's 'In nomine'. The instrumental

accompaniment is now totally independent and is generally fragmented. Some of the material stated by instruments in the coda is derived from the 'In nomine'. For example, the bassoon and double bassoon from bar 131 to bar 133 state the 'In nomine' treble line, and in bars 143 to 145, the flute states the fragment from the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant.

Despite the heavy reliance on parody, both of pre-Baroque styles, forms and techniques and of material from Taverner's 'In nomine' in Act I, scene ii, the extent to which the music is actually aurally reminiscent of Mediaeval or Renaissance music is somewhat limited. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, the harmonies that result between the various voices in sections one to four of the motet are generally dissonant, and these dissonances are made even more obvious by the inclusion of a *colla voce* accompaniment. The inclusion of an independent instrumental accompaniment adds to the dissonant-sounding harmonies of the motet even further. The fragmented nature of the independent accompaniment, and the disjunct vocal lines of the second section and of Taverner's interjections are other factors which make much of Act I, scene ii sound more twentieth-century in nature, although the music has been composed using a pre-Baroque form.

Even the sections of Act I, scene ii which are reminiscent of music of the Middle Ages or Renaissance (for example, the vocal lines of the introduction and the coda) do not imitate

the music of that period authentically. Davies' use of parody in this scene reveals once again the integration of characteristics and styles of the pre-Baroque with those of the twentieth-century.

The transition to the following scene also occurs in the *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner. Bars 147 to 259 of Act I, scene ii correspond to bars 1 to 116 of the *Second Fantasia*. This cannot be considered as an example of Davies' parody of his own work, however, as the first act of *Taverner* was written before the *Second Fantasia*; thus, in this instance, the parody occurs in the latter work.

The style in which the transition is written continues several of the ideas of the "motet" sections of Act I, scene ii, most importantly the gradual thickening of the texture, and the use of a canonic style of writing. In addition, the nineteen-note canonic theme of the transition is derived from the 'In nomine' treble line.<sup>4</sup>

### **Summary**

The parody employed in Act I, scene ii is restricted to that with a serious intention. Davies uses the parody of pre-Baroque forms, compositional techniques, and material from Taverner's 'In nomine'. Like Act I, scene i, the musical substance of Act I, scene ii is determined, for the most

part, by Davies' use of a parodied form. Act I, scene ii is cast in the form of a motet, which was the most important genre of polyphonic music written in the Renaissance period. Davies' use of relatively strict canonic techniques can possibly be regarded as an extension of the through-imitative principle which was a feature of motet writing.

Although Davies uses a pre-Baroque form, the music of Act I, scene ii does not usually produce sounds that are reminiscent of early music. The fact that Davies' melodic lines do not establish any particular scale or mode, or even a tonal centre, and that the simultaneous sounding of the various voice parts and the free instrumental accompaniment is dissonant are features of a twentieth-century nature.

Davies has parodied material from Taverner's 'In nomine' in a fairly abstract manner in Act I, scene ii, and thus, while a relationship between some of Davies' vocal melodies and those from the 'In nomine' is frequently suggested, the connection between the two is often tenuous. The instrumental accompaniment generally makes more direct references to 'In nomine' material, but since the source material is often integrated into the middle of a long cantus firmus, such references are usually also aurally imperceptible.

In Act I, scene ii Davies' parody of musical material, compositional techniques and forms once again results in music which reveals a fusion between features of the pre-



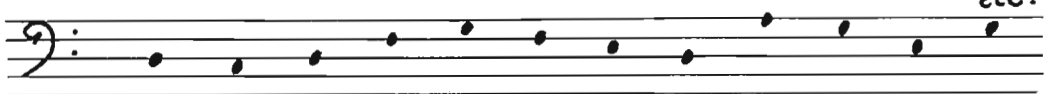
Baroque and those of the twentieth century.

### Notes

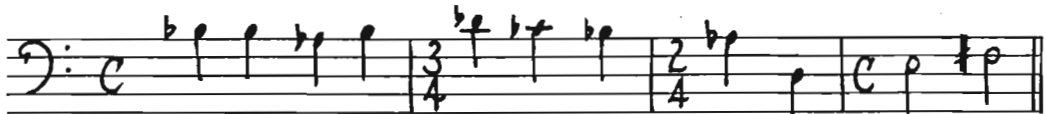
1. The New Grove, s.v. "Motet", vol. 12, p. 617.
2. The bass line from bars 6 to 9 could equally be derived from the plainchant "*Victimae paschali laudes*" (see Example a), but since the words at this point refer to the work of John Taverner, it is more likely to be a derivation from the 'In nomine'.

#### Example A

Opening phrase *Victimae paschali laudes* plainchant



I/ii - Bass bars 6 to 9



3. The canonic theme is not always used in its original form in section 3. Every now and again only a segment of the theme is used and sometimes a few extra notes are tagged on the end.
4. See pages 48 to 50 for a more comprehensive discussion of the transition between Act I, scene i and ii.

### 3.3.2 Act II, scene iii

#### Synopsis

Act II, scene iii corresponds to Act I, scene ii in its use of the chapel setting, the reappearance of Taverner and the chorus of monks, and the recurrence of musical material from Act I, scene ii. Unlike Act II, scene i, Act II, scene iii parallels Act I, scene ii without the use of satirical parody that was prominent in the first scene of Act II. Hence, tempi are at a pace that befits the setting and the orchestration is balanced.

In this scene, the White Abbot and monks are celebrating a Mass and reflecting on the betrayal of Christ by Judas. Taverner enters and, after pausing for a moment to observe the monks in their worship, he points out the "evils" of the Roman Catholic Church above the continuation of the Mass by the White Abbot. In the same way that the words sung by the monks in Act I, scene ii provide a comment on Taverner's reflections, the juxtaposition of Taverner's anti-Catholic views and the Latin text of the Mass suggests that, despite the shortcomings of Catholicism, Taverner's new religious beliefs are more harmful and unacceptable than those of the White Abbot. The Mass is interrupted by the entrance of a Captain who announces the official dissolution of the monasteries. The monks are then taken prisoner and led away.

Music and drama

Apart from the announcement of the dissolution of the monasteries, the whole of Act II, scene iii presents an extract from the Roman Catholic Mass, which consists of the Gospel, the Preface and the Sanctus. The music of Act II, scene iii can be divided up accordingly:

<u>Bars</u>	<u>Portion of the Mass</u>
1-54	Gospel
55-106	Preface
107-128	Sanctus
132-160	Benedictus section of the Sanctus.

The Gospel and the Preface both come from the Proper of the Mass, and their texts combine elements of the readings and prayers which are used on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.<sup>1</sup> The dominant theme of the Latin text is therefore the betrayal of Christ by Judas. Since neither the Gospel nor the Preface are ever given elaborate musical settings in liturgical use, but merely intoned or recited, no specific musical style, form or techniques exist which Davies could have parodied in the first two sections of Act II, scene iii. Consequently, these sections are somewhat eclectic in the styles and techniques which they parody.

The "Gospel" section of the Mass opens with a solo for the White Abbot which is void of any pre-Baroque influences. The melodic contour of the White Abbot's vocal line is relatively disjunct and is accompanied by dissonant, sustained chords.

The passage sung by the monks from bar 22 to bar 54 begins with a two-part polyphonic phrase which is unaccompanied and recalls the organum style of the introduction to Act I, scene ii. The fact that the passage sung by the monks alternates two-part, polyphonic phrases with four-part, homorhythmic phrases could perhaps be seen as a possible influence of Renaissance music in which the change between polyphonic and homorhythmic sections and the variation of the number of vocal parts were sometimes used as a means of articulating form.

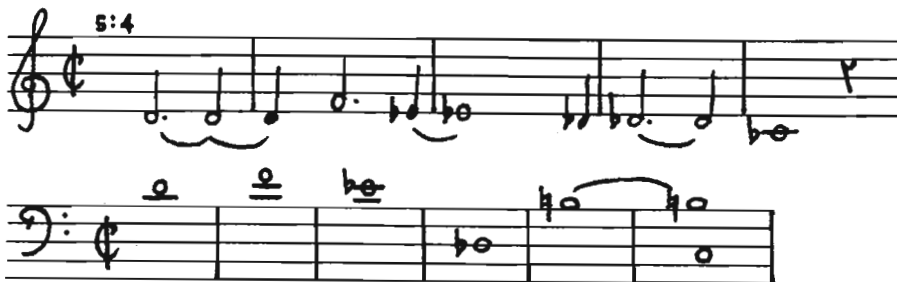
The "Preface" section of Act II, scene iii exhibits several features which appear to have been derived from the Mediaeval motet. The simultaneous use of a text in Latin (the White Abbot) and a text in the vernacular (Taverner) suggests the influence of one of the earliest species of motet, in which the words of an upper voice provided an explanation of, or commentary on, the original Latin text. In such motets, the lower voice, which carried the original Latin text, generally moved in slower note-values than the upper voice which was faster moving and more freely composed. Both of these features are evident in the "Preface" section. The Latin vocal line of the White Abbot is chant-like in that it has a small range, is rhythmically simple, frequently repeats certain pitches and uses conjunct melodic movement. Taverner's vocal line, on the other hand, is rhythmically more complex, has a wider range, and often uses large melodic leaps. Rather than the English text providing a gloss or

comment on the Latin text, however, the juxtaposition of the White Abbot's calm prayer of praise to God, and Taverner's harsher, more jarring criticism of the Roman Catholic Church subtly highlights Taverner's fanaticism.

Another feature of the "Preface" section of Act II, scene iii which could be regarded as the parody of a Mediaeval compositional technique is the presence of a *pes* in the first part of the section. A *pes* is a repeated melodic fragment which provides "a melodic ostinato or ground, over which the upper voices move without voice exchange."<sup>2</sup> The *pes* in the "Preface" section is a short melodic fragment derived from the treble line of Taverner's 'In nomine'. (See Example 1.) The *pes* is first stated in the handbells four times (bars 57 to 76), and then taken over by the trombone for a single, slightly altered statement (bars 79 to 84).

Example 1

II/iii - handbells bars 57 to 61



II/iii - trombone bars 79 to 84

The string parts which provide part of the orchestral accompaniment to the duet between Taverner and the White Abbot occasionally state themes from the strict canonic motet of Act I, scene ii, sometimes subjecting them to new canonic

treatment involving the use of devices such as retrograde statement and mensural canon, or else merely altering the material by subjecting it to pitch displacement. An example of this can be observed in bars 70 to 77. In these few bars A from Act I, scene ii (in the slightly expanded form used at bar 111 in Bass I) is used to create a two-part canon between viola and cello. (See Example 2.)

Example 2 : II/iii - bars 70 to 76 (partial score)

The image displays a partial musical score for two staves: Viola Solo (top) and Vc. Solo (bottom). The score is written in 5/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo/mood is marked 'p' (piano). The score begins with a measure of whole rests for both instruments. The Viola part then enters with a melodic line, and the Vc. part enters with a similar line, creating a two-part canon. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs. A bracket above the Vc. staff indicates a 'quasi C' section. The score ends with a double bar line and the word 'etc.' written above the final measure.

The settings of the two portions from the Proper of the Mass cannot therefore be described as the parody of any one particular form, style or compositional technique. Rather, the first two sections of Act II, scene iii reveal diverse and fragmentary examples of devices which could possibly be regarded as early musical influences.

The "Sanctus" section shows the distinct use of the basic principle of the parody mass. Parody masses (settings of the Ordinary of the Mass) were popular during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and involved the use of musical material "derived from various voice-parts or from entire sections of a polyphonic composition."<sup>3</sup> The amount of borrowed material

that was incorporated into the new Mass, and the manner in which it was treated varied greatly from one work to the next.

The Sanctus of Act II, scene iii can be divided into two sections: the Sanctus itself (bar 107 to bar 128), and the Benedictus (bar 132 to bar 160). The first part of the Sanctus has newly-composed vocal lines which are doubled at dissonant intervals in the woodwinds; a string accompaniment uses theme C from Act I, scene ii, treating it canonically, and the whole is underpinned by the opening phrase of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant which is stated by the timpani in an abbreviated form in bars 107 to 121, and in full in bars 122 to 128. The use of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant as a cantus firmus thus serves to unify the Sanctus. The Benedictus (bars 132 to 160) consists of a large section of Taverner's 'In nomine' in which the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant is the cantus firmus and is thus similarly unified. Davies' reworking and modification of the original material consists of transferring the cantus firmus from the original alto to Bass I (in order to accommodate the vocal resources available to him in the opera) and adding an independent musical accompaniment. The instrumental accompaniment is made up of very quiet, fragmented motifs in the strings and harp which do not make the quotation of Taverner's 'In nomine' any less obvious. Occasional short portamenti in the string parts and the biting dissonance of the harmonies in the accompaniment emphasize the irony of the

use of the Benedictus ("Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord") in response, as it were, to the proclamation of the eradication of the monasteries. This section of Act II, scene iii comprises the most extensive parody of musical material from Taverner's 'In nomine'.

Davies' use of material from Taverner's work enables him to borrow the pre-Baroque Parody Mass form. Both the use of musical material from a pre-existing Mass and the use of the Parody Mass form are appropriate in this scene where the monks and the White Abbot are celebrating a Mass. If one considers this instance of material borrowed from the 'In nomine' as an expanded occurrence of the leitmotif representing Taverner, his skill as a musician and his beliefs before his conversion by Death, then this quotation of the 'In nomine' highlights Taverner's personal tragedy.

The appearance of yet another leitmotif in Act II, scene ii suggests that Taverner, through his conversion, has assumed the destructive role of Death. The D-F\*-E-G\* chord which was established as the most important harmonic structure in the instrumental *In Nomine* works functions in *Taverner* in the manner of a leitmotif. In Act I, scene iv the whole-tone chord is associated with the character Death. Its appearance in Act II, scene iii at bar 40, just before the entrance of Taverner, therefore intimates that Taverner has, by virtue of his conversion, become an agent of Death.



### Summary

Several features of Act II, scene iii can be explained as being parodied from the Mediaeval or Renaissance periods. Although Davies makes use of elements from a number of pre-Baroque styles, forms and compositional devices in Act II, scene iii, the overall form of the scene is not determined or shaped by the parody of a Renaissance or Mediaeval form in the same way as its corresponding scene.

The use of material from Taverner's 'In nomine' is used covertly as well as overtly in Act II, scene iii. The altered, unrecognisable references to the 'In nomine' are used solely as compositional devices, while the obvious quotations from the source composition function in the manner of a leitmotif, providing a subtle musical commentary on the events of Act II, scene iii. The large quotation of material from Taverner's 'In nomine' immediately attracts the attention of the listener because of its disparate nature, and its appearance is perhaps one of the ways in which Davies forces his listeners to think about the meaning of the action.

### Notes

1. Davies, "*Taverner: Synopsis and Documentation*", p. 6.
2. The New Grove, s.v. "Motet", vol. 12, p. 624.
3. The Harvard Dictionary, s.v. "Parody Mass", p. 643.

### 3.4 ACT I. SCENE 3 - ACT II. SCENE 2

Taverner does not appear in either Act I, scene iii or Act II, scene ii. These two scenes provide the political context within which Taverner's personal tragedy takes place. Dance music of the type imitated by Davies in Act I, scene iii and Act II, scene ii would have been regarded as the music of the wealthy upper class during the Renaissance period. This means that these scenes not only exclude Taverner dramatically but musically as well, since much of the music imitates secular styles associated with a social class to which Taverner does not belong.

#### 3.4.1 Act I. scene iii

##### Synopsis

Act I, scene iii is set in the throne room, where a meeting between the King and the Cardinal is taking place. The King and the Cardinal (who are not named but who historically would be Henry VIII and Wolsey) discuss the present undesirable state of the Church, the proposed reforms, and the matter of the King's divorce. The Cardinal expresses his doubts as to whether the Pope will declare the King's present marriage invalid. At the end of the scene the King makes it clear that he intends to put an end to relations with Rome. Both the Cardinal and the King's Jester (who at

the end of the scene is revealed as Death) voice their fears about what will ensue once the King has assumed the powers formerly accorded to the Pope.

The historical setting of Act I, scene iii is at a time a little earlier than 1529, since the Reformation, which began in 1529 with Wolsey's indictment, is not yet underway.

#### Music and drama

The parody which is of paramount importance in Act I, scene iii is that of borrowing styles of the Renaissance period. Nearly the whole scene is accompanied by dance music, and the parody of Renaissance styles is emphasised by the fact that the music is played on period instruments which are visible on stage.<sup>1</sup> The instrumentation of Act I, scene iii consists of a lute, four bass viols, two tenor viols, two treble viols, and a violone. All of these instruments have a soft, slightly nasal tone quality, and the accompaniment of the meeting between the King and the Cardinal is perhaps meant to sound like "light background" music.

It is particularly apt that Henry VIII, a king who is noted for his musical interest and ability and in whose court music occupied a prominent position, should be the historical model on which Davies' unnamed King is based. The entrance and exit of the King are accompanied by fanfares played on modern

instruments (bars 1 to 11 and 322 to 326). A fanfare is a short flourish played on brass instruments which was used for ceremonial purposes, "especially to call attention to the arrival of a dignitary."<sup>2</sup> The use of brass instruments, dotted rhythms, staccato and accented notes, the motif on the side drum, and arpeggiated-type figures all recreate the air of pomp and ceremony usually associated with fanfares. (See Example 1.)

Example 1 : I/iii - bars 1 to 4

FANFARE  
sempre presto  $\text{♩}(\text{♩}) = 112$

Lights up

1. Hn.  $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$

2. Hn.  $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$

1. Tr.  $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$

2. Tr.  $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$

1. Tuba  $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$

2. Tuba  $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$

S.D.  $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$   $\text{sf}$

The music that forms an accompaniment to the dialogue between the King and the Cardinal from bar 16 to bar 242 consists of stylistic parodies of pavans, galliards, and marches. As Stephen Pruslin states, "it is as if ... [courtly] music from Taverner's time had been transmuted into the harmonic language of today."<sup>3</sup> Davies uses the basic features which characterise each of the pre-Baroque dance forms that he

parodies, but treats them in an entirely twentieth-century fashion. His parody of forms from the Mediaeval and Renaissance periods thus results in a fusion between the music of the pre-Baroque and that of the twentieth century.

Bars 16 to 59 of Act I, Scene iii is labelled "pavana". The Renaissance pavane has a sedate character, was "often used as an introductory processional dance,"<sup>4</sup> is mostly in simple quadruple metre and has two, three or four sections, each of which is usually repeated. Davies' pavana exhibits several features which are typical of the Renaissance dance form of the same name. These features are often modified in order to make the pre-Baroque form suitable for use in the mid-twentieth century.

The pavana in Act I, scene iii of *Taverner* is played at a fairly dignified and sedate pace ( $\text{♩} = 126$ , where the smallest division of the bar is a quaver), and is predominantly in simple quadruple time although Davies does occasionally alter the metre. In bar 25, for example, the metre changes to  $5/4$ , and in bars 28 to 29 to  $3/4$ . Changes of meter would not have occurred in authentic Renaissance dance music, as dance music relies on fixed metres which make the beat predictable and therefore possible to dance to. Any unexpected change in the meter would upset the flow of the dance-steps.

The pavana divides into three main sections, which, defined by texture, instrumentation and melodic style, exhibit an A B

A<sup>1</sup> form:

- A Bars 16 - 31 Full polyphonic texture (three bass viols and a lute) and relatively conjunct melodic lines in the strings.
- B Bars 32 - 44 Very sparse texture (lute and one bass viol) in which the melodic movement is disjunct and melodic lines are very fragmented.
- A<sup>1</sup> Bars 45 - 59 Full polyphonic texture (three bass viols and a lute) in which the melodic lines are once more conjunct.

These three sections are not repeated literally, but each section consists of the statement of a musical "idea" and its varied repetition. (See Example 2 for an instance of material from the A section, and Example 3 for the B section.)

Example 2 : I/iii - Extract from A section of pavana (bars 16 to 20)

Andante  $\text{♩} = 126$   
pavana  
KING *mf pesante* *pp* 20

Our good Lord Car - di-nal, we thank you with all our

[Lute]

Gtr.

[Bass Viol 1]

1. *pp*

[Bass Viol 2]

Vc. Soli 2. *pp*

[Bass Viol 3]

3. *pp*

Example 3 : I/iii - B section of pavane (bars 31 to 45)

King: -cused. We, pos - d(e)ring the pre - sent state of

Ctr.: [Lute] mf f p

Viol 1: pp pp senza espr. p

Viol 2: pp

Viol 3: pp

King: Chris - ti - a - ni - ty in our realm. mis - er - a - bly af - flic - ted with dis - sen - sion.

Ctr.: f mf p

Viol 1: mf p poco p pp

Viol 2: pizz. p vib.

Viol 3: p

King: note with regret how the dig - ni - ty of the See A - pos - to - lic is there - by di - min - ished.

Ctr.: f mp f mf

Viol 1: p pp

Viol 2: arco p

Viol 3: pizz. pp p mp

The section from bar 65 to bar 149 is written in the style of a galliard, a dance commonly paired with the pavane in the sixteenth century. Features of the galliard form are most

clearly parodied at the beginning of this large section, since the progressively more frequent changes in meter and tempo later in the section tend to erode the fundamental style of the dance form. The section from bar 65 to 79 reveals all of the features that one would expect of a typical sixteenth-century galliard. The section is written in triple meter and Davies makes abundant use of the hemiola which is one of the most characteristic traits of the galliard. The use of hemiola causes a rhythmic ambiguity which is a feature of many sixteenth-century galliards. (See Example 4.)

Example 4 : I/iii - Extract from galliard (bars 64 to 72)

tempo - - - - - moderato  $\text{♩} = 120$  alla galliarda 70 (leggero, giocondo)

Jst. - nim Vir, ut u-no o-re prae-di-cant om-nes, u-nus pro-pe

[Lute] *mf metallic* *ord* *mel.* *ord*

Otr. *ord*

[Bass Viol 1] *p espr.*

[Bass Viol 2] *p senza espr.*

[Bass Viol 3] *pizz.*

Vc. Soli *mp espr. vib.*

on stage

The section of Act I, scene iii from bar 180 to bar 242 is written in a march-like style, which musically suggests the official nature of the discussion that is taking place. Duple and quadruple meters predominate, and the rhythmic divisions of each bar emphasize the march-like metre. The relatively homophonic accompaniment of the march-like



sections also helps to give the music the character of a march. (See Example 5.)

Example 5 : I/iii - Extract of march-styled music (bars 210 to 214)

210  
[2+3]

King  
de - cla - ra - tion if the marriage be val - id or no:

Gtr.  
[Lute]  
f sf mf espr.

Vc. Soli  
1. [Treble Viol 1]  
2. [Treble Viol 2]  
3. [Bass Viol 1]  
4. [Bass Viol 2]

on stage

[change to Bass Viol 4]  
[change to Bass Viol 3]

From bar 243 to the end of Act I, scene iii there is a notable absence of the parody of any pre-Baroque form. The Cardinal sings an entire aside unaccompanied, and where the accompaniment enters again at bar 244, it is very free and does not reveal features of any particular form or style. Davies' use of unstable glissandi, *sul ponticello*, highly fragmented melodic motifs and the gradual building up of the twelve-tone chord on which the scene ends, all create a feeling of dis-ease and musically suggest the impending social turmoil which is predicted by both the Cardinal and the Jester at the end of the scene. The fact that the use of pre-Baroque forms ceases at the point where it becomes clear that the King intends to disrupt the status quo by effecting

a break with Rome is significant, and a parallel can be drawn between the effect of the King's actions on the society and the musical "disorder" that results when Davies no longer uses traditional forms to structure his musical dialogue.

Two other types of parody occur in Act I, scene iii besides the stylistic parody of pre-Baroque forms. Satirical parody is introduced in an undeveloped form, and Davies once again parodies musical material from a pre-existing composition.

Satirical parody is introduced by the Jester's sarcastic imitation of the Cardinal in bars 62 to 64. The Jester's vocal line is written in plainsong style (unaccompanied with fairly conjunct melodic movement and a syllabic setting), and sardonically parodies the plainsong line of the Cardinal in bars 80 to 82 by presenting it at an extremely slow tempo - *lentissimo*, compared to the *lento* of the Cardinal's version - and the viol parts which introduce the Jester's line use glissandi which tend to be a feature used by Davies (and other composers) to indicate satirical intent. (See Example 6a.)

The exaggerated imitation of plainsong in bars 62 to 64 is later sung "sanctimoniously" by the Cardinal in bars 80 to 82. (See Example 6b). This is an example of what has been termed "parody in reverse", that is, the parodied version of an object occurs before the object itself.<sup>5</sup> In this particular example, the fact that the Jester parodies a

statement of the Cardinal's before the Cardinal actually makes the statement, is significant, because it contributes towards creating the impression that the Jester is actually in control of the events of this scene, and by implication, of the political changes that are underway.

**Example 6a : I/iii - Jester bars 62 to 64**

Jester, lifts his head, makes sign  
†, rattles his jingling Johnny.

60 rit. *Lentissimo*  
JESTER *libero, plainsong style (leering, sarcastic)*

Car - di - na - lis Pa - ci - fi - cus.

[Lute]  
Gtr.

[Bass Viol 1]  
1. *pp* *ppp*

[Bass Viol 2]  
2. *pp* *p* *ppp*

[Bass Viol 3]  
3. *pp* *p* *ppp*  
pizz. arco

*p* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *a niente*

**Example 6b : I/iii - Cardinal bars 80 to 82**

80 Lento  $\text{♩} = 80$  The Jester is pushed down by the King's foot.  
CARDINAL

$2+3$  *f* (plainsong style, sanctimoniously) *p*

Eng - land is our store - house of de - lights,

The Jester also burlesques the King in bars 133 to 136. This instance of satirical parody is a dramatic feature rather than a musical one. The Jester parodies the King dramatically by putting on a paper crown and by imitating the lovesick King. Although the Jester's melodic line at this

point imitates that of the King at bar 26, it is not an exaggerated imitation. The fact that the vocal line that is imitated by the Jester occurred so much earlier in the scene, and that the line is not likely to be recognised by the average listener, means that the Jester's use of a vocal line of the king does not constitute an example of musical satirical parody. For satirical parody to be effective, the object that is being parodied must be identifiable.

Although Taverner has been excluded from Act I, scene iii, Davies still makes use of material from the 'In nomine'. The *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant is used as one of the themes of the *gagliarda* which accompanies the Jester from bar 65 to bar 79 and the Cardinal from bar 83 to bar 90. The first few notes of the plainchant are stated three times altogether. The first statement is unaltered, and in the second and third statements the A natural is modified to an A flat. The words that the 'In nomine' material is used to accompany expose the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church. The Cardinal refers to England as a "storehouse of delights, a very inexhaustible well, where much ... can be extracted from many." Taverner belongs to the social class from which "much ... can be extracted", and thus Davies' use of the 'In nomine' leitmotif at this point can perhaps be understood as a musical suggestion that Taverner's fate is closely linked to the political situation of his time, despite the fact that the 'In nomine' material is aurally imperceptible.

### Summary

The principle type of parody employed in Act I, scene iii is the borrowing of forms and styles from the pre-Baroque period. The music of this scene is organized in the same way that the musical material of the first two scenes of Act I is structured - in these cases by the use of the Baroque da capo aria form and the motet respectively. Davies maintains the most characteristic features of each of the forms that he employs while treating them in a thoroughly twentieth-century style. The use of period instruments in Act I, scene iii aurally and visually enhances the parody of forms and styles from the period.

The parody of material from the 'In nomine' plays a very small role in Act I, scene iii. This is appropriate since Taverner does not appear in this scene. The brief use of 'In nomine' material in this scene can be regarded as being significant in that it functions as a reminder that Taverner's personal tragedy is linked to the social and political events of the time.

The foremost purpose of Act I, scene iii is to expose the corruption of both the Church and the State. This is primarily achieved by the Jester who parodies the King and the Cardinal and reveals the motivations of the characters to the audience. The corruption of the Church is summed up in the words of the Cardinal: "England is our storehouse of

delights, a very inexhaustible well where much abounds and much can be extracted from many". Attention is drawn to this line by the fact that the Jester has parodied it several bars before. The Jester similarly lists the "expenses" of the State mentioned by the King. These expenses consist of bribes to various people to enable the King to ease his personal life. The introduction of satirical parody in an embryonic form is one of the ways in which the audience is made aware of the evils of Church and State.

#### Notes

1. The period instruments did not appear on the stage (as directed in the libretto) in the premiere production of *Taverner*. This was pointed out as a weakness in the production by more than one critic.
2. The New Harvard Dictionary, s.v. "Fanfare", p. 299.
3. Stephen Pruslin, "An Anatomy of Betrayal", Music and Musicians 20 (July 1972), p. 30.
4. The New Grove, s.v. "Pavan", vol. 14, p. 311.
5. Joseph Kerman (in his article "Popish Ditties", Tempo 101 (1972), p. 21) attributes this phrase to Stephen Arnold. This may be wrongly attributed since it has not been possible to trace the original reference.

### 3.4.2 Act II. scene ii

#### Synopsis

Act II, scene ii is once again a meeting between the King and the Cardinal. The historical setting of this particular scene is several years later than that of the corresponding scene (Act I, scene iii). The date of this scene is approximately 1534, as in this scene the King pronounces himself the "Supreme Head in Earth ... of the Church of England"<sup>1</sup> and this is obviously based on Henry VIII's Act of Supremacy of 1534. The Cardinal, who is made into an archbishop in Act II, scene ii, declares that the King's former marriage is invalid and proclaims his "pregnant mistress, henceforth the Queen of England."<sup>2</sup> The divorce of Henry VIII from Catherine of Aragon and his subsequent marriage to Anne Boleyn took place in 1533. The King informs the Archbishop of his intention to dissolve the monasteries and the Jester's final comments - "Seest thou those great buildings? There shall not be left one stone on top of another which shall not be thrown down"<sup>3</sup> - predicts the breakdown of religion as it was known, but also alludes to the social upheaval that will result from the King's actions which the widespread swing from Catholicism to anti-Catholicism.



Music and drama

The musical correspondence between Act I, scene iii and Act II, scene ii does not lie in re-use of melodic material from the former scene, but rather in the fact that both scenes are orchestrated for "period" instruments, and that the music of both scenes consists largely of parodied Renaissance forms and styles.

Although Act II, scene ii is not a dramatic parody of its corresponding scene in Act I, several musical features suggest the use of a satirical-type parody similar to that observed in Act II, scene i. Act I, scene iii is orchestrated for soft-toned instruments (viols and lute), whereas the instrumentation of Act II, scene ii places an emphasis on wind and brass instruments which generally have a higher-pitched, harsh timbre. The sopranino recorder, for example, has a high pitch and piercing sound; the shawms have a loud and coarse tone; and the regal has a nasal, unrefined tone-quality which Mattheson thought "disgusting".<sup>4</sup> In addition, there is (as in Act II, scene i) frequent use of percussion in Act II, scene ii.

The use of 'parodistic' instrumentation in Act II, scene ii can be explained through the further exploration of the similarities between the correspondence of Act I, scene i to Act II, scene i, and of Act I, scene iii to Act II, scene ii. In Act II, scene i, the use of high-pitched, harsh-sounding



instrumentation and of improvising percussion emphasised the fact that Taverner had become fanatical, rejecting the restraint (or authority) of his conscience and his former beliefs and condemning the White Abbot to death at the stake. Similarly, in Act II, scene ii the King rejects the authority of the Pope and resolves to dissolve the monasteries for his own personal gain. The Jester's last words predict the disastrous consequences that the King's actions will have on society. The parody effects in the music of Act II, scene ii support the idea that the King, like Taverner, is not fully in control of his actions, and that he is being driven by an inherently destructive force which is personified as Death in *Taverner*.

The period instruments used in Act II, scene ii were all in common usage during the second half of the sixteenth century. The instrumental forces are divided into two alternating groups: the woodwind and brass instruments (usually more readily associated with secular music), and the keyboard instruments (regal and positive organ, more often associated with sacred music). The most obvious use of parody in Act II, scene ii (as in Act I, scene iii) is in the use of Renaissance and Mediaeval styles and forms. In Act II, scene ii, however, Davies makes use of a much wider range of styles and forms than in the earlier scene.

Act II, scene ii begins with an "Intrada", a piece which was generally written for an instrumental ensemble and used to

"announce or accompany an entrance or to begin a suite."<sup>5</sup> Davies' Intrada in Act II, scene ii fulfils both of the above functions. The musical character of Davies' Intrada is processional and grand: it is in duple meter and scored for wind instruments with fanfare-like motifs, repeated notes and dotted rhythms, so that although the King is actually discovered on stage when the curtain rises for Act II, scene ii, his presence is appropriately "announced" by the music. The Intrada also functions as the first piece of the instrumental suite of Act II, scene ii, introducing musical material which recurs in other movements of the suite. The Intrada corresponds in style and function to the fanfare that opens Act I, scene iii. (See Example 1.)

Example 1 : II/ii - bars 1 to 4

**Intrada**

*sempre ff*

STAGE BAND

Sopranino  
Recorder  
or Piccolo

Cornett (C)  
(Sopranino  
Shawm)  
or Clarinet (B $\flat$ )

Bass Shawm  
\*X2 Serpents  
or Double Bassoon

Sop. Sh.  
or Tr.

Alto Trombone  
(Sackbutt)  
or  
Tenor Trombone

Nakers (A,C)  
or  
High Timpani

$\text{♩} = 132$

$\frac{3}{8}$

*sempre uguale*

$\text{♩} = 132$

The musical score for the Intrada, bars 1 to 4, is presented for a stage band. The tempo is marked as 132 beats per minute. The meter is 3/8. The score is marked 'sempre ff' and 'sempre uguale'. The parts are arranged in a system with six staves. The first staff is for the Sopranino Recorder or Piccolo. The second staff is for the Cornett (C) (Sopranino Shawm) or Clarinet (Bb). The third staff is for the Bass Shawm \*X2 Serpents or Double Bassoon. The fourth staff is for the Sop. Sh. or Tr. The fifth staff is for the Alto Trombone (Sackbutt) or Tenor Trombone. The sixth staff is for the Nakers (A,C) or High Timpani. The score begins with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The first staff has a treble clef, and the second staff has a treble clef. The third staff has a bass clef. The fourth staff has a treble clef. The fifth staff has a bass clef. The sixth staff has a bass clef. The score is marked 'sempre ff' and 'sempre uguale'.

The Intrada is followed by a "Preambulum" played on the regal. The Preambulum, like the Intrada, has a preludial function in that it is the first piece in a group of

movements. In Act II, scene ii of *Taverner* the Preambulum forms the first movement of the keyboard suite. The earliest type of preambulum or prelude evolved c.1450 as the result of keyboard players testing the sound and touch of the instrument before they began to play, and were therefore freely improvised. The rhythmically very free, improvisatory nature of Davies' Preambulum suggests that it is probably meant to be a parody of this earliest, unsophisticated type of prelude, as by the sixteenth century, preludial pieces exhibited florid, rapid passage-work which alternated between the two hands. (See Example 2.)

**Example 2 : II/ii - Extract from Preambulum**

Card.

mar-riage on pain of ex - com-mu-ni-ca-tion, and se-cood, for bid - ding all sup - port of

Organ

Card.

you and your cause by all mem - bers of the Church

Organ

off

The next piece in the instrumental suite is a pavane, a dance which first appeared in England c.1550. The slow processional character ( $\text{♩} = 72$ ) and the duple meter typical of the pavane is maintained throughout, but Davies introduces

a rhythmic feature that seems to contribute to the formation of a "nightmarish", out-of-control effect similar to that created by the use of improvising percussion to accompany the vocal lines of Taverner in Act II, scene i. From bar 21 onwards, the melodic lines of the recorder and the cornett are played at the ratio of 5:4. The bar-lines of this section do not coincide and the rhythm of this passage is therefore ambiguous. (See Example 3.)

Example 3 - II/ii - Extract from Pavan (bars 16 to 26)

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system, labeled 'BAND', contains five staves. The top staff is for 'Rec. or Picc.' and the second for 'Corn. or Cl.'. Both have a 5:4 time signature. The third staff is for 'Alto Tbn. or Ten. Tbn.' and the fourth for 'Nak. or High Timp.'. The bottom staff is for 'Nak. or High Timp.'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'p sempre'. The second system, also labeled 'BAND', contains the same five staves. The top staff is for 'Rec. or Picc.' and the second for 'Corn. or Cl.'. Both have a 5:4 time signature. The third staff is for 'Alto Tbn. or Ten. Tbn.' and the fourth for 'Nak. or High Timp.'. The bottom staff is for 'Nak. or High Timp.'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'p sempre'.

The above example also serves to demonstrate the unity of materials between the various movements of the instrumental suite. The nakers are used once again to provide an ostinato of alternating A and C, and the alto trombone functions as a melodic ostinato in much the same way as the bass shawm in the Intrada.

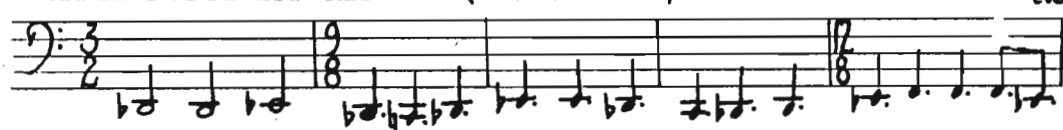
The keyboard "Miserere" at bar 30 is based on a cantus firmus in the lowest voice; it is presented in longer notes which are generally of equal value. The cantus firmus on which this piece for regal is based is derived from the "Miserere mihi Domine" plainchant. (See Example 4.)

Example 4

Opening fragment of *Miserere mihi Domine* plainchant



Bass line of Davies' Miserere (bars 36 to 40)



Davies' use of the "Miserere mihi Domine" plainchant can be accounted for in two ways. Firstly, the Miserere is usually associated with the Mass for the Dead. The use of the Miserere at this point could, therefore, be regarded as significant because the King's vocal line (which it accompanies) states that England is no longer going to pay homage to Rome. In other words, one might say that the Miserere is used to accompany the news of the "death" of the Pope's authority in England. Secondly, the Miserere is also sung as the first psalm on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday in the Roman Catholic rite. The fact that the "Miserere mihi Domine" plainchant is a chant used at Easter is also significant, since references to the Easter story and the related theme of betrayal are frequent in *Taverner*.

The dance that follows the Pavane in the instrumental suite

**Example 5 : II/ii - Extract from Galliard (bars 47 to 61)**

**Galliard** STAGE BAND  
♩ = 132

**BAND**

Sop. Sh.  
or Tr.

Alto Tbn.  
or  
Ten. Tbn.

Nak.  
or  
High Timp.

**BAND**

Bass Sh.  
or D. Bsn.

Sop. Sh.  
or Tr.

Alto Tbn.  
or  
Ten. Tbn.

Nak.  
or  
High Timp.

Before the instrumental group has completed the galliard, the regal enters with the statement of a plainchant cantus firmus. At bar 78, after the cantus firmus has been stated twice on its own, it is stated once again with an added, more florid line in the right hand. The galliard ends at bar 89 and the regal piece, entitled "Te per Orbem Terrarum", continues alone. The words "Te per Orbem Terrarum" come from the hymn "Te Deum" which is used as a hymn of thanksgiving on various occasions. The plainchant which Davies labels as "Te per Orbem Terrarum" and which possibly has its origins in the "Te Deum"<sup>6</sup> is used at the point where the King announces that he has "extirped, abolished and excluded out of this our realm the abuses of the Bishop of Rome" and states that he will now be "Supreme Head in Earth immediately under God".<sup>7</sup> The "Te per Orbem Terrarum" plainchant therefore musically suggests the King's "thanksgiving" for his victory in overthrowing the influence of the Pope.

The end of "Te per Orbem Terrarum" is similarly overlapped by the next movement in the instrumental suite, which is the "Dumpe". The Dumpe is introduced in bar 138 by an ascending and a descending tritone motif which forms an ostinato-type bass for the piece. The Dumpe was one of the new English dance forms that were popular in the court of King Henry VIII. The dumpes "were of particular significance for the development of independent chamber music ... [f]or it was the *dompes* which, as a form of instrumental music, appear chiefly to have been performed by an ensemble of instruments rather

than on a keyboard."<sup>8</sup> Dumpes have a sombre, doleful character as they are usually composed in memory of a recently deceased person or played at funerals. The significance of the use of the Dumpe at this point of Act II, scene ii is similar to the significance of the Miserere. At this juncture in the scene the King states that the name of the Bishop of Rome will be "utterly abolished and razed out, and his name no more remembered, but suppressed and obscured for ever."<sup>9</sup>

Dumpes are usually built on standard grounds or ostinatos which emphasise the tonic and the dominant. As already stated, the ascending and descending tritone motif in the bass shawm provides an ostinato-type bass for Davies' Dumpe. The tritone is an interval often used by twentieth-century composers to break down or replace the strong tonic to dominant relationship of the tonal period, so in this way Davies has modified the original form to make it suitable for use within a twentieth-century harmonic idiom.

The following three pieces in the keyboard suite, "Eterne Rex Altissime", "Eterne Rerum Conditur", and "Eterne Rex Alias", are also based on plainchant canti firmi.<sup>10</sup> The style of these canti firmi date from a later time than "Te per Orbem Terrarum". In "Te per Orbem Terrarum", the cantus firmus is embellished by a quasi-improvisatory line. "Eterne Rex Altissime", however, is written in an imitative polyphonic style and the predominance of the cantus firmus is thereby lessened. All the keyboard pieces up to this point have been



based on canti firmi (with the exception of the Preambulum) and in each successive cantus-firmus movement, the cantus firmus has become less important and is de-emphasised by the growing sophistication of the voices which embellish the chant. (See Example 6.)

Example 6

Te per Orbem Terrarum

Regal

Regal

This musical score is for the piece 'Te per Orbem Terrarum'. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system is labeled 'Regal' on the left and shows a single melodic line on a five-line staff. The second system, also labeled 'Regal', shows a more complex texture with multiple voices or instruments, featuring various note values and rests.

Eterne Rex Altissime

Regal

Regal

This musical score is for the piece 'Eterne Rex Altissime'. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system is labeled 'Regal' on the left and shows a single melodic line on a five-line staff. The second system, also labeled 'Regal', shows a more complex texture with multiple voices or instruments, featuring various note values and rests.

Eterne Rex Alias

Regal

Regal

This musical score is for the piece 'Eterne Rex Alias'. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system is labeled 'Regal' on the left and shows a single melodic line on a five-line staff. The second system, also labeled 'Regal', shows a more complex texture with multiple voices or instruments, featuring various note values and rests.

Eterne Rerum Conditor

Organ

Organ

This musical score is for the piece 'Eterne Rerum Conditor'. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system is labeled 'Organ' on the left and shows a single melodic line on a five-line staff. The second system, also labeled 'Organ', shows a more complex texture with multiple voices or instruments, featuring various note values and rests.

In the toccata, which follows the three canti-firmi pieces, the cantus firmus is dropped completely, and the entire composition is newly composed. The toccata first appeared in the late sixteenth century, but flourished particularly in the seventeenth century where it was characterised by complex rhythms and far more virtuosic passage work. Davies' toccata exhibits a great number of rapid scalar passages that become gradually more and more complex; in addition, the toccata of Act II, scene ii has an improvisatory character. (See Example 7.)

Example 7 : II/ii - Concluding bars of Toccata



Besides the fact that Davies' toccata does not suggest harmonies or melodic patterns of the Renaissance, a more significant stylistic anomaly is the use of strings and harp as an "accompaniment" to the keyboard part. The string parts with their frequent glissandi continue as a backdrop to the "Coranto", the next piece in the instrumental ensemble suite. Davies' courante reveals characteristics of both the Italian and French styles of the dance form, which flourished in Europe from the end of the sixteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century. The Coranto in *Taverner* is in 6/8

time, and not very fast (♩ = 80); it also displays rhythmic and metrical ambiguity and the use of hemiola, all of which are features typical of the French courante. The Italian influence in Davies' Coranto may be seen in its homophonic style, the melody in the recorder and the cornett, and a homorhythmic accompaniment provided by the shawms and the sackbutt. (See Example 8.)

**Example 8 : II/ii - Extract from Coranto (bars 201 to 203)**

STAGE BAND

♩ = 80

Soprano Recorder or Piccolo

Cornett (C)  
(Soprano Shawm)  
or Clarinet (B)

Bass Shawm  
(2 Serpents)  
or Double Bassoon

Alto Shawm  
(Alto Schreierpfeife)  
or Trumpet (C)

Alto Trombone  
(Sackbutt)  
or Tenor Trombone

Nakers (A,C)  
or High Timpani

The "Mask in Echo" for keyboard begins in bar 225, three bars before the end of the Coranto. The movement is written for regal and organ duet in which the organ echoes the regal part. The organ begins the imitation of the regal part at the distance of two bars, but by the last bar the gap has been closed to the distance of a quaver. The Mask was one of the minor dance forms of the Renaissance which frequently appears in English virginal books.

The mask is the last of the parodied styles or forms from the

Renaissance to be used in Act II, scene ii, and the glissandi string accompaniment that provided an unstable harmonic background to the toccata, coranto and "Mask in Echo" now changes to suspenseful tremoli played *sul ponticello* to accompany the Jester's prediction of the destruction of religion, the cornerstone of Renaissance society.

The use of glissandi in the strings during the last three movements, as well as the overlapping of successive movements both contribute to producing a chaotic, unstable musical effect which is in keeping with the text at this particular point in the opera. In the same way that the overlapping of dance movements and the string glissandi threaten the coherence and stability of the music, so too the King's decision to overthrow the authority of Rome and to reform religion threaten to undermine the stability of the society.

The fact that Act II, scene ii is made up of a suite for "secular" stage band and a suite for keyboard instruments, in which religious associations are emphasised by the use of the organs and sacred canti firmi, is important. The division between sacred and secular musically reflects the meeting between the representative of the Church (the cardinal/archbishop) and the head of secular affairs (the king). Furthermore, the fact that the division between sacred and secular music becomes increasingly blurred towards the end of Act II, scene ii, due to the dropping of the canti firmi in the keyboard suite and the overlapping of the movements,

musically portrays the renunciation of the sacred authority of the Pope and the usurpation of sacred leadership by a secular leader.

The use of a suite and of musical forms which date from a later time than the pavan-galliard pair of Act I, scene iii suggests the time that has passed between Act I, scene iii and Act II, scene ii. The grouping of dances in twos and threes was common in the mid-sixteenth century and was replaced by larger groupings of pieces called suites in the seventeenth century.

### **Summary**

Act II, scene iii exhibits two types of parody. The first and most prominent is the parody of Renaissance styles and forms. Davies has not merely written stylistic or formal imitations of pre-Baroque models: rather, he maintains certain features typical of a particular style or form while modifying others, because he treats melodic and harmonic material in a twentieth-century manner. Davies' parody of Renaissance styles and forms reveals a thorough integration of old and new musical elements which is typical of much of Davies' work.

The second type of parody that is used in Act II, scene ii is that of satirical parody. Although the satirical intent of

the parody in this scene is not as poignant as the sardonic parody of Act II, scene i, it functions in a similar manner. In both Act I, scene i and Act II, scene ii parodistic musical elements are introduced to create a sense of chaos and unruliness, and serve to highlight the dire results of the rejection of authority by both Taverner and the King.

Act II, scene ii is the only scene of the opera *Taverner* in which Taverner is excluded musically as well as dramatically, since it is the only scene which does not parody material from the 'In nomine'.

#### Notes

1. Davies, Taverner p. 273.
2. Ibid., pp. 277-78.
3. Ibid., pp. 292-93.
4. The New Grove, s.v. "Regals" by Peter Williams, vol. 3, p. 228.
5. The New Grove, s.v. "Intrada", vol. 9, pp. 279-80.
6. The origin of this plainchant melody could not be traced in either the Index of Gregorian Chant or the Liber Usualis.
7. Davies, Taverner, p. 273.
8. Ernst Meyer, Early English Chamber Music, p. 75.
9. Davies, Taverner, p. 274.
10. The origin of these plainchant melodies could not be traced using either the Index of Gregorian Chant or the Liber Usualis.

### 3.5 ACT I. SCENE 4 - ACT II. SCENE 4

#### 3.5.1 Act I. scene iv

##### Synopsis

Act I, scene iv is the climax of the first act of *Taverner* and the pivotal point in the opera as a whole, as it is in this scene that Taverner's conversion takes place. The dramatic action of Act I, scene iv emphasises fantastic events and bizarre imagery. The use of surrealistic events and imagery in Act I, scene iv suggests that the whole scene is actually a dramatic realisation of the psychological crisis that Taverner is going through in his mind. The stage direction at the beginning of Act I, scene iv also suggests that this scene is an enactment of a figment of Taverner's imagination, because the scene opens with an image in which John Taverner's face seems to emerge from the spotlighted "Death's head ... with eyes closed."<sup>1</sup> Davies himself has described Death as playing the part of Taverner's "mentor" or "conscience" in Act I, scene iv.<sup>2</sup>

In this climactic, tension-filled scene, Death confronts Taverner and attempts to extract a confession from him. Death shows the Pope to Taverner as Antichrist and secures Taverner's renunciation of the Roman Catholic faith. Death says that this is not in itself sufficient and that, in order for Taverner to save himself, he must also reject "that total

self your father reared, even your Mistress, your Music that you whored to Rome."<sup>3</sup> Richard Taverner and Rose Parrowe appear and almost persuade Taverner to ignore Death's demands, but Death quickly puts on a mock mystery play in which he takes the part of Joking Jesus. As Joking Jesus, Death persuades Taverner that his renunciation of his "total self" (what Davies refers to as 'betrayal') is divinely sanctioned, and that he is required "now to do war" for God in order to do penance for having "whored [his] corse in Rome."<sup>4</sup> Sufficiently convinced (or confused), Taverner confesses: "I repent me very much that I have made songs to Popish ditties in the time of my blindness". Then, totally converted, he states that he is prepared to "defend Christ's truth with the sword and the fire for love of him."<sup>5</sup> At this point Taverner's soul, which appeared at the beginning of the scene as a white dove, reappears, having been transformed into a black raven, and is consumed by fire.

#### Music and drama

Act I, scene iv makes fairly extensive use of material derived from Taverner's 'In nomine'. Davies generally uses material parodied from the 'In nomine' purely as a compositional device, and statements of 'In nomine' fragments are usually so altered that they are aurally unrecognisable. Despite the fact that the 'In nomine' fragments are stated in imperceptible forms, their use can be justified in terms of the idea that these fragments are commonly used in the manner



of a leitmotif. Although the progressive transformation of musical material is a trait of Davies' compositional style, it is particularly apt in Act I, scene iv, since it musically reflects the inverted "alchemical transformation" of Taverner's soul.<sup>8</sup>

The first section of Act I, scene iv, where Death confronts Taverner, makes much use of material derived from the 'In nomine'. All of the vocal lines of this section can be shown to exhibit the influence of the 'In nomine' treble line, and some of the string parts are also based on statements of the same material. No two statements of the 'In nomine' fragment are presented in the same manner, but chromatic alteration and octave displacement are common to all of them. In addition to the modification of each statement of an 'In nomine' fragment, the use of so many different transformations of the material further prevents the listener from being able to recognise the source of the material used in the opening section of Act I, scene iv. Such extensive use of 'In nomine' material at this point in the scene can be regarded as being significant since 'In nomine' material (in its original form or a slightly chromatically altered and octave-displaced form) is representative of Taverner before his conversion, and in this section Taverner's conversion has not yet begun. Taverner uses the excuse that he is "but a poor musician" in an attempt to avoid the confrontation with Death.

Taverner's plea is unsuccessful, however, and in the following section, where two monks begin the "alchemical transformation" of Taverner's soul, the chromatically altered, pitch-displaced version of the 'In nomine' treble line (which has been established as a leitmotif representative of the unconverted Taverner) is presented in inversion which distorts the melodic material still further. Davies parodies the pre-Baroque device of cantus firmus as well as material from the 'In nomine' in this section. The monk's duet is supported by a cantus firmus which is stated three times. Each successive statement of the cantus is slightly altered in that it is given a new rhythmic treatment, notes are placed in different registers, and each statement contains one new note.

The manner in which Davies uses transformed segments of 'In nomine' material to musically reflect the transformation of Taverner's soul is illustrated well in bars 130 to 140. Taverner sings that he is "but a poor, lank shadow of [him]self, so racked by acid doubt."<sup>7</sup> The bass clarinet line, which forms part of the orchestral accompaniment of Taverner's line, begins with a melody that is clearly derived from Taverner's 'In nomine', and can be understood as a musical reference to Taverner's former self. At the point where Taverner states that he is "racked by acid doubt", the bass clarinet chromatically alters the descending scalar line of the 'In nomine' treble fragment to create a succession of three semitones. (See Example 1.) This new transformation

of the 'In nomine' material can perhaps be understood as a musical reflection of the distortion of Taverner's character.

Example 1 : I/iv - bars 130 to 140 (partial score)

The musical score for Example 1, I/iv, bars 130 to 140, is a partial score. It features two staves: the top staff is for the B.C. (Bassoon/Contrabassoon) and the bottom staff is for J. Tav. (John Taverner). The B.C. staff begins at bar 130, marked with a box containing '130'. It contains musical notation with dynamic markings *p*, *mf*, *pp*, *mf*, *mf*, *p*, and *mf*. A fermata is placed over the final note of bar 130. The J. Tav. staff also begins at bar 130 and contains the lyrics: "I am but a poor, lank sha-dow of my-self, so racked". The score continues to bar 140, marked with a box containing '140'. The B.C. staff ends with a fermata and a *mf* marking. The J. Tav. staff ends with the lyrics "by a - - - old doubt." and a fermata.

In the section from bar 141 to bar 176, where Death sarcastically tells Taverner that the "indestructible heritage of the church is heaped against [him]", and lists the 'corrupt' elements of the Roman Catholic faith, the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant (an essentially Roman Catholic chant, used by Taverner in one of his "Popish ditties") is used, significantly, as a cantus firmus in the bassoon and double bassoon. The *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant is stated twice - first in the bassoon alone; and second, in a form altered by one note, by the bassoon, while its inversion is simultaneously stated by the double bassoon. Both statements of the plainchant are transposed to begin on B<sup>b</sup>, the note which Davies frequently uses as a secondary

tonal centre in his instrumental In Nomine works.

The 'In nomine' treble line is similarly used to form a flute cantus firmus to accompany Joking Jesus from bars 527 to 543. This cantus firmus is made up of a much more distorted version of the 'In nomine' material than the cantus firmus made up from the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant in bars 141 to 176.

Perhaps the most significant use of material derived from Taverner's 'In nomine' occurs at the end of Act I, scene iv. At bar 653 Taverner signs his confession singing: " I repent me very much that I have made songs to Popish ditties at the time of my blindness."<sup>8</sup> The melody of Taverner's vocal line consists of a statement of the 'In nomine' treble line, altered only by the fact that its pitches are subjected to octave displacement and that the first note is repeated a number of times. This appears to be the closest Davies comes to using the original material in Act I, scene iv. It is significant that Taverner sings the beginning of his vocal line on a monotone, since this suggests musically that Taverner has been brain-washed by Death into signing his confession. It is ironic that Taverner should reject his music and betray his former self to the melodies of one of the "Popish ditties" that he composed. (See Example 2.)

Example 2 : I/iv - bars 653 to 657 (partial score)



Material from the 'In nomine' treble line is used with a similar ironic effect to accompany Death's quotation from Scripture (which predicts the nature of Taverner's further activities) and Taverner's confirmation of his conversion, up to the words "Put off thy blindness." In this section (bars 661 to 772) the 'In nomine' material is again used in the form of a cantus firmus . A solo violin states the fragment from the 'In nomine' treble line three times, and each successive statement of the 'In nomine' material is more distorted than the last. Once again the progressive distortion of the original musical material could be seen as enhancing the idea that Taverner's character is progressively distorted in Act I, scene iv, until he is finally totally converted by Death. The ironic implication of Davies' use of 'In nomine' material at this point is emphasised by the fact that the violin statement of the 'In nomine' fragment is presented "[s]tarting each note senza vibrato, but with crescendo, increasing vibrato on each note through its duration, a maximum of nauseatingly, sentimental vibrato being reached just before the change to another note."<sup>2</sup> This satirical parody of 'In nomine' material as well as the soft dynamic of the entire section, the use of mutes and as many harmonics as possible in the string parts, and the production

of bell-like sounds in the percussion create an ominous, foreboding air. It is significant that at the words "Put off thy blindness", sung by Taverner when confirming his conversion, all reference to 'In nomine' material ceases, and the scene concludes with Davies' newly-composed material.

Act I, scene iv introduces a new leitmotif. The whole-tone chord D-F\*-E-G\*, which is the single most important harmonic structure in the instrumental *In Nomine* works, is used in *Taverner* to represent Death. The chord appears for the first time as a harmonic pedal to accompany Taverner's line "Death! a thief!" in bars 15 to 19.<sup>10</sup> The chord recurs at several points in Act I, scene iv. For example, it appears, again as a harmonic pedal, in bars 215 to 220 when Death threatens Taverner that he has "yet time to burn for [his beliefs]",<sup>11</sup> and intermittently throughout the section where Death induces Taverner to sign his confession (bars 648 to 660).

Act I, scene iv is the first scene in *Taverner* to make extensive use of parody with a satirical function. For satirical parody to be effective it is necessary that the audience is able to discern the object that is being imitated in an exaggerated fashion. The best example of satirical parody in Act I, scene iv is the burlesque of the passion play which occurs in bars 467 to 647.

The parodistic nature of the mystery play is effective because both dramatic and musical elements support the

parody. Dramatically the sardonic parody of the passion play is made clear by features such as the use of out-size "joke" nails to pin Joking Jesus to the cross, the presence of a band of singing demons, and stage directions which indicate that Joking Jesus is "obviously acting a role."<sup>12</sup> The stage directions reveal that Death occasionally forgets that he is supposed to be playing the role of Joking Jesus, and the alternation between Death's attempts to take the part seriously, and relapses in which he is unable to control his mirth, is a further indication that the passion play is intended as a burlesque.

The music reinforces the satirical parody evident in the dramatic action in several ways. The highly distorted nature of the 'In nomine' material which is used to provide a cantus firmus accompanying Joking Jesus in bars 527 to 543 can be regarded as appropriate, since the corrupted version of Taverner's original music is used to accompany a distorted, satirical version of the passion play. Gabriel's vocal line from bars 603 to 606 makes use of both words and music from the 'In nomine' in a satirical manner. Gabriel's line "Benedictus qui venit, Ossana" comes from the Sanctus of the Mass and is sung to a statement of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant. Only the last note of the plainchant fragment is altered. (See Example 3.) The perfunctory statement of these words and the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant fragment provide a particularly ironic comment on the action, as the audience is aware that the person into which Death is

transforming Taverner would not be 'coming in the name of the Lord.'

Example 3 : I/iv - bars 606 to 606 (partial score)

GABRIEL

Be - ne - dic - tus qui ve - nit. O - san - na.

MICHAEL

Be - - - ne - - - dic - tus. O - san - na.

That the part of God the Father is sung falsetto by a tenor is an obvious instance of satirical parody, since God is usually sung by a bass part in accordance with the practice established in opera and oratorio. The bass voice is commonly regarded as being the most appropriate setting for the part of God since it is able to reflect some of the power and majesty of the character. The appearance of God the Father in bars 503 to 508 singing "Ecce filius bastardus meus" - Behold, my bastard son - is quoted by Michael Chanan as being the first appearance of parody in Davies' music. Chanan states that this line is "a parody of Davies' own *O Magnum Mysterium*."<sup>13</sup> While the text recalls and inverts the meaning of a line in *Jesus autem hodie* (a carol that is not part of *O Magnum Mysterium*), no musical ties can be found between either *Jesus autem hodie* or *O Magnum Mysterium* and this particular section in Act I, scene iv. The text of the final section of the passion play uses the same text as the last of Davies' *Five Motets* - "Attollite portas principes" - but Taverner does not parody this work musically either.



Davies also makes use of features such as those found in Act II, scene i to enhance the parodistic nature of the passion play in Act I, scene iv. The vocal line of Joking Jesus is accompanied by instruments with a relatively high pitch (piccolo and flute) and by a similarly high-pitched tabor which beats rhythmically throughout. The parody passion play is introduced and concluded by demons singing "Attollite portas principes" as they draw the cart on and off the stage (bars 479 to 501 and 607 to 646). The parts of the demons are sung by treble voices which are accompanied colla voce by soprano shawms which also have a high pitch and a shrill, harsh tone-quality. The markings in the score indicate that the coarse tone-quality of the soprano shawms is to be exaggerated, as the shawms are directed to play with an "extremely harsh and reedy" tone in the first demon section, and "snarling[ly]" in the second. The words of "Attollite portas principes" are:

Lift up your gates, O princes,  
And let the everlasting doors be raised,  
For then the King of Glory will come in.<sup>14</sup>

The emphasis on high-pitched instrumentation, shrill, harsh timbres and percussion provides an inappropriate setting for the words of "Attollite portas principes" and highlights the impertinence of their use. Both words and music thus contribute to the creation of parody with a sardonic intent.

Although Act I, scene iv is expected to parallel Act II, scene iv, there are several places in Act I, scene iv which reveal correspondences with scenes other than Act II, scene

iv. References to Act I, scene i in particular are noteworthy. For example, Death's opening vocal line where he asks Taverner "What does the Lord require of thee?" is reminiscent of the vocal lines of the White Abbot in Act I, scene i, where Taverner was similarly called upon to answer for his beliefs. The introductory fanfare motif of Act I, scene i also recurs noticeably in Act I, scene iv. At bar 201 Death screeches words similar to those chanted by the church council in Act I, scene i at bar 123. The use of a high-pitched, screeched vocal line and glissandi musically supports the satirical parody of Act I, scene iv. Similarly, in the middle of the passion play, God the Father sings "To those that purge our land from heretical filth is promised highest reward of supernatural blessing". These words are chanted by the church council in Act I, scene i. The chord to which these words are sung in Act I, scene i is G-C-D<sup>b</sup>-B<sup>b</sup>, and this chord is recalled in the horns and the trumpets in bars 595 to 599 and in the horns and oboe in bars 600 to 602 of Act I, scene iv.

### **Summary**

There are three main categories of parody exhibited in Act I, scene iv: the use of material from Taverner's 'In nomine'; the use of satirical parody; and the use of the cantus firmus principle from pre-Baroque music.

Material from Taverner's 'In nomine' is used in an imperceptible form for the most part, but 'In nomine' fragments generally can be shown to function in the manner of a leitmotif, providing some sort of comment on the dramatic action at that particular point. The fact that all reference to Taverner's 'In nomine' ceases at the point in Act I, scene iv where Taverner's conversion is finally established as irrevocable is significant.

The use of satirical parody is very important in Act I, scene iv because it is the first appearance of effective satirical parody in *Taverner* and in Davies' output as a whole. The satirical parody of Act I, scene iv is more sophisticated and effective than the two small examples which were noted in Act I, scene iii. In Act I, scene iv, the satirical parody inherent in the dramatic action is complemented by musical features whose sardonic purpose is clearly audible.

Like the first, second, and third scenes of Act I, which are all organized by the parody of a form or number of forms from an earlier musical period, the musical organization of Act I, scene iv is largely reliant on the use of the *canti firmi*. The *canti firmi* provide a structural foundation for large sections of Act I, scene iv. Often the *canti firmi* are made up of material derived from Taverner's 'In nomine', and in such instances the parody of musical material from a pre-existent source and of musical techniques from an earlier period of musical history coincide.

Notes

1. Davies, Taverner, p. 132.
2. Davies, "Taverner: Synopsis and Documentation", p. 5.
3. Davies, Taverner, p. 168.
4. Ibid., p. 194.
5. Ibid., pp. 204-5 and 211-12.
6. Ibid., p. 141. The alchemical process involved changing dross into gold, obtaining something valuable from what was once worthless. In Act I, scene iv two monks invert the alchemical process to which they subject Taverner's soul, since he is transformed from a humane, reasonable person (a white dove) into a fanatical, inhumane persecutor (a black raven).
7. Ibid., pp. 149-50.
8. Ibid., pp. 204-5.
9. Ibid., p. 207.
10. Ibid., p. 133.
11. Ibid., p. 162.
12. Ibid., p. 192.
13. Michael Chanan, "Dialectics in Peter Maxwell Davies", Tempo 90 (Autumn 1969), p. 10.
14. Peter Maxwell Davies, Five Motets (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1966), translations by Stephen Pruslin.

### 3.5.2 Act II, scene iv

#### Synopsis

Since scenes i, ii and iii of Act I are all paralleled by scenes i, iii and ii respectively of Act II, there is the expectation that Act I, scene iv and Act II, scene iv will be related to each other in a similar manner.

Act II, scene iv does not, however, parody Act I, scene iv, neither does it reveal any immediately obvious correspondences to the earlier scene. The settings, the characters that appear, and the dramatic action of the respective scenes are different. The only clear dramatic similarity that can be shown between Act I, scene iv and Act II, scene iv is that both scenes form the climaxes of their respective acts.

Act II, scene iv is set in the market-place of Boston where a large crowd of townspeople are gathered to witness the execution of the White Abbot. A procession, which includes the witnesses and the council from the trial scenes, the Archbishop and soldiers, leads the White Abbot to the stake and the faggots are made ready. John Taverner is discovered aside, writing at his desk. The letter, which he reads aloud, records that "the Rood was burned the seventh day of this month, and the friar, who did express the cause of his burning and the idolatry committed by him",<sup>1</sup> while the

chorus sing comments on Christ's death on the cross. Taverner tells the White Abbot to prepare himself for his death and bids him speak his last. The White Abbot sings a lengthy "last word" which provides a telling commentary on Taverner's "betrayal". The White Abbot's final aria reveals that he is the one character who has adhered to his original beliefs. He, unlike Taverner, is prepared to die for what he believes. As the White Abbot is burned, Taverner calls out to God, "Forsake not thy faithful servant"<sup>2</sup> and, as he and Rose Parrowe stand in the light of the fire, the sign of the cross falls across Taverner's back.

#### Music and drama

In the same way that Act II, scene iv does not parody Act I, scene iv dramatically, it also does not re-use musical material from the earlier scene. Even though the final scenes of both Act I and Act II parody musical material from Taverner's 'In nomine' extensively, this does not contribute to creating a parallel between the two scenes. Whereas the parody of 'In nomine' material in Act I, scene iv involves the distortion and alteration of the original material so that it is no longer aurally recognisable, the 'In nomine' material is used predominantly in unaltered, aurally recognisable forms in Act II, scene iv.

An unaltered fragment of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant is stated from bar 83 to bar 90 in the treble line and

accompanied colla voce in the oboes. This statement of the plainchant is the longest fragment of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant to be used in *Taverner*. The fragment is then restated in an altered form from bar 91 to bar 94. The use of a sacred plainchant with its religious associations is particularly appropriate at this point in *Taverner* since the music then supports the parallels that are being drawn in the text between the death of the White Abbot and the crucifixion of Christ.

These two statements of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* material lead into the "parody" of a large section of Davies' *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner. The use of material from the fantasia can be regarded as an example of parody since the second act of *Taverner* was written after the *Second Fantasia* had been completed. Bars 95 to 294 of Act II, scene iv correspond to bars 1009 to 1215 of the *Second Fantasia*. The material from the *Second Fantasia* is reworked in the sense that in some sections note values are diminished, the orchestration is altered, or vocal lines with colla voce accompaniments are added.

Taverner's final vocal lines, which draw the opera to a close, are accompanied by two plainchant fragments. The first appears in bars 286 to 294 where the flute states a version of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant fragment with all repeated notes omitted. It is interesting to note that this fragment from the 'In nomine' is presented differently

in *Taverner* from the way it is used in the *Second Fantasia*. (See Example 1.) In the *Second Fantasia* the plainchant fragment is subjected to octave displacement, while in Act II, scene iv the notes of the plainchant are stated at their original pitch.

**Example 1 : Second Fantasia - bars 1207 to 1215 (partial score)**

*Taverner* II/iv - bars 286 to 294

290

Fl. I.

E. Ho.

B. Cl.

Bsn. I.

D. Bsn.

J. Tav.

Vc. Solo

rit. 2 + 3

Fl. I.

E. Ho.

B. Cl.

Bsn. I.

D. Bsn.

J. Tav.

Vc. Solo

rit. 2 + 3



This, together with a number of other "quotations" from the 'In nomine', would seem to suggest that Davies considers less altered versions of material from the original work to be of an inherently more dramatic nature. The second plainchant fragment appears in the cello line from bar 284 to bar 287. This plainchant is derived from the plainchant "Victimae paschali laudes". (See Example 2.)

Example 2 : II/iv - Cello bars 284 to 287



Opening phrase of *Victimae paschali laudes* plainchant



This plainchant in effect functions only as a compositional device, since it is so distorted that it is aurally unrecognisable. Even in its written form, the relationship between the "Victimae paschali laudes" and the cello line in Act II, scene iv of *Taverner* is somewhat tenuous. The use of this plainchant at the end of the opera is meaningful, however. "Victimae paschali laudes" is an Easter sequence and thus alludes to the resurrection of Christ. Stephen Arnold states that the "reminder of the Easter sequence celebrating the Resurrection is the one, extremely restrained, hint of a resolution to the opera's inner

drama."<sup>3</sup>

The opera concludes with John Taverner's 'In nomine' played by an ensemble of recorders, to which Davies adds a sustained tritone in the cellos. The 'In nomine' is not played in its entirety, but fades out after the curtain has fallen, and this creates the feeling that there are many questions which *Taverner* has raised but not resolved.

The examination of the more minor musical parallels between Act I, scene iv and Act II, scene iv reveals some of the less obvious dramatic links between the two scenes. The whole-tone chord which was associated with Death in Act I, scene iv recurs in Act II, scene iv at the point where Taverner gives the signal for the White Abbot to be burned. The recurrence of the D-F\*-E-G\* chord (the leitmotif for Death) at this point suggests that Taverner has become Death, or, at the very least, taken over the function of Death. This strengthens the argument that Death was a product of Taverner's imagination in Act I, scene iv. In Act I, scene iv Death is the cause of the spiritual death of Taverner, and in Act II, scene iv Taverner brings about the physical death of the White Abbot.

The chorus parts sung by the townspeople in Act II, scene iv recall the style of the sections that were sung by the demons in Act I, scene iv, and which framed the mock crucifixion of Christ. This establishes a parallel between the executions

of the two scenes: a parallel which is further emphasised by the fact that the chorus sections, which introduce the respective executions, both sing of Christ's death on the cross. The correspondence between the execution of the White Abbot in Act II, scene iv and the parody passion play in which Christ's death is satirically "imitated" in Act I, scene iv is another example of what might be termed retrospective parody.

Although Act I, scene iv is the scene in which satirical parody plays a more prominent role, Act II, scene iv is not void of sardonic references. Furthermore, the fact that such references are frequently made to scenes other than the "corresponding" scene, is another parallel that can be drawn between Act I, scene iv and Act II, scene iv. In bars 14 and 15 of Act II, scene iv, the townspeople state: "This is the work of John Taverner, musician..."<sup>4</sup> Textually this recalls the words of the monks in Act I, scene ii, who sang "Hoc est opus Johani Taverni ...". The re-use of this phrase in English in the final scene of *Taverner* is especially ironic, since these words point out the incongruity of a musician being responsible for the death of an abbot. The chorus continues to say that Taverner's work is to destroy the enemies of Christ, and the juxtaposition of comments such as "I have found an upright man that fears God and eschews evil";<sup>5</sup> "He had his sons murder one another and rebel against the Father";<sup>6</sup> and "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"<sup>7</sup> make the audience aware that, although Taverner has

been convinced by Death that his actions are rendering a service to God, his primary motivation was to justify his own escape from Death. The ironic tragedy of the text is emphasised by the use of glissandi in the string parts, which, through their musical instability, reveal the equivocal nature of Taverner's conversion and betrayal. In order to secure his physical life, Taverner unwittingly brought about his spiritual death.

#### Summary

The type of parody which is predominant in Act II, scene iv is the use of material from a pre-existent work. Material from Taverner's 'In nomine' is mostly used in unaltered, aurally recognisable forms. Since the 'In nomine' functions as a leitmotif associated with Taverner before his conversion, the use of 'In nomine' fragments in an unaltered form serves to highlight the tragedy of Taverner's rejection of his beliefs, his "whole self" and his music. The final quotation of a substantial section from the 'In nomine' at the end of the scene, when Taverner is lying prostrate with the shadow of the cross on his back, is a particularly good example of the manner in which the aurally recognisable use of 'In nomine' material emphasises the tragedy of the opera.

Notes

1. Davies, Taverner, p. 349.
2. Ibid., pp. 378-9.
3. Stephen Arnold, "The Music of *Taverner*" Tempo 101 (1972), p. 29.
4. Davies, Taverner, p. 314.
5. Ibid., pp. 337-38.
6. Ibid., pp. 340-41.
7. Ibid., pp. 341-42.

## CHAPTER 4 : CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Davies has stated that he regards his function as a composer to make people more aware of themselves and the social situation in which they exist.<sup>1</sup> In order to pursue such a goal a composer needs to have a viable means of musical communication. In the absence of tonality as a commonly understood musical "language" capable of ensuring a certain degree of comprehensibility, twentieth-century composers have had to find new means of composing and of expressing themselves through their music. Nearly every worthwhile composer of this century has found a different, individual solution to the problem of an exhausted tonal system, and the twentieth century is thus characterised by a plethora of different musical styles and the lack of a single, generally accepted and understood musical system which is able to govern music in the same way as tonality did during the common-practice period. It is for this reason that present-day audiences find so much contemporary music impossible to comprehend and thus inaccessible.

Davies' use of parody is perhaps the single most important means by which he sets out to conquer the related problems of accessibility and communication. The detailed examination of the *First Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner, the *Seven In Nomine*, the *Second Fantasia* and Taverner reveal

three main categories of parody. The first two types of parody both have a serious intent and comprise the use of material from a pre-existent composition and the borrowing of musical forms, styles and compositional devices from earlier periods of music history. The third type of parody evident in the In Nomine compositions is Davies' use of parody in its modern sense which is exaggerated imitation meant to ridicule or burlesque that which is being copied.

Although the boundaries between each of the three basic categories of parody are not always carefully defined, and some examples seem to incorporate elements of more than one type of parody, each category will be discussed separately in an attempt to clarify the manner in which Davies employs each type and to reveal their respective functions.

#### Notes

1. Tom Sutcliffe, "A Question of Identity", Music and Musicians 20 (July 1972), p. 27.

## 4.2 PARODY WITH A SERIOUS INTENT

### 4.2.1 The parody of pre-existing musical material

Parody in its Renaissance sense is a compositional technique whereby an existing composition is altered and re-worked and used as the basis of a new work. Since each of the compositions being considered in this study uses Taverner's 'In nomine' as its starting-point, parody which involves the use of musical material from a pre-existing composition is central to this group of works, and it is the type of parody of which Davies makes most use.

One of the important aims of the sixteenth-century technique of parody is that elements of the composition being used as a source should be "absorbed into the new piece and subjected to free variation in such a way that a fusion of old and new elements is achieved."<sup>1</sup> Thus, unlike satirical parody, the listener does not need to be able to recognise the source which is being parodied. On the contrary, the successful use of the sixteenth-century device of parody results in a composition in which the old and new material are so well integrated that it is not possible to aurally distinguish between that which is newly-composed and that which is parodied from another composition. The most fundamental and important function of parody in its Renaissance sense lies in its ability to provide a composer with germinal material from which a new composition can be generated.



The analysis of each of Davies' In Nomine compositions reveals the consistent use of only three features from Taverner's 'In nomine'. The three elements from the 'In nomine' on which Davies has focussed his attention are: the opening sequence of notes in the treble line of the 'In nomine'; the first phrase of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant; and the D tonal centre of Taverner's original composition.

For the most part Davies treats the three features parodied from the 'In nomine' in a twentieth-century fashion so that the old material will blend in with his newly-composed material and hence the fusion which is an aim of sixteenth-century parody is usually achieved. Davies makes the melodies from the 'In nomine' compatible with his own essentially modernist style by frequently subjecting some of the notes to octave displacement, by altering the rhythmic values of the notes, and sometimes by fragmenting the melodic line by the addition of rests. The modal character of the borrowed melodic fragments is avoided by the chromatic alteration of some of the notes. Davies' chromatic alteration of the 'In nomine' melodies often results in the creation of sequences of whole-tones which make the melodies concordant with the atonal melodies and harmonies of Davies' compositional style.

The D tonal centre is also used in a twentieth-century manner. The D is often retained as the first note of the

borrowed 'In nomine' fragments, but does not really make itself felt as a tonal centre because of brevity of the fragments and the fact that the melodies are usually chromatically altered. The D is also sometimes used to form the lowest note of a dissonant harmonic pedal (for example, in the D-F\*-E-G# chord). Although the D is important theoretically as the "root" of the chord, it is not aurally more important than the other chordal notes since the dissonant nature of the chord (frequently accentuated by the fact that the notes are stated in a close range) tends to obliterate the structural importance of the lowest note. The D is usually used as a tonal reference for short passages, and this as well as the essentially dissonant nature of Davies' material means that the tonal centre usually passes unnoticed.

Davies does not always treat the borrowed 'In nomine' fragments in the same way throughout each of the In Nomine works. The extent to which the material is distorted and therefore the extent to which the influence of the 'In nomine' can be discerned in each instance differs from one example to the next. Usually, however, Davies has treated the 'In nomine' melodies in any one particular composition (or scene in the case of *Taverner*) fairly consistently so that any one work or scene will usually exhibit a single predominant means of using the 'In nomine' material. It is interesting to note that the In Nomine works reveal a progression from Davies' use of material from the source

composition in a very abstract, academic manner in the earlier works, to its more obvious and less disguised use in the later works. As a result there is also a progression from Davies' compositions of the fifties, which are generally less accessible and expressive, to the works of the sixties in which more direct, aurally recognisable references to borrowed material provides a successful communicative element. As Stephen Arnold states, Davies' use of musical materials from the past in an aurally perceptible form "provides a rich and profuse world with which [the listener] can soon identify."<sup>2</sup>

The influence of the 'In nomine' is least discernible in the earlier compositions. In the *Seven In Nomine* (1963-64), numbers II and III, Davies "subjects the plainsong to a transformation / development process involving complex mensuration-canonic techniques", so that the material borrowed from Taverner's 'In nomine' is no longer aurally recognisable and can seldom be traced on the written page either.<sup>3</sup> The result in the case of both II and III of the *Seven In Nomine* is compositions in which the old material has been thoroughly integrated with the new. It is even more difficult to discern the influence of the source work on the fifth piece of the *Seven In Nomine*. Although Davies states that the 'In nomine' plainchant lies on a cross in the centre of his circular canon, it is not possible to determine which notes of the plainchant coincide with, and therefore form part of, the new canonic theme. There is no tangible

reference to 'In nomine' material in this piece.

There are again no aurally recognisable references to the 'In nomine' in the *First Fantasia* and the final piece of the *Seven In Nomine*, but the influence of the 'In nomine' material can be visually determined more easily than in II and III of the *Seven In Nomine*. This is because the borrowed material is often only modified by octave displacement and the chromatic alteration of particular notes rather than being transformed by complex, cerebral compositional procedures which tend to destroy the identity of the borrowed material.

Much of the *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine* by John Taverner (1964) similarly uses material from Taverner's 'In nomine' in a very distorted manner, but Davies also begins to make use of citations from the original composition that a listener familiar with the 'In nomine' would be able to recognise, since not all of the quotations from the 'In nomine' are distorted by octave displacement and chromatic alteration. The tendency to use increasingly obvious references to the 'In nomine' is even more evident in *Taverner*. By the time Davies wrote the last two scenes of the opera (c.1966-68), he was using large, substantially unaltered sections of Taverner's 'In nomine' in his own work, and allowing a juxtaposition or superimposition of disparate musical styles to occur.

The transition in Davies' handling of borrowed material that can be observed in the In Nomine group of compositions, from a style in which the source material is handled in a very abstract, intellectual manner to a style in which parodied material is stated in a more obvious form (less distorted and therefore also less disguised) is representative of the change that took place in Davies' compositional style during the early sixties. In early works such as *Alma Redemptoris Mater* (1957), based on a Dunstable motet of the same name, and the *St Michael Sonata* (1957), based on plainchants from the Requiem Mass, the source material is always distorted to such an extent that it is aurally unrecognisable. In works written in the late sixties, however, (for example, *Missa Super L'Homme Armé* and *Eight Songs for a Mad King*), Davies makes use of far more obvious references to the works that he parodies and the resulting juxtaposition and superimposition of different musical styles becomes characteristic.

The change in Davies' use of borrowed material can be accounted for in two ways. Firstly, the years that the composer spent teaching at Cirencester Grammar School (from 1959 to 1962) had meant that Davies had had to simplify his extremely complex and consequently inaccessible compositional style in order to make the music that he wrote technically and intellectually suitable for children. The last work that Davies wrote while at Cirencester was the *First Fantasia*, and the influence of the clear-textured, less complex writing that characterised his works for children is evident in the

two recitatives of the *First Fantasia*. It was in the works written at Cirencester that references to the pre-Baroque styles and musical material on which the composer based so many works became audible. One could, therefore, also attribute Davies' more frequent literal quotation of and allusion to the music of the Middle Ages and Renaissance as an influence from his experience of writing for children. This influence gradually worked its way into his compositions for adults, and first became fully apparent in *Taverner*.

Secondly, the fact that Davies began to use borrowed material in a more obvious fashion at the same time that there was a new emphasis in his output on works of a dramatic nature suggests that Davies felt the use of fairly substantial, overt references to the source material could best be justified through their association with dramatic elements. The large quotation from the 'In nomine' which appears in Act II, scene iii, for example, can be justified by the dramatic context in which the quotation is used. The original 'In nomine' came from the Sanctus of Taverner's *Gloria tibi Trinitas* Mass, and set the words 'In nomine Domine'. The use of a section of this work in Act II, scene iii can thus be justified for two reasons. Firstly, Act II, scene iii is in itself a dramatic recreation of a Roman Catholic Mass in which Taverner's composition might have been used and, secondly, the words for which Taverner's work furnished a musical setting - 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord' - provide an ironic comment on the action at that

particular point, since the monastery has just been dissolved under the supervision of Taverner in his new role as Protestant persecutor, and not (as the audience knows) by someone coming 'in the name of the Lord'. The music also serves as an wry reminder of Taverner's former self and beliefs, in sharp relief to the person that he has now become.

Since Davies' use of Taverner's material in an unaltered form usually results in a superimposition of two disparate musical styles, the listener's attention is likely to be attracted to "the appearance of atavistic, exogenous traits."<sup>4</sup> The aurally recognisable quotation of portions from the 'In nomine' therefore has a function beyond that of merely providing basic building material for a new composition, as Davies always tends to use overt references to the 'In nomine' as a musical comment on the dramatic action which the music accompanies.

Even aurally unrecognisable references to the 'In nomine' material are generally used at points where its occurrence can be accounted for by the dramatic action. Melodic fragments derived from Taverner's work function in the manner of a leitmotif, and can be understood as representative of Taverner before his conversion. It is clear that Davies neither borrows material from the past indiscriminately nor uses the parodied material at arbitrary points within his own works. His choice of this particular 'In nomine' by Taverner

for use in the opera (and the instrumental In Nomine compositions) is apt for two reasons. Firstly, the work is historically important as the source of over a hundred and fifty In Nomine compositions written in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Secondly, the musical character of the music complements the mood of the opera. David Josephson notes that "[t]he relatively small number of chamber sections for boys (trebles in particular) and its Dorian modality render the Gloria tibi Trinitas the darkest of the festal Masses in sound"; this supports the subject matter of *Taverner* which is the tragic nature of Taverner's rejection of his music and the associated sombre theme of betrayal.<sup>5</sup>

Other dramatic works by Davies also reveal the tendency to use carefully selected, borrowed musical material, forms or styles at appropriate points in the drama. For example, in *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, Davies uses material from an eighteenth-century suite called *The Phantom Queen* to accompany the King's illusion in which he yearns for Lady Esther Pembroke whom he imagines to be his queen.

Davies makes use of plainchants other than the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant, the cantus firmus on which Taverner's 'In nomine' is based, in Act II, scene ii and Act II, scene iv. Hugh Benham states that the "inclusion of a plainsong from a particular feast may serve to relate a polyphonic work to that feast. In addition the melody, with its hallowed



associations may be to some extent the reference to authority and tradition so dear to medieval man."<sup>6</sup> Davies' use of Mediaeval plainchants respects the fact that the melodies have a liturgical significance attached to them, and the composer consequently makes use of the chants at dramatically appropriate points. In Act II, scene ii, for example, the "Miserere mihi Domine" plainchant (which is part of the Mass for the Dead) forms the cantus firmus of Davies' "Miserere". The Miserere accompanies the King's announcement of England's break with Rome, and thus is a musical allusion to the 'death' of the Pope's authority in England. Davies incorporates the Easter plainchant "Victimae paschali laudes" into *Taverner* near the end of Act II, scene iv. Stephen Arnold states that "[t]his reminder of the Easter Sequence celebrating the Resurrection is the one, extremely restrained, hint of a resolution to the opera's inner drama."<sup>7</sup>

It is interesting to note that Davies, like Taverner, has re-used musical material from his own compositions. That the concept of parody can be extended to include Davies' use of material from one of his *In Nomine* compositions in another is supported by the following passage by Hugh Benham:

In writing a parody Mass, the Continental composer ... borrowed from someone else's music, but he was not guilty of plagiarism because he normally altered what he borrowed... . Taverner and Tallis, on the other hand, re-used their own work, and did not as a rule change the borrowed material much beyond what was necessary to accommodate new words; consequently their practice appears to be largely independent of Continental practice. ...[The works of Taverner and Tallis] have some material not found in their parent

works and do not necessarily incorporate borrowed sections in the correct order.<sup>9</sup>

The *Second Fantasia* contains material that first appeared in the first act of *Taverner* while the second act makes use of sections that first appeared in the instrumental work. Davies states that the reason for this re-use of musical material was that he felt many of the ideas in the first act of *Taverner* "were capable of a more symphonic development than was possible within the confines of a dramatic context."<sup>8</sup> The sole function of Davies' parody of material from his own compositions is thus very similar to the basic function of parody in its Renaissance sense: it provides the composer with an idea capable of expansion and of generating musical material for the writing of a new composition.

#### Notes

1. The New Grove, s.v. "Parody" by Michael Tilmouth, vol. 14, p. 238.
2. Arnold, "The Music of *Taverner*", p. 22.
3. Davies, "Seven In Nomine", p. 140.
4. Ballantine, p. 72.
5. Josephson, John Taverner, p. 133.
6. Benham, p. 47.
7. Arnold, "The Music of *Taverner*", p. 29.
8. Benham, p. 55.
9. Davies, "*Second Fantasia*", p. 141.

#### 4.2.2 The parody of forms, styles and compositional procedures from early music.

For the purpose of this study the term "parody" was extended to include the borrowing of forms, styles and compositional devices characteristic of earlier periods of music history. The parody of forms and compositional procedures is used fairly extensively in the group of compositions based on Taverner's 'In nomine', and, with one exception, examples of this type of parody employ models taken from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

The fundamental function of the parody of musical forms is to provide the composer with a structural framework to aid in the organization of musical material. It has proved especially difficult to sustain lengthy musical discourse when the principles underlying the extended forms of the common-practice period are removed. In the absence of tonality many composers of the twentieth century have been confronted with the problem of the lack of an overall principle of organization and have occasionally turned to the musical forms of the past to provide them with a means of structuring their musical material.

Davies' original contributions to the *Seven In Nomine* are all short enough to be comprehensible without the composer's recourse to formal models from early music, but the *First Fantasia*, the *Second Fantasia* and certain scenes from *Taverner* (which are all more lengthy than the pieces included

in the *Seven In Nomine*) frequently use models dating from before the twentieth century in order to provide a degree of organization and shape to the wealth of musical material that is presented in these works. The use of traditionally established models thus aids in making the music more comprehensible to the listener even if the specific form that is being parodied is aurally unrecognisable.

The *First Fantasia* and the *Second Fantasia* both employ the principle of the parody fantasia which uses material from an existing polyphonic work as its starting point and was popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The fantasia form provided Davies with a very loose structural idea, since the form of the fantasia is generally of an improvisatory nature, and does not require a rigid structural framework. As Gustave Reese notes, fantasias of the Renaissance period tend to exhibit a "definite sense of structure, but the absence of fixed forms."<sup>1</sup>

The *First Fantasia* is aptly described by Reese's definition, since it exhibits clearly demarcated musical sections but cannot be defined by any traditionally established form, although elements of the sonata principle are sometimes in evidence. The *Second Fantasia*, on the other hand, combines the fundamental idea of the parody fantasia (that is, basing the new composition on a pre-existing work) with formal ideas that have been borrowed from the symphonic tradition. The *Second Fantasia* can be considered as having the basic form of

a symphony despite the fact that the work contains no exact repetition and has an improvisatory appearance which results from Davies' continual use of transformation techniques.

Davies parodies a wide variety of forms in *Taverner*. The parody of forms and styles characteristic of other musical periods in *Taverner* frequently has a function beyond that of merely providing the composer with a means of structural organization. In Act I, scene ii, for example, the music sung by the monks is cast in the form of a motet. The introduction and the first section proper of the motet even sound reminiscent of Renaissance motet-writing. The use of the motet form to provide a basic structure for Act II, scene ii is dramatically appropriate since the lines sung by the monks are intended to be a realisation of the music that Taverner is writing while seated at his desk during this scene.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore also significant that each time Taverner stops writing to voice his thoughts the motet is interrupted. Similarly, Davies use of a parody mass in the corresponding scene (Act II, scene iii) is both complemented and justified by the fact that the scene dramatically presents the celebration of a Roman Catholic Mass.

Davies' use of various pre-Baroque forms in Act I, scene iii and Act II, scene ii clearly demonstrates the many different levels of meaning that Davies' use of Mediaeval and Renaissance styles and forms can have. The primary function of the use of forms from the pre-Baroque is to provide the

composer with a means of organizing the musical material which is presented within the scene. This is particularly evident in Act II, scene ii where the music of the whole scene consists of two suites, the movements of which alternate and sometimes overlap. The specific individual movements which Davies has chosen to use in these two scenes can be accounted for dramatically, and are used to emphasize certain elements of the dramatic action.

There are two main ways in which Davies employs musical forms from the past to comment on the dramatic action of Act I, scene iii and Act II, scene ii. The first manner in which Davies makes his use of borrowed forms meaningful is particularly well illustrated in Act II, scene ii where the use of forms and instrumentation reflects the change that takes place in the scene - from a situation in which sacred and secular powers are separate to a situation where the power of the Church is usurped by a secular leader. The music of Act II, scene ii is made up of two interlocking suites. The first suite represents the secular power, as it is played on wind instruments (which are more readily associated with secular music), and the various movements of this suite are made up of dance forms. The second suite represents the authority of the Church, is orchestrated for regal and positive organ (which one tends to associate with the church), and is comprised of movements with a sacred origin.

The individual pieces of the sacred suite clearly reflect the progressive weakening of the authority of the Church until it is finally taken over by the King. The "Miserere", "Te per Orbem Terrarum", "Eterne Rex Altissime", "Eterne Rex Alias", and "Eterne Rerum Conditor" are all built on plainchant cantus firmi which represent the authority of the Church, but in each successive movement of the sacred suite the plainchant on which the piece is based becomes less important and noticeable as more elaborate voices are built around the cantus firmus. The last piece of the sacred suite is a Toccata in which the cantus firmus (and thus the sacred authority on which the piece is based) is dropped altogether and the piece is entirely newly-composed. Thus, the demise of the emphasis on a sacred authority in the music reflects the take-over of sacred power by a secular leader that takes place in the dramatic action.

The second way in which Davies' use of pre-Baroque forms is meaningful is through his parody of musical styles and forms that were in use during a particular period of musical history and which are thus used to allude to certain dates or times. An obvious example of this is Davies' use of a pavan-galliard pair in Act I, scene iii and of a suite, the forms of which date from a later period, in Act II, scene ii in order to represent musically the time that has passed between the two scenes. The grouping of dances in twos and threes was common in the mid-sixteenth century and was replaced by larger groupings in the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup>

Although Davies employs forms from the general period of music history in which Taverner is included, he does not aim to pinpoint the dates of the historical setting of the opera accurately through the music. For instance, both Act I, scene iii and Act II, scene ii exhibit a slightly anachronistic disparity between the actual historical date of the setting and the dates alluded to by the forms which Davies parodies. The historical date of Act I, scene iii is c.1526-28, because, although there is talk of religious reform, the reformation (which began with the indictment of Wolsey in 1529) is not yet under way. The time suggested by the instruments and forms employed in Act I, scene iii is slightly later than this, since dance styles such as the pavan and galliard only made an appearance in England c.1540, and there is no evidence to suggest that consorts of viols were popular before this date.<sup>4</sup>

The musical instruments and forms used in Act II, scene ii allude to a far wider range in time than those in Act I, scene iii. All of the period instruments used in Act II, scene ii were in common usage in the sixteenth century. The pavan and galliard which originated in Italy were popular on the Continent in the sixteenth century and given a new lease of life by English composers from about 1590 to 1625. Courantes were composed from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries and exhibited French and Italian influences. The very free improvisatory style of the Preambulum which introduces the sacred suite of Act II, scene ii alludes to



the fourteenth century, while the toccata which ends the sacred suite was only really fully developed and became popular at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The form of the entire scene - the grouping together of several short pieces referred to as a suite or 'sett' - was only common by the mid-seventeenth century. The fact that the forms used by Davies in Act II, scene ii cover a relatively wide time-span results in an anachronistic disparity between the historical setting and the time suggested by the music, even greater than that in Act I, scene iii.

The fact that Davies makes no attempt to parody styles and forms that were common during the reign of Henry VIII musically complements his desire to de-emphasize the importance of the historical reality on which the opera is based. In an article that Davies wrote on *Taverner* he states that neither time nor location should be treated realistically, that "place is as particular or as general as the text demands, and needs no definition by conventional 'scenery'" because "the 'action' is within Taverner's mind."<sup>5</sup> While it is easy to see how some of the scenes in *Taverner* could be dramatic representations of what is going on in Taverner's mind (for example, Act I, scene iv and Act II, scene i), it is difficult to understand how the scenes involving the King and the Cardinal can be seen from this perspective since Taverner does not feature in either of these scenes. Gabriel Josipovici voices similar doubts about the possibility of Act I, scene iii and Act II, scene ii

being dramatic manifestations of Taverner's imagination. He states:

[T]here is pressure from within the work for the entire action to take place inside Taverner's mind. (The stage directions at II.i. suggest that what we are seeing on stage is Taverner's nightmare.) On the other hand the presence of the King and Cardinal, and the fact that Taverner himself really did exist in history make it impossible for this to happen.<sup>6</sup>

The explanation that Davies does not use the parody of forms in a historically accurate manner or treat time and place realistically in order to create the impression that the action is taking place in Taverner's mind is therefore insufficient. The use of slightly anachronistic music and the desire not to treat location and time realistically can perhaps be better accounted for by Davies' wish to treat Taverner's personal crisis symbolically and hence to reveal that the essence of the opera is relevant in all places and in all times, not in Tudor England alone. Davies states that he regards the story of *Taverner* as being

the situation not only of the creative artist, but of anybody who believed in anything, and could have this belief corrupted so that it started to eat into him and destroy him. The historical Taverner was just a peg to hang the whole thing on . . . . I think we see parallels with Taverner all the time, with people who become party-liners and their humanity as such disappears. It doesn't matter whether they're political or religious figures: the two are very much the same in that they can become equally fanatical, equally inhuman.<sup>7</sup>

It can perhaps be argued, then, that the fact that Davies does not treat historical location, time or music realistically is one of the composer's means of revealing the relevance of the opera to its twentieth-century audience.

That Davies uses musical forms of one period and treats them in the musical idiom of another, or has twentieth-century music presented by period instruments of the Renaissance (which are visible to the audience) are conceivably other such devices.

This argument is strongly supported by the fact that Davies uses forms from the past for similar reasons in the dramatic works that followed *Taverner*. In *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, for example, Davies parodies forms and styles from a number of musical periods. Davies' states that he quotes musical material and styles "from Handel to Birtwistle" and "regard[s] the work as a collection of musical objects borrowed from many sources."<sup>8</sup> Davies' overt references to the music characteristic of a number of different musical periods can also be regarded as a means by which Davies attempts to communicate to his audience the relevance of the subject matter.

Davies reveals the relevance of the twelfth-century legend of St Magnus to the twentieth century very explicitly in his chamber opera *The Martyrdom of St Magnus*. In the seventh scene of the opera the action is gradually brought forward from the twelfth to the twentieth century: dramatically by a series of news flashes which report the twelfth-century events in the language of twentieth-century political journalists, and musically by a montage of musical styles which provide a "journey" through the history of music. (See

Example 1.)

Example 1 : Extracts from scene 7 of *The Martyrdom of St Magnus*

Bars 7 to 12

Vla. 

Vc. 

Bars 54 to 57

Fl. 

Cl. 

Hpsd. 

Bars 84 - 86

*andante moderato*  $\text{♩} = c. 80$

Vla. 

Vc. 

Bars 126 to 128

*Tempo di Valse*  $\text{♩} = c. 66$

Piano 

Bars 151 to 153

151 

A. Fl. 

Cl. 

Hn. 

Tr. 1 & 2 

Pno. 

The eighth scene of *The Martyrdom of St Magnus* (which is the scene in which Magnus is executed for his beliefs) takes place in the twentieth century. The setting is not specified, but Magnus is the political prisoner of an unidentified, modern political regime. Davies states that this is done in "an attempt to make audiences aware of the possibilities with us [sic] for such a murder of a political or religious figure, whatever his convictions."<sup>9</sup> In this chamber opera parodied forms and styles are clearly meant to show the audience that the subject matter is meaningful throughout history and not least of all in the twentieth century.

Referring to *Taverner* Martin Cooper states that "the use of Renaissance dance-forms and instruments proves a desperate, and in the event double-edged attempt to provide variety and obtain authenticity."<sup>10</sup> The above discussion of Davies' parody of pre-Baroque forms and styles has, however, revealed that this is not so. The use of styles and forms functions to provide a degree of order for the musical material of the scenes in which they are used, as well as reflecting and commenting on the dramatic action.

Davies has made use of several compositional techniques or devices that were in use in the pre-Baroque, as well as parodying forms and styles from the Mediaeval and Renaissance periods. The most obvious example of a Renaissance compositional procedure which Davies uses extensively in the

In Nomine group of compositions is sixteenth-century parody itself. Other examples of compositional techniques which Davies parodies from early music are the practice of building a piece on a cantus firmus and canonic devices.

According to The Harvard Dictionary of Music a cantus firmus is an "existing melody that becomes the basis of a polyphonic composition through the addition of contrapuntal voices."<sup>11</sup> Davies' canti firmi appear in a number of different guises. In its most obvious form the cantus firmus is presented in sustained notes of equal value, but often the note values are variable and the line is only recognisable because the majority of its notes are longer than those in other parts. Davies frequently uses the opening phrase of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant or the beginning of the 'In nomine' treble line as a cantus firmus, but newly-composed melodies are also occasionally used as the basis of a polyphonic section. Davies sometimes parodies the migrant cantus firmus - a fifteenth-century English practice which involved distributing the cantus firmus between various instrumental or vocal parts. The use of this type of cantus firmus is very difficult to recognise since it blends particularly well with Davies' compositional style, with its fragmented melodies which are often split up amongst various parts. Davies states that the advantage of using a migrant cantus firmus is that "the tenor can wander through the texture, from voice to voice, instrument to instrument, not fixed to a bass or anywhere else. One can create inside the texture

very interesting perspectives of sound because the centre of gravity is mobile."<sup>12</sup>

Although Davies' use of canti firmi differs from that of fifteenth-century composers in that he only uses canti firmi to support small sections of a composition rather than an entire work, his canti firmi function in much the same way as they would have done in the pre-Baroque. Canti firmi in the pre-Baroque provided a foundation around which newly-composed material could be built and structured. As Lewis Lockwood states, composers in the fifteenth century were "laying special emphasis on florid, elaborated melodic lines of unprecedented sweep and flow."<sup>13</sup> This resulted in a style "in which a strongly linear orientation governed polyphonic writing." Canti firmi provided an "element of integration."<sup>14</sup> The overthrow of tonality in the twentieth century has resulted in a similar emphasis on polyphonic writing where the primary concern is with melody rather than with harmony. Davies' melodic lines frequently present rapidly transforming material and in such instances a cantus firmus has an integrative function, as it forms a link between the various contrapuntal voices and provides the listener with a line that can be more easily followed than any of the surrounding melodic material.

Canonic devices, like canti firmi, are a means of organizing and unifying musical works which are melodically rather than harmonically constructed. The twentieth century has

witnessed a revival of the use of canonic techniques as composers have abandoned tonality and begun to write in polyphonic rather than harmonically-determined styles. Canonic devices are an integral part of serial technique, allowing for variation of the original pitch row while leaving the essential identity of the row unaltered because the sequence of intervals presented by the row is maintained.

Davies' use of canonic techniques therefore highlights a parallel between, and reveals the influence of, both early music and twentieth-century music. Davies uses canonic techniques in a serial manner to vary and transform thematic material. Canonic techniques are also used in a manner that reveals the influence of the pre-Baroque, resulting in passages or compositions which are identifiable as canons.

Davies' canons are usually far more complex than those of the pre-Baroque or Baroque in that they generally make use of all the available canonic variants: inversion, retrograde, diminution, augmentation, and various combinations thereof. In addition, Davies does not keep successive canonic entries at a consistent intervallic or durational distance as was usually the case in pre-Baroque and Baroque canons. Davies often begins two separate canonic entries simultaneously. This tendency largely accounts for Davies' exploitation of so many different canonic techniques, since canonic entries which begin without an intervening time-lapse need to be differentiated by the use of contrasted canonic devices. The



influence of the pre-Baroque is evident in the fact that Davies' canonic themes very often maintain their melodic contour, thus making it possible to aurally identify sections or whole works as canons.

Davies' use of canonic devices, like that of *canti firmi*, has a compositional function. The canonic devices provide the composer with a means of unifying the various voices that make up the polyphonic texture; of varying thematic material when modulation no longer affords a means of variation; and of generating fairly substantial works or passages from a minimum of thematic material.

#### Notes

1. Reese, p. 539.
2. Davies, "*Taverner: Synopsis and Documentation*", p. 5.
3. Davies' use of a motet in Act I, scene ii and of a parody mass in the corresponding scene - Act II, scene iii - can similarly be regarded as a musical representation of the passing of time since the motet was developed and in common use before the parody mass came into being.
4. Anthony Lewis, ed., Musica Britannica, (London: Stainer and Bell, 1954-), Vol. 18: Music at the Court of Henry VIII, edited by John Stevens, (1962), p. xix.
5. Davies, "*Taverner: Synopsis and Documentation*", p. 5.
6. Gabriel Josipovici, "*Taverner: Thoughts on the Libretto*", Tempo 101 (1972), p. 18.
7. Griffiths, Davies, p. 106.
8. Davies, "*Eight Songs for a Mad King*", in Griffiths, Davies, p. 148.
9. Davies, "*The Martyrdom of St. Magnus*", in Griffiths, Davies, p. 168.

10. Martin Cooper, "Leaving Too Much to the Words", Opera 23 (September 1972), p. 798.
11. The Harvard Dictionary, s.v., "Cantus firmus", p. 130.
12. Unattributed interview with Davies, "Ancient and Modern - 3", Early Music Gazette (April 1980), p. 5.
13. The New Grove, s.v. "Cantus firmus" by Lewis Lockwood, vol. 3, p. 739.
14. Ibid.

#### 4.2.3 Possible reasons for Davies' use of material from the Middle Ages and Renaissance in particular.<sup>1</sup>

Davies' consistent use of musical materials and procedures from the pre-Baroque in particular, not only in the In Nomine group of compositions, but in his output as a whole, raises the question: why should Davies have decided to borrow musical material and procedures from the pre-Baroque in particular?

Davies is not the only composer to have made use of material from the past. In their search for new methods of composition after the exhaustion of tonality at the beginning of the twentieth century, many composers have looked to the music of the past for ways of composing that would avoid any suggestion of tonality and the excess of tension that characterises the music of the late nineteenth century. In the early twentieth century Debussy attempted to return to writing music with the relatively tension-free melodic and harmonic movement typical of pre-tonal music by making use of Mediaeval modes and features such as parallel fifths and octaves which characterised Mediaeval organum. Messiaen, too, used non-functional harmonies which do not create any feeling of tension or progression. Messiaen also made a more direct reference to the music of the Middle Ages by sometimes incorporating quotations from plainchant in his compositions. Unlike Davies, Messiaen generally uses the plainchant in an unaltered form, changing its original sound only minimally by the manner in which he orchestrates and harmonizes it. His

work *Couleurs de la cité céleste* (1963) is an example of a work that includes a plainchant melody.<sup>2</sup> Although Stravinsky drew largely on the music of the late Baroque during his so-called neo-classical period of composition, his works *Mass* and *Cantata* (from the late forties and early fifties) include the use of chant-like melodies and fauxbourdon.

The use of musical material from the past has been a trend particularly popular with English composers. Anthony Milner, an English composer who has made use of procedures from early music, agrees that the use of musical material and techniques from the pre-Baroque by English composers is common, and is of the opinion that they have "been drawn to their past because of the peculiar situation that existed here at the turn of the nineteenth century: we had lost all touch with our traditions."<sup>3</sup> Milner thus suggests that the tendency for English composers to look to the music of the past is an attempt to retrace the roots of English music. Reginald Smith Brindle also notes that while the emphasis of the European avant-garde has been on looking forward, and of creating an entirely new musical language with no ties to the past, in England (which Brindle refers to as "a more retrogressive musical nation") "there is a great reverence for early music" and many composers have revealed a concern for melding old and new elements.<sup>4</sup>

Two examples of English composers who have made use of material from the past are Harrison Birtwistle and Roger

Smalley, contemporaries of Davies. Birtwistle's *Monody for Corpus Christi* (1959), for example, uses a Mediaeval text as well as compositional techniques and procedures from the period. Smalley wrote a series of compositions derived from a set of pieces by Blitheman which are all based on the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant. *Missa Parodia I* and *II* (1967) are two of the pieces in Smalley's series of compositions and are based on the principle of the Renaissance parody mass.<sup>5</sup> Both Birtwistle and Smalley abandoned this style of composition during the sixties. Of all the twentieth-century composers who have made use of materials from early music, it would appear that Davies' involvement with the music and thought of the Middle Ages and Renaissance has been the most enduring and consistent. As John Rockwell states, "Davies' single-minded concentration on the pre-Baroque puts him at a considerable distance from those composers who skip blithely through the past, quoting eclectically and shifting styles from piece to piece."<sup>6</sup> Despite the fact that Davies would appear to fit into a largely British trend, and that the works of English composers and English subject matter frequently provide material for his compositions, Davies would deny that he is attempting to be nationalist, as he states that there "is no longer any place for nationalism in music: our problems are fundamental, general, international."<sup>7</sup>

Leonard Meyer's views on the subject of the use of materials of the past by twentieth-century composers are particularly

useful in accounting for the phenomenon. Meyer proposes that such "borrowing" was discredited in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries because of the prevailing ideology of individualism which emphasised that to "create was to embody ... unique and personal affects in tones" and that "one of the chief aims of an artist was to express his innermost thoughts, feelings and emotions."<sup>9</sup> The beliefs of the time therefore precluded the use of features characteristic of an earlier period as this would have been considered a show of conservatism, and the quotation of musical material from a pre-existing composition would have been considered as plagiarism. Meyer is of the opinion that new ideologies have replaced those of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the twentieth century. Meyer states that in the twentieth century "[o]riginality is no longer tied to the discovery of means expressive of the artist's inner experience, but to the ordering of materials; and creativity is seen as a species of problem-solving."<sup>9</sup> He concludes that "since any style can constitute a basis for objective construction and for the presentation of principles of order, such views are not incompatible with the use of past art works as sources for materials, relational patterns, and the syntactical procedures and norms."<sup>10</sup>

Despite the fact that Meyer claims that the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ideologies of creativity and individualism have been superseded in the twentieth century, it would appear that their influence is still felt to some extent.

John Rockwell points out that Davies' consistent use of musical material and procedures from the pre-Baroque "leaves him open to the charge leveled originally against the neo-classicists - that he is historically ultimately little more than a recycler of music dead and gone."<sup>11</sup> Contemporary music critics still tend to view the integrity and value of compositions which use material from other composers or styles with some suspicion.

Several features in Davies' music suggest that he is aware of this prejudice and has done his best to avoid being criticized for being so concerned with materials from the past. Davies distorts the material that he borrows in order to ensure that "a conflict to the total synthesis that was the aim of sixteenth-century parody" does not occur, and this means that differentiation between old and new material is frequently impossible.<sup>12</sup> Davies only begins to use quotations in his works for adults in a more literal, easily recognisable form where they can be justified by dramatic considerations. For example, the large quotation from the 'In nomine' which appears in Act II, scene iii is excused, as it were, because the musical quotation is used in a dramatic context which recreates the situation in which Taverner's 'In nomine' would originally have been used. Similarly, in *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, Davies' parody of the musical material and styles of a number of composers and periods of music history is justified by the fact that the music thus reflects the sharp mood-changes of the King and the fact that he has a

schizophrenic personality. Where Davies parodies music from the past in an obvious manner, he never allows the quotation to stand by itself, but always adds musical material of his own, as if to emphasize that he is not reliant on the work of another composer. For example, the large quotation from the 'In nomine' that appears in Act II, scene iii is "accompanied" by string glissandi, and that at the end of Act II, scene iv is supported by an augmented-fourth pedal in the cello.

Another reason that can be put forward for the trend of using materials and techniques from early music in the twentieth century is that there has been a general revival of interest in the music of the pre-Baroque during this century. Scholars have conducted concentrated and rigorous research in the area of early music for the first time and their findings have been published. The results of such research has made the transcription of extant scores possible and scholarly editions have been made readily available. There has also been a revived interest in the problems of performance practice which has resulted in the formation of early music consorts and, in turn, facilitated the recording of early music. With both visual and aural examples of the music of the pre-Baroque being made available to the public, composers of the twentieth century have a far greater knowledge and awareness of early music than composers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had. Although examples of the Middle Ages and Renaissance are available to those who are



interested, the music of these periods is not performed to nearly the same extent as that of the Baroque and the common-practice period. It is for this reason, and because the music of the Middle Ages and Renaissance was not governed by tonality, that "the more distant musical past offers less problematic territory [than that of the tonal period], partly because the music of the medieval and Renaissance periods is sufficiently separate from the present to be no danger to the composer for whom compromise would be obnoxious."<sup>13</sup>

The use of Mediaeval and Renaissance material and procedures can also be considered appropriate for use in the twentieth century because of the number of similarities which exist between the styles of the two periods. Davies has stated that he considers Schoenberg and plainsong to be part of his heritage. He says: "I was already very interested in Schönberg at 14 or 15; the older music came later, at 17 or 18. I suppose that I have spent the rest of my life trying to forge a link between the experience of these different styles."<sup>14</sup>

The majority of music written in the Middle Ages and the first half of the Renaissance pre-dates the advent of tonality and therefore uses harmony in a non-functional manner. Similarly, much of the music of the twentieth century has been written with the aim of avoiding the influence of tonality. The music of the serial and post-serial composers (among whom Davies can be included) in

particular is largely concerned with avoiding the influence of tonality and thus the harmonies of serial compositions do not usually contribute to a feeling of progression and movement. Mediaeval and much Renaissance music as well as that of the serialists and the post-serialists tends to emphasise polyphonic textures and melodic writing. Thus, canonic techniques which provide a means of integrating music which concentrates on melodic continuity are used in both the pre-Baroque and the twentieth century.

The technique of hocket was popular in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and was a "peculiar device consisting of the rapid alteration of two (rarely three) voices with single notes or short groups of notes, one part having a rest while the other sounds."<sup>15</sup> The use of hocket thus resulted in an interruption and fragmentation of the melodic lines not unlike that typical of serial writing which will frequently fragment a "melodic" idea by the insertion of rests and distribute the melody among various voices. The use of "mechanical" devices which partially pre-determine the manner in which a composition will develop can also be found in both the pre-Baroque and the twentieth century. The use of the principle of isorhythm (predominant in the fourteenth century) is similar to the use of pitch and rhythmic sequences by serial and post-serial composers, and pre-Baroque mensural techniques are similar to the complex mathematical procedures used by formalist composers of the twentieth century. The migrant cantus firmus developed and

used by English composers in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries parallels the concept of "Klangfarbenmelodie" in the twentieth century where composers will often distribute a single melodic idea among several parts.

The fact that so many features of Davies' music which can be explained as influences from early music can also be accounted for by reference to twentieth-century practices is evidence of the success of Davies' fusion of the music of the two periods.

#### Notes

1. Some passages in this section are taken from the concluding chapter of the author's fourth-year long essay entitled "The extent of the influence of Renaissance and Mediaeval compositional practices on the religious choral music of Peter Maxwell Davies composed between 1959 and 1963".
2. Paul Griffiths, Modern Music: The Avant Garde since 1945 (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1981), p. 191.
3. Unattributed interview with Anthony Milne, "Ancient and Modern", Early Music Gazette (April 1980) p. 3.
4. Reginald Smith Brindle, The New Music: The Avant Garde since 1945 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) p. 140.
5. It is possible that Smalley's brief interest in early music and his use of the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* plainchant in particular was influenced by Peter Maxwell Davies, as Smalley studied under Goehr in 1962, who frequently used intensive analyses of works by Davies to illustrate his lessons.
6. John Rockwell, "An English Composer Matures", The New York Times, 1 March 1981.
7. Peter Maxwell Davies, "Problems of a British Composer Today", The Listener (October 1959), p. 564.

8. Leonard Meyer, Music, the Arts and Ideas (London: University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 187-88.
9. Ibid., p. 198.
10. Ibid.
11. Rockwell, see note 6.
12. The New Grove, s.v. "Parody", vol. 14, p. 239.
13. Griffiths, Modern Music, p. 189.
14. "Ancient and Modern - 3", p. 5.
15. The Harvard Dictionary, s.v. "Hocket", p. 398.

#### 4.3 Parody with a satirical intent

Parody in its modern sense refers to the process of imitating features characteristic of a particular composer, work or style in an exaggerated manner in order to make the object that is being parodied appear ridiculous. Thus, unlike the categories of parody which have a serious intent, satirical parody requires a subject that is recognisable in order for it to be successful. Michael Tilmouth points out that opera, "as the most extravagant musical entertainment", has made use of parody in its modern sense "throughout its history" and it is significant that it is in Davies' first dramatic work, the opera *Taverner*, that the composer first used borrowed material in an exaggerated fashion.<sup>1</sup> Although parody in its modern sense is usually used to derogate the work of another composer, Davies employs it rather as a dramatic device which involves a close collaboration between the music, the drama and the text.

The most extensive and successful use of satirical parody in *Taverner* occurs in Act II, scene i. The effectiveness of this example of parody can be attributed to the fact that text, drama and music can each be regarded as examples of satirical parody in their own right.

The music of Act II, scene i presents an exaggerated imitation of the music of Act I, scene i, and, even though listeners might not be able to recognise every melodic

fragment from Act I, scene i that recurs in an overstated form in Act II, scene i, the music of the latter scene is clearly audible as a caricature of that of the former scene. Davies exaggerates all of the musical parameters in order to achieve the grotesque imitation of Act I, scene i in Act II, scene i. Tempi are speeded up so that the music sounds rushed; dynamics are consistently loud; dense, complex textures predominate in which parts appear to behave independently; improvisatory sections add to the chaotic effect that often characterises satirical parody; shrill-timbred, high-pitched instrumentation is emphasised; and there is a continual cacophony of sound from the unpitched percussion instruments. The function of satirical parody in the music of Act II, scene i is to complement and aurally enhance the sardonic parody that occurs in the text and drama of the scene.

The drama and text of Act II, scene i parody Act I, scene i in an even more obvious manner than the music. Act II, scene i presents the same setting, characters and events as Act I, scene i, but inverts the sense of the corresponding scene in a mood of burlesque. In Act II, scene i the roles of the White Abbot and Taverner are interchanged, the views of the church council are contrary to those expressed in Act I, scene i, the evidence is given in a truncated, perfunctory form so that the whole trial is given a farcical character, and the stage directions indicate that the movements of the actors should be "somnambulistic" and "jerky".

The satirical parody of the text and drama are more easily recognisable than that of the music, since the visual and textual references to the corresponding scene tend to be more direct and therefore more easily perceptible than the musical references, especially since many of the themes from Act I, scene i that are exaggerated in Act II, scene i are not of a particularly memorable quality. Nevertheless, the musical parody does effectively enhance and complement the parody in the text and dramatic action.

Satirical parody is also used fairly extensively and effectively in Act I, scene iv where a mock passion play is presented. The passion play is clearly an example of dramatic parody since the text inverts the sense of a normal passion play, replacing the suffering Christ with a Joking Jesus who occasionally forgets that he is supposed to be "acting a role",<sup>2</sup> sniggers from the cross and is pinned to the cross with out-size joke nails. Although Davies frequently uses musical features such as those employed in Act II, scene i in order to present the music of Act I, scene i in an exaggerated form,<sup>3</sup> the music does not constitute an example of satirical parody in the same way as the music of Act II, scene i as it does not imitate music from another source. The exaggerated musical features, however, can perhaps be considered as parodies of musical conventions. For example, the highly exaggerated vibrato statement of 'In nomine' material distorts the melody, making it grotesque, and is thus a parody of normal vibrato practices which are

intended to make the sound produced by an instrument more beautiful. The fact that the part of God the Father is sung falsetto by a tenor is another instance in which Davies has applied satirical parody to a convention rather than pre-existing musical material, as this is a deliberate floutation of the convention established in operas and oratorios in which the role of God is usually sung by a bass voice. The exaggerated musical features tend to attract the listener's attention and therefore serve to highlight the parody inherent in drama and text.

There are two small examples within the *In Nomine* works where Davies states melodic material from Taverner's 'In nomine' in an exaggerated manner that suggests parody in its modern sense. In Act I, scene iv of *Taverner* and in the Scherzo of the *Second Fantasia* the 'In nomine' treble fragment is presented by solo violin "[s]tarting each note senza vibrato but with crescendo, increasing vibrato on each note through its duration, a maximum of nauseatingly , sentimental vibrato being reached just before the change to another note."<sup>4</sup> Despite the fact that these statements of material from the 'In nomine' are examples of parody in its modern sense in that they imitate a previously stated version of the 'In nomine' fragment at the same pitch, distorting it through the use of an exaggerated vibrato, there are two reasons which indicate that their function is not to burlesque Taverner's 'In nomine'.

Firstly, the satirical parody of another work is only



meaningful if it is possible to recognise the source that is being imitated. In neither of the instances in which the 'In nomine' fragment is presented with an extravagant use of vibrato is it possible to aurally recognise the fragment as being derived from the 'In nomine', since it has been subject to octave displacement. Thus, although the fragment is stated in a manner which uses a device of satirical parody and attracts the listener's attention because of its unusual nature, this cannot be considered as an example of satirical parody with the purpose of derogating the work of another composer, because the fragment is not immediately recognisable as being a melody from the 'In nomine'. Secondly, there are only two small examples in which 'In nomine' material is stated in a highly exaggerated manner and it is hardly likely that Davies would base a whole series of compositions on the work of a composer whose work he did not respect. Hugh Benham points out that by parodying a work in the sixteenth century "a composer was paying tribute to a fellow craftsman" and it is reasonable to assume that parody in its sixteenth-century sense, used so extensively in the In Nomine works, should mean the same for Davies.<sup>5</sup>

Although the two exaggerated vibrato statements of the 'In nomine' treble line are not meant to satirize Taverner's work, they are nevertheless examples of parody in its modern sense, as they clearly exaggerate a previous statement of the same melodic fragment. (See Example 1.)

Example 1 : I/iv - violin bars 663 to 670

VI. Solo

660 *Lentissimo* *lunga* *Lento molto*  $\text{♩} = 80$  *con sord.* *pp senza espr. senza vibr.*

VI. Solo

670 *pp sim.*

I/iv - violin bars 704 to 712

VI. Solo

(con sord.) *Allegro moderato*  $\text{♩} = 100$  *fpp* *f* *fpp*

VI. Solo

710 *sempre allegro moderato*  $\text{♩} = 100$  *fpp* *molto f* *fpp* *molto f* *fpp* *ord.* *fpp*

The extravagant presentation of the 'In nomine' line in Act I, scene iv occurs at the point where Taverner confirms his conversion, accepting what Death has revealed to him as an authentic vision. The use of satirical parody serves to highlight the false nature of the conversion and the fact that Taverner, rather than "look[ing] ... out [meaning] afresh, ... by scorching reason",<sup>8</sup> has been brainwashed. The idea of using the exaggerated vibrato statement of 'In nomine' material in the *Second Fantasia* had its origin in *Taverner*, the first act of which Davies had completed before he started work on the instrumental composition. Although the precise meaning of this example of satirical parody in the *Second Fantasia* is difficult to ascertain, since there is no text or drama to provide sound reasons for its use as is the case in *Taverner*, the highly communicative nature of satirical parody nevertheless means that listeners are

provided with a musical feature that is accessible.

Davies also makes extensive use of parody in its modern sense in the works that followed this opera. Nearly the whole of *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, for example, is comprised of a montage of styles and musical material from a number of different periods of musical history. The fifth song clearly emulates the piano style characteristic of composers such as Mozart; the third song contains obvious references to the pre-Baroque piece "Mis Musgrave's Fancy"; in the sixth song there is a quotation from Handel's *Messiah* which is ridiculed by a series of disrespectful sounds in the percussion; and in the eighth piece the "Scotch Bonnet" is presented as a cabaret-type number. In all of these instances the source of the parody is easily traceable.

It would seem, thus, that Davies' use of satirical parody (and the exaggerated musical features which are associated with it) aims at making the parodied object grotesque in order to enhance parodistic elements in the text and drama, rather than as a means of derogating the object that is being parodied. Michael Chanan states that Davies uses satirical parody as a means of disrupting the complacency of his audiences,<sup>7</sup> and the composer himself claims:

My references and jokes ... explore regions which I think people find difficult. ... they are brought into awareness of regions of themselves which perhaps they don't know.<sup>8</sup>

Notes

1. The New Grove, s.v. "Parody (ii)" by Michael Tilmouth, vol. 14, p. 239.
2. Davies, Taverner, p. 192.
3. For example, the vocal line of Joking Jesus is accompanied by instruments with a relatively high pitch - piccolo, flute and a tabor which beats rhythmically throughout. The mock passion play is preceded and followed by sections sung by treble-voiced demons. Their parts are accompanied colla voce by soprano shawms which have a shrill, harsh timbre and are directed to play with an "extremely harsh and reedy" tone in the introductory section and "snarling[ly]" in the concluding section.
4. Davies, Taverner, p. 207.
5. Benham, p. 55.
6. Davies, Taverner, p. 75.
7. Michael Chanan, "Latent Bombast", The Listener (August 1969), p. 288.
8. Sutcliffe, p. 27.

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION

The major "region" which Davies explores in *Taverner* is the meaning of betrayal. The composer has stated:

My opera *Taverner* projects onto the life and mind of the sixteenth-century English composer John Taverner certain perennial occupations of my own: notably with the nature of betrayal at the deepest levels.<sup>1</sup>

Davies' choice of an artist who is required to re-evaluate his place and function in society provides *Taverner* with a subject similar to that of Pfitzner's *Palestrina* (1917) and Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* (1934). All three operas address the questions of an artist's social responsibility and of artistic veracity in the face of political, social or religious opposition.

Pfitzner's opera *Palestrina* portrays the composer against the background of the reforms that were being made by the Council of Trent. Palestrina finds himself no longer able to compose, but in response to his cry for help, a host of angels descends from heaven and provides Palestrina with the inspiration to write his *Missa Papae Marcelli*. With this work, Palestrina is able to persuade the Council of Trent not to ban polyphonic music.

The central character of Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* is based on the sixteenth-century painter Matthias Grünewald. In the opera Mathis gives up painting so that he can lead a peasant revolt against the authority of the Church. Mathis

later returns to painting when he realises that his active political involvement was futile and that he can better serve his fellow man through his art.

*Taverner* is similarly concerned with an artist's reaction to the social and political confusion in which he finds himself, in this case the English Reformation. Unlike both Palestrina and Mathis, however, Taverner never returns to his art, but betrays it by rejecting it along with all of his former beliefs. The tragedy of the opera, and the act of betrayal itself, lies in the fact that Taverner does not give up composition for something that is more valuable or worthwhile: he exchanges his music, his beliefs and his humanity for the role of persecutor of Roman Catholics. Instead of using his personal and artistic crisis to benefit his art and to discover a new, more meaningful manner of composition, Taverner "brainwashes himself into giving up the thing which he really believes in, and which makes his life worthwhile, and assumes the cloak of the worst possible Protestant conformist."<sup>2</sup>

It has already been noted that Davies considers the opera as depicting the situation "of anybody who believed in anything, and who could have this belief corrupted so that it started to eat into him and destroy him."<sup>3</sup> It is, however, also possible to regard *Taverner* as Davies' personal working out of the role that his music should have in society; in the same way, Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* is considered by many

writers to be a manifestation of the composer's personal dilemma of how to "justify continuing to create art that is not politically engaged in a time of dangerous political uncertainty."<sup>4</sup> Stephen Pruslin suggests that the "act of writing was clearly a ritual one for Davies, a way of reaffirming that Taverner's betrayal would never be his own."<sup>5</sup>

The In Nomine compositions clearly show Davies' transition from works that were more cerebral, complex and inaccessible to works in which parody is used in aurally appreciable ways as a means of communication and of making his compositions more approachable. In *Taverner*, the last of the In Nomine compositions, communication becomes a primary objective of the composer, and Davies first begins to exploit the communicative potential inherent in parody. Davies himself has said that he was concerned with developing a sound compositional style in all the works up to *Taverner*:

[A]ll those early works up to about 1964, I think of as apprentice pieces. ... I was building up a solid foundation of compositional technique, and the last two things I did like that were *Taverner* and the *Second Fantasia*.<sup>6</sup>

The second act of *Taverner* was composed after Davies' return to England from Princeton in 1964, and all the fundamental musical features which provide Davies with a unique means of musical expression and communication in his mature compositional style can be seen in the second act of the opera.

The transition from Davies' use of borrowed material in an abstract, usually imperceptible manner in the works up to 1964, to his later use of materials from other periods of music in a more obvious fashion can be clearly observed in *Taverner*. In the first three scenes of the opera, parody with a serious purpose predominates, and the musical material derived from Taverner's 'In nomine' is usually altered beyond recognition. Act I, scene iv and Act II, scene i are the first instances in Davies' output where satirical parody is employed extensively. Besides the presence of satirical parody (from Act I, scene iv onwards) which has inherently a very communicative quality, Davies also begins to make direct references to the composition that he is parodying. The third and fourth scenes of Act II both contain substantial portions of Taverner's 'In nomine' in which Davies is not overtly concerned with disguising the source material. The last scene of Act I and the second act of *Taverner*, with their mixture of parody in both recognisable and unrecognisable forms, and of parody with a serious intent and that which has a satirical purpose, are appreciably more communicative and comprehensible than the first three scenes of the opera in which imperceptible parody in its Renaissance sense predominates.

It has been shown that it is through the use of parody that Davies has been able to develop a musical style that is able to alleviate the problems of inaccessibility and of communication. The use of various types of parody is the



means by which Davies is able to fulfil what he considers to be the ultimate function of art, "not so much to comfort people, but to make them aware."<sup>7</sup>

#### Notes

1. Davies, "*Taverner: Synopsis and Documentation*", p. 4.
2. Sutcliffe, p. 28.
3. Griffiths, Davies, p. 106.
4. David Neumeyer, The Music of Paul Hindemith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 100.
5. Stephen Pruslin, "An Anatomy of Betrayal", Music and Musicians 20 (July 1972), p. 29.
6. Griffiths, Davies, p. 109.
7. Sutcliffe, p. 27.

## APPENDIX

One of the most constant features of Peter Maxwell Davies' compositional style is his use of various materials from the Middle Ages and Renaissance. The following list, although by no means complete, is representative of some of the many ways in which the composer has incorporated materials from the pre-Baroque in his works.

The musical material of many of Davies' compositions is derived from fragments of plainsong or compositions written by pre-Baroque composers. The *St Michael Sonata* (1957) uses plainsong melodies from the Requiem Mass, and *Te Lucis ante Terminum* (1961) is similarly based on the plainchant of that name. *Alma Redemptoris Mater* (1957) is derived from a Dunstable motet of the same name; the source of *Ricercar and Doubles* (1959) is the Mediaeval carol "To many a well"; and *Missa Super L'Homme Armé* (1968) takes an incomplete mass by an anonymous Renaissance composer as its starting point. Three works, the *Leopardi Fragments* (1961), *String Quartet* (1961), and *Sinfonia* (1962) are all based on Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610. The musical material of *Antechrist* (1967) is based on that of the thirteenth-century motet "Deo Confitemini, Domino", but also incorporates plainchant fragments. *Worldes Blis* (1966-69) is an orchestral "motet" which uses musical material from a thirteenth-century English monody. *St Thomas Wake* (1969) is based on a Pavan by John

Bull. The twelfth-century hymn "Noblis Humilis" which is famous for its use of organum in thirds instead of in fourths and fifths provides the basis of much of the musical material of the *Hymn to St Magnus* (1972).

*Five Motets* (1959) *O Magnum Mysterium* (1960), the *Four Carols* (1961-62), and *Ave Maria: Hail Blessed Flower* (1961) all have texts which originated in the Middle Ages.

Several of Davies' compositions are based on forms or styles from the pre-Baroque. *Shakespeare Music* (1964), and *Eight Songs for a Mad King* (1969) both parody dance forms and styles from the Renaissance. *O Magnum Mysterium*, the *Four Carols*, *Ave Maria: Hail Blessed Flower* and *Five Motets* are based on the Mediaeval carol and motet forms respectively.

Besides writing original works in which he absorbs musical material from the pre-Baroque into his own compositions, Davies has also made several innovative realisations of compositions from the Middle Ages and Renaissance. For example, the *Fantasia on a Ground and Two Pavans* (1968) are arrangements of Purcell pieces orchestrated for flute, clarinet, keyboards, percussion (which includes marimba, a whistle and a rattle), violin, cello and voice ad lib.

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