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A History Of The Plagal-Amen Cadence

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A HISTORY OF THE PLAGAL-AMEN CADENCE

by

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DEDICATION

To my bride, with all my love.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to the following individuals: to Swee Hong Lim (University of Toronto) for planting this research idea in my head in 2010; to Michael Morgan, for sharing your amazing collection of music; to the following individuals who, either through personal meetings or correspondences, shared their wisdom with me: Mary Louise (Mel) Bringle (Brevard College), J. Peter Burkholder (Indiana University), Sue Cole (University of Melbourne), Carl P. Daw (Boston University), Roland Eberlein (University of Cologne), David Music (Baylor University), and Nicholas Temperley (University of Illinois); to my committee members Charles Fugo, Marina Lomazov, and Joseph Rackers; to John McKay, whose patience, wisdom, humor, and kindness I greatly admire; to my parents, who have been supportive of this “whole music thing” even though they weren’t always sure why I was doing this (don’t worry, I haven’t always been sure either!); to my beautiful wife, Angela, who has sacrificed so much over the past few years to let me pursue what I enjoy—I love you; and to the Lord, Jesus Christ who is *the* Amen—the Faithful and True witness, the Beginning of God’s new creation.

ABSTRACT

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, most hymns in the Anglo-American tradition ended with the congregation singing *amen* following the original stanzas, almost always framed within a plagal cadence. Helping this tradition take root was *Hymns Ancient & Modern* (1861), an Anglican hymnal that published the “amen” cadence after every modern hymn. This practice was heavily adopted among other denominational hymnals throughout England and the United States, peaking around the turn of the century. By the middle of the twentieth century, a decline in the number of hymnals including this cadence was noticeable; however, it would take until the end of the century for the plagal-amen cadence to disappear from hymnals. Today, only one doxological hymn, “Praise God from whom all blessings flow” (OLD HUNDREDTH), customarily makes use of this convention.

This research presents the context of the plagal-amen cadence tradition through a survey of its shared history, particularly from the last two centuries. By first examining the use of *amen* and the plagal cadence separately, insight into their individual backgrounds is gained. Their association was already being discussed during the late eighteenth century, and the plagal-amen cadence only grew in popularity from that time forward.

This study suggests that the music of Thomas Tallis, primarily in his *Preces and Responses*, led to the popularity of the plagal-amen cadence. Tallis's immediate influence was felt among contemporary English composers, but a revival of his music in nineteenth-century England had a greater influence on the plagal-amen tradition. With his historical title as the father of English cathedral music, Tallis was favored by those leading the Oxford Movement. Because of this, the simple IV–I cadence chosen by Tallis to set the text *amen* attained a much greater significance in the history of church music.

PREFACE

The topic of this research came to me by way of Professor Swee Hong Lim while one day discussing research ideas with him. Among his many recommendations, he suggested that someone “find out why the plagal-amen became so popular. No one has looked into this,” he said. Under his guidance, I began researching this topic in 2010 and have worked toward finding an answer since then. This length of time was unexpected. After all, while not as common today as it was during the 1800s, who has not heard or sung the plagal-amen as it concludes the OLD HUNDRETH? (Popular culture has used this cadence, too—Mel Brooks, anyone?) And in contemporary praise songs, popular among millennials, this practice is still being used in worship services in Western traditions. (Even the Korean church I attend uses this cadence multiple times in each service.)

Unfortunately, due to the lack of published material, it proved very difficult to find anything concrete. Surprisingly, I suspected that something as common as “Amen” and “Plagal Cadence” would be an easier topic to research; I assure you, it is not. Searching for “amen” through most indices has left me most familiar with the frequent occurrences of “Ambrose” and “American,” but rarely has “amen” been found hiding between those two words. Likewise, the plagal cadence is something that is common to most theory textbooks, yet seldom does this topic warrant a spot in an index. So it is with this paper that six years of research culminates in a unified entry for music indices:

CADENCE, Plagal-amen.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the late fifteenth century, Western composers have often ended their sacred works with a plagal cadence, i.e., a closing IV–I harmonic progression. Moreover, because many of the sacred texts set to music by Renaissance and Baroque composers concluded with *amen*, it was only natural that this word eventually became paired with the plagal cadence, specified throughout this research as the “plagal-amen cadence.” The coupling of these two components has such a rich history that many theory textbooks and musicians refer to the IV–I progression as the “*Amen* cadence”—often regardless of the presence of the *amen* text.¹ Further, the plagal cadence continues to be presented as one of the four “big” cadences, along with the authentic, half, and deceptive cadences.

The phraseology “plagal-amen cadence” might suggest that these two elements—the plagal cadence and *amen*—have always been paired. There is no question of their long-standing historical association, but their independent histories go back much further. An examination of *amen* in chapter one shows its roots in ancient texts; and for the early Church *amen* was a way of acknowledging Christian tenets among believers, especially in defiance of heretical cults. On the other hand, the plagal cadence, discussed in chapter

¹ Examples include Houlahan and Tacka’s *From Sound to Symbol* (445); Clendinning and Marvin’s *Musician’s Guide to Theory and Analysis, 2nd edition* (299); Steinke’s *Harmonic Materials in Tonal Music, 9th edition* (220); and Laitz’s *Complete Musician, 3rd edition* (239).

two, was partially born out of necessity for those composers writing in certain modes. Even though these two entities have had their individual spheres of influence, many writers were recognizing their connection by the eighteenth century. And by the nineteenth century, one rarely finds examples of either one apart from the other.

During the mid-1800s, the plagal-amen became one of the most common characteristics of hymnals published in England and the United States and was routinely sung after every hymn. Scholarship today holds an 1861 hymnal, *Hymns Ancient and Modern (HAM)*, accountable for instigating the popularity of the plagal-amen, since it was here that this type of amen first became attached to every hymn; however, earlier hymn and chant collections had published these cadences in considerable numbers as well. With their reputation of wisdom and insight, the editors of *HAM* influenced subsequent hymnals from almost every major Protestant denomination in England and the United States. By the early twentieth century the majority of hymnals concluded each hymn with the plagal-amen cadence. This practice began to wane shortly thereafter, though some denominations continued on into the 1980s before completely abandoning the custom.

There are many essays and discussions in books about the ending of the plagal-amen tradition. Erik Routley's *The Music of Christian Hymns* and David Eicher's essay "Why Don't Hymns End with Amen?" are two commonly cited sources on this subject.² This research, however, examines the beginning of this past-convention. It would seem that a well-known piece of Protestant history such as the plagal-amen deserves

² Erik Routley, *The Music of Christian Hymns* (Chicago: GIA, 1981), and David Eicher, "Why Don't Hymns End with Amen?" (n.p.: Presbyterian Publishing, 2011).

recognition of its sixteenth-century roots along with its nineteenth-century revival.

Unfortunately, little information can be found in previous scholarship on the genesis of this topic beyond giving credit to the editors who produced *HAM*.

Hymnists, theorists, and historians interviewed throughout this research have informally suggested various dates and places of possible origin, mostly agreeing only on one locale: England. Furthermore, few publications include discussions of *amen* alongside the plagal cadence. Even when these terms do appear in proximity, often nothing is addressed detailing their collective pairing. Some examples of relevant publications include dissertations by Frederic Homan and Wilbur Yates.³ These works study cadential motion in monophonic Gregorian chant and cadences in polyphonic music through the fifteenth century, respectively. However, neither mentions the “amen” text and its association with the plagal cadence.

Due to the lack of previous published materials or scholarship, there has been a great deal of synthesis throughout this study. After separately examining “amen” and “plagal cadence,” these two elements are combined in chapter three and presented as a unified cadence. The final chapter surveys the lifespan of the plagal-amen cadence, from its early use in English chapel music through its recovery and revival in the nineteenth century, propelled by Anglican church music, both in Britain and the United States. The conclusion will examine why the plagal-amen once again has been relegated to only a select number of worship hymns.

³ Frederic Warren Homan, “Cadence in Gregorian Chant” (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1961), and Wilbur C. Hadley Yates, “A History of the Cadence in Polyphonic Vocal Music Through the Fifteenth Century” (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1962).

CHAPTER I:
THE USE OF AMEN FROM ANTIQUITY
THROUGH MODERN TIMES

Amen may hold the position of the most spoken word in world history. Originally from the Hebrew verb *aman*, it has continued to be used in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (*amin*) even today. According to Rabbinical tradition, *amen* is formed by the first letters of *Adonia, Melech Neeman*, meaning “the lord, the faithful king.”¹ This expression was common among Jews when weighing or trading merchandise to assure truth in measurement. In the passive voice, the meaning of *amen* is “so be it, true, and faithful,” customarily spoken by worshipers in response to what has just been said, read, or sung by another.

Christian plainsong stemming from the Jewish scriptures possessed many of the worship-song characteristics, including an *amen* response. Beyond the text, the musical style was to be dignified, different from secular songs.² Such features of Jewish

¹ Daniel Isaac, *An Essay upon the Word “Amen”* (York: T. Deighton, Shambles, 1807), 3.

² Winfred Douglas, *Church Music in History and Practice: Studies in the Praise of God* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1962), 17.

and early Christian worship both shape and pass on traditions to much of the Western church today.

***Amen* and Its Use in Prayers**

In contemporary worship, *amen* is most frequently heard as a closing to a prayer. The historical implications of this tradition are few, however. In the New Testament, the word Greek word *genoito*, meaning “be it so,” was used as an early-Christian translation to the Hebrew *amen* and was often used to signify confirmation.³ Interestingly, no prayer in the New Testament Gospels concludes with *amen*, including the recorded prayers of Christ.⁴ Neither is it suggested anywhere in the New Testament that worship leaders added *amen* to their own prayer except after a doxology. Rather, when the prayer finished with “through the Lord Jesus Christ,” the response was *amen*.⁵

Thus in New Testament writings, *amen* was used more commonly as an approval or confirmation of the leader’s prayer, not as a concluding word to the prayer itself. This convention was altered some centuries later when communal prayers with their established texts included the congregational *amen* as a part of the text. Such formulae

³ John F. MacArthur, *MacArthur Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 1618. For a more exhaustive list of this original Greek word within the New Testament, see http://biblehub.com/greek/genoito_1096.htm.

⁴ However, there are prayers within the Pauline epistles, as well as scenes from Revelation, that conclude with *amen*. Further, some modern translations do end the Lord’s Prayer with *amen*, though this does not appear in the earliest translations.

⁵ J. M. Ross, “Amen,” *The Expository Times* 102, no. 6 (March 1991): 168.

were loved by early Christians and they “used them as an expression of greeting, a token of union, a sign of recognition, almost as a password.”⁶

The practice of concluding prayers with *amen* has become so popular in Church history that, since the standardization of worship elements (i.e., collect prayers, spoken formulae, etc.), it was quite rare to hear a prayer without a prominent *amen*. By the time the Reformers decided to alter worship templates, it would have been unlikely that they would alter the place of *amen* within worship. In the forward to the Genevan Psalter (1543), Calvin stated: “As to public prayers, these are of two kinds: some are offered by means of words alone, the others with song.”⁷ Because prayers ended with *amen*, it is plausible then to consider that Calvin’s sung prayers also ended with *amen*.

Combatting False Religions

Soon after Christianity was founded, dissention arose in the Church between sects and acrimonious doctrinal debates followed, leading to the earliest declared heresies. One of the primary ways to teach and engrain theology has always been through song, and the early Church fathers fought false doctrines via worship music. Within the first few centuries of the Church, Christian poetry was flourishing and was given the name *psalmi idiotici*, or contemporary sacred poetry in the style of the Psalms.⁸ Since the Psalms

⁶ Dom F. Cabrol, *Liturgical Prayer, Its History and Spirit*, trans. by Benedictine of Stanbrook (Birmingham, England: Burns, Oates & Washbourne: n.d.), 43.

⁷ Quoted in Oliver Strunk, ed., *Source Readings in Music History: From Classical Antiquity through the Romantic Era* (New York: Norton, 1950), 346.

would have included a doxological ending, many of the early Christian poems likely ended in this fashion as well; hence, the poems concluded with *amen*.

Hymns became the sung poetry of the early Church, often used to combat false teachings; the minor doxology “Gloria Patri” is one of the earliest in both the Eastern and Western liturgies. Many church fathers are noted for writing hymns against specific errant teachings: St. Ephraem the Syrian (306–373) against the gnostic Bardaisan; St. Gregory of Nazianzus (329–390) and St. Hilary of Poitiers (c. 310–c. 367) against Arianism; and, the well-known Ambrose of Milan (337–397) against Justinian, Arius, and others.⁹

Ambrosian hymns—hymns in the style of Ambrose, though not necessarily penned by him—have continuously been sung by the Church since their conception. While all of the hymn’s text would have been important to the worshipers, the part most relevant to the present research is the doxological endings. The template of Ambrosian hymns was to end with a Trinitarian doxology (and consequently a concluding *amen*). Erik Routley assumes the custom to have been that most Christians “within earshot of the hymn being sung would shout out amen.”¹⁰ By this, the shouters would affirm their belief in what had just been sung and implicitly repudiate the heretical doctrines of the

⁸ Andrew Hughes, *Medieval Manuscripts for Mass and Office: A Guide to Their Organization and Terminology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 37f.

⁹ Douglas, 131.

¹⁰ Erik Routley, *Church Music and the Christian Faith* (Carol Stream, IL: Agape, 1978), 97.

day. An example of this Trinitarian ending with *amen* is given here in the final verse of one of the four hymns ascribed with certainty to Ambrose, “Deus creator omnium”:

Christum rogamus et Patrem,
Christi Patrisque Spiritum;
unum potens per omnia,
fove precantes, Trinitas.
Amen.

Hail we the Father and the Son,
And Son's and Father's Spirit;
One blest Trinity who all obey;
Guard Thou the souls that to Thee pray.
Amen.

Singing as a prominent part of early Christian practice is well-documented. Pliny the Younger wrote to Emperor Trajan, “that [Christians] were accustomed to come together on a regular day before dawn and to sing a song alternately to Christ as to a god.”¹¹ Metrical Christian hymnody spread from the East by way of Ephraem the Syrian, to the West through Hilary of Poitiers, and finally to Ambrose by the later part of the fourth century. The “Hymnos eothinos” (“Morning hymn,” an expansion of the “Gloria in excelsis Deo,” is found in several ancient sources including the Apostolic Constitutions and the Codex Alexandrinus, both completed during this time.¹² While the hymn writers in these collections were anonymous, their influence on shaping the early liturgy of the Church was great.

As mentioned earlier, another popular hymn dating from this period is the “Doxa Patri” (“Gloria Patri”), frequently used in worship by the fourth century. According to the Benedictine rite, the “Gloria Patri” was to be sung after each Psalm, a practice that has

¹¹ Quoted in M. Alfred Bichsel, “Greek and Latin Hymnody,” in *Hymnal Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*, ed. by Marilyn Kay Stulken (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 4. Original text: “..quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum invicem...”

¹² *Ibid.*, 5.

continued on throughout Church history.¹³ By adding the “Gloria Patri” to the end of the Psalms, the Church was able to give the Hebrew Psalter and canticles a Christological perspective, thereby making them suitable for Christian worship.

Such Trinitarian propaganda was needed by the early Church to contest the heretical teachings among the Church members. It was primarily because of the Church’s need to counter-argue with such false doctrines that new hymns, rather than the formerly accepted Psalms and biblical songs, found a favorable place in the liturgy by early-Church fathers.¹⁴ However, the Church was not alone in using songs to spread the Gospel. Arius of Alexandria, the founder of the Arian sect who claimed Jesus was a being created by God (the Father) rather than coexisting as part of the Triune God, also used popular music to advance his teachings. The Church’s answer, of course, was to write hymns and liturgical songs such as the Doxology that offered praise to the Trinity.

Ambrose, perhaps the most well-known figure in early Church music, observed the critiques he received from the heretics and accepted these as compliments. He acknowledged early on, along with many other Church fathers, the power of music to fight heresy. In Ambrose’s own words:

They say that the poetry of my hymns has led the people into deception. I certainly do not deny it. This is an important formula and there is none more powerful. What indeed is more powerful than the confession of the Trinity, which the people repeat many times each day? All strive to be faithful in acknowledging

¹³ See, for example, the order of the Benedictine rights, 17.2, 18.1, and several other chapters. Accessed January 16, 2016, <http://www.osb.org/rb/text/toc.html#toc>.

¹⁴ Bichsel, 6.

the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in verse. This has made them all teachers, who are scarcely capable of being followers.¹⁵

Ambrose's view of music and the characteristics of his hymns, especially the doxological endings, would prove important to Anglican Church leaders many centuries later.

Amen as a Conclusion to Psalms and Other Biblical Songs

As the early Church continued to develop, it would prove important to connect it liturgically to its Jewish roots, although the Church was now a New Testament-Jewish entity. Early Christians certainly continued to sing the Psalms; the instruction to do so is mentioned multiple times throughout Paul's epistles. As such, there was a need to augment the Psalms beyond a solely Jewish worship style.

The five books of the Psalter in the Vulgate end with a "pre-Christian" doxology, generally the words "Benedictus Dominus." Since this phrase was Old Testament-inspired (as were the Psalms), the need arose to add a concluding New Testament doxology—the "Gloria Patri"—in order to publicize Christian tenets.¹⁶ This same doxology was also added to the three major canticles of the New Testament (*Magnificat*, *Benedictus*, and *Nunc dimittis*), though these three were already considered orthodox, as well as additional Old Testament canticles (e.g., the songs of Moses, Miriam, Hannah).

By the end of the fourth century, we can assume that all Psalms were being sung, according to McKinnon. He elaborates:

¹⁵ Quoted in J. P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, Vol. 16 (N.p.: Garnier Fratres, 1890), 1017-18.

¹⁶ Hughes, 23f.

At the center of early monastic spirituality was the attempt to realize literally the Pauline maxim “to pray without ceasing” [1 Thessalonians 5:17]. The device the desert monks chose to accomplish this was the recitation of psalms, not by the selection of certain favored psalms, but by the continuous recitation of the Psalter from beginning to end, generally with a pause for prayer between each psalm.¹⁷

The influence of desert monasticism cannot be overlooked. The Christian Church was, in some sense, fascinated by the lifestyles and worship services of the monasteries. Early Church fathers such as Jerome, Basil, and Cassian participated in worship services led by monks and nuns. Moreover, hymnody as we know it today can be considered to have originated in the fourth century and developed within the Divine Office, not as parts of the Mass.¹⁸ By 529, St. Benedict had already set forth the eight daily prayer offices in his *Benedicti Regula monasteriorum*, which incorporated the singing of hymns and Psalms.

In addition to the standard Psalmic doxology of the Church (ending with “...et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.”), worshiping congregants would respond with “a refrain independent of the psalm, often a short phrase such as *Amen, amen, amen* or ‘O God, unmovable’.”¹⁹ The Psalms continued to be a significant part of worship throughout the Middle Ages, but their widespread usage outside of the monastic tradition took place following the Reformation, both in Europe and the New World.

In the hands of the Reformers, the Psalms took a chief position among the worship elements of the service. Further, we know that it was the standard practice by the

¹⁷ James W. McKinnon, “The Book of Psalms, Monasticism, and the Western Liturgy,” in *The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages*, ed. Nancy Van Deusen (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 49.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Hughes, 25.

sixteenth century to sing harmonized versions of the psalter, at least in private worship gatherings.²⁰ Popular arrangers and composers of psalm harmonizations included John Day, Thomas Ravenscroft, Louis Bourgeois, and Claude Goudimel.

The Psalms sung in many Protestant traditions and specific characteristics were generally similar: metered, performed slowly and deliberately, and often with the presence of a “gathering note” to help congregants find a starting pitch. Kenneth Long quips that, “the 78th Psalm [with 72 verses] performed in this way and followed by a two-hour sermon must have given the faithful a pretty fair foretaste of eternity.”²¹ More relevant to the present discussion than the length or tempi of the Psalms, however, is Long’s assertion that “amens were not sung [post-1660].”²² This statement seems contrary to several of the publications surveyed from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as will soon be discussed.

A Chronological Survey of Practices for Singing and Speaking *Amen*

There are many examples of *amen* as a concluding word in hymns, sequences, and other sung and spoken elements throughout the Catholic tradition. Additional responses include *Hosanna*, *Alleluia*, and *Kyrie eleison* (especially within the German

²⁰ *The Ainsworth Psalter: Psalm 65 with settings by Claude Goudimel* (New York: New York Public Library, 1938), preface.

²¹ Kenneth R. Long, *The Music of the English Church* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1971), 232.

²² *Ibid.* Routley concurs, writing that “singing amen after post-Reformation hymns [perhaps meaning metered Psalms?] was unknown before about 1850,” (p. 98).

tradition). These would be exclaimed frequently by the congregants during a worship service. Moreover, in the General Instruction for the Liturgy of the Hours, §174 directs that “a hymn follows the traditional rule of ending with a doxology, usually addressed to the same divine person as the hymn itself.”²³

Thomas Morley wrote during the sixteenth century that motets and other “grave music”—a standard phrase for music of the Psalms in later centuries—“must close with deliberate and binding endings.”²⁴ Already by this time, many motets, anthems, and other liturgical settings were concluded with elaborate and lengthy *amens*, particularly by English composers. Composers such as Byrd, Morley, Tallis, and Weelkes developed the coda-like *amen* setting to its climax. Church music would not see *amen* in a similarly prominent position for another two centuries.

As discussed previously, Ambrosian and other hymns concluded with *amen*. By the Middle Ages and the subsequent standardization of the Mass, many of the hymns and songs ended with *amen*, which can easily be found in the *Liber Usualis*. After the Reformation, with the popularity of psalm arrangements and new hymns, *amen* and other typical concluding words (e.g., *Alleluia*, *Kyrie*, etc.) appear frequently.

²³ General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours: Congregation for Divine Worship, accessed November 4, 2015, <http://www.almudi.org/images/Portals/0/docs/Breviario/fuentes/breviario.asp?tiempo=6>.

²⁴ Quoted in William Palmer, “Byrd and Amen,” *Music and Letters* 34, no. 2 (Apr., 1953): 140.

Luther's hymns show concern for proclaiming the Gospel as a living voice (*viva vox evangelii*), and consist of doxological praises plainly and directly expressed through the texts.²⁵ Early Lutheran hymnals with published *amens* include:

- *Enfurter Enchiridion* (1524): consists of hymns and canticles concluding with *amen*, but many more hymns end with *Kyrioleis* (from the body of *Leisen* sacred music);
- *Ein New Gesengbuchlen* (1531): includes several *amens*, both textually and musically-notated, published by Michael Weisse;
- *Das Babstsche Gesangbuch* (1545): generally considered one of the most representational German hymnals of the period (see fig. 1.1);
- Slüter Hymnal (1560, first issued in 1531): makes use of *amens* and several *Kyrioleis*, (see fig. 1.2);
- *Das Paderborner Gesangbuch* (1609): includes both musically-notated and simple, textual *amens*.

In addition to the new hymns being written for the Lutheran Church, use of the Psalms also continued. The *de tempore* hymn was developed by Luther from the Gradual. Typically, such a *responsorium graduale* was a responsorial psalm. The verse was usually sung by a soloist with the congregation, and later the choir, responding with a short affirmative statement, such as *amen*.²⁶

²⁵ Carl F. Schalk, "German Hymnody," in *Hymnal Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*, ed. by Marilyn Kay Stulken (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 23.

Within the English tradition, *amen* appears frequently, as previously noted. John Merbecke's (c. 1510–c. 1585) *Book of Common Prayer Noted* (1550) was assembled during a turbulent time in England's church history. With Henry VIII having already severed ties with Rome, the Church of England was in need of its own rite, complete with music. Merbecke's book would prove highly influential, especially to court and church musicians, throughout the reigns of Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth I. Perhaps the most essential characteristic of this "hymnal" for the reader to note is the multiple settings of *amen* as a syllabic response, contrary to the extended and melismatic *amens* found in other contemporary publications around Europe. Moreover, *amens* are resolved using $\hat{7}-\hat{1}$, $\hat{2}-\hat{1}$, and especially worthy of our attention, $\hat{1}-\hat{1}$ (fig. 1.3). Merbecke's use of such a closing formula—syllabic and $\hat{1}-\hat{1}$ —soon caught the attention of Thomas Tallis and other prominent English Church musicians shortly thereafter; Tallis will be surveyed in chapter four.

Another English musician, Edward Lowe (c. 1610–1682), gave instructions for singing *amen* in 1661 when he writes: "the Amen is to be sung by the Quire at the end of each prayer in parts, excepting in the second service, and then in a single tone."²⁷ (Note that many of the following sources are after Long's purported terminal date of 1660 for this tradition.)

²⁶ Marilyn Kay Stulken, *Hymnal Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), xiv.

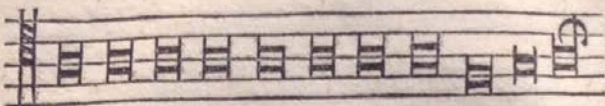
²⁷ E[dward] L[owe], *A Short Direction for the Performance of Cathedrall Service* (Oxford: William Hall, 1661), 45.

wie es war von anfang itzt vnd imerdar,
 vnd von ewigkeit zu ewigkeit,
 A MEN.

Ich danck dem HERRN vñ gan-
 zem hertzen/ Im rat der fromen/ vñ
 in der Gemein.
 Gros sind die wercke des HERR-
 ren / Wer jr achtet der hat eitel lust
 dran.
 Was er ordnet das ist löblich vnd
 herrlich/ Vnd seine gerechtigkeit blei-
 bet ewiglich.
 Er hat ein gedechtnis gestiftet sei-

Figure 1.1 *Das Babstsche Gesangbuch* (1545)

Dat erste Chor.



O du Gades Lam / dat der werlt sün-
de drecht.

O du Gades Lam / dat der Werlt sün-
de drecht.

O du Gades Lam / dat der Werlt sün-
de drecht.



Christe / Kyrie / Christe /

Beide Chor thosamende.



Kyrie / Eleyson / A M E N.

Figure 1.2 The Slüter Hymnal (1560)

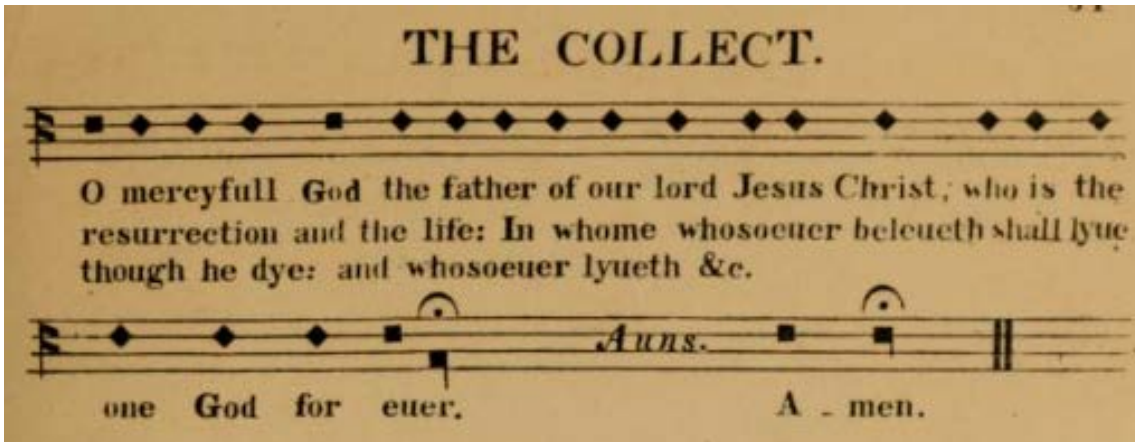


Figure 1.3 “The Collect,” from Merbecke’s *Book of Common Prayer Noted*, p. 60.

These instructions are found in a section titled, “Extraordinary Responsalls upon Festivalls in Foure Parts,” and Lowe provided the music examples shown in figure 1.4. However, these examples appear to be direct copies of Tallis, whom Lowe failed to recognize anywhere in his book.

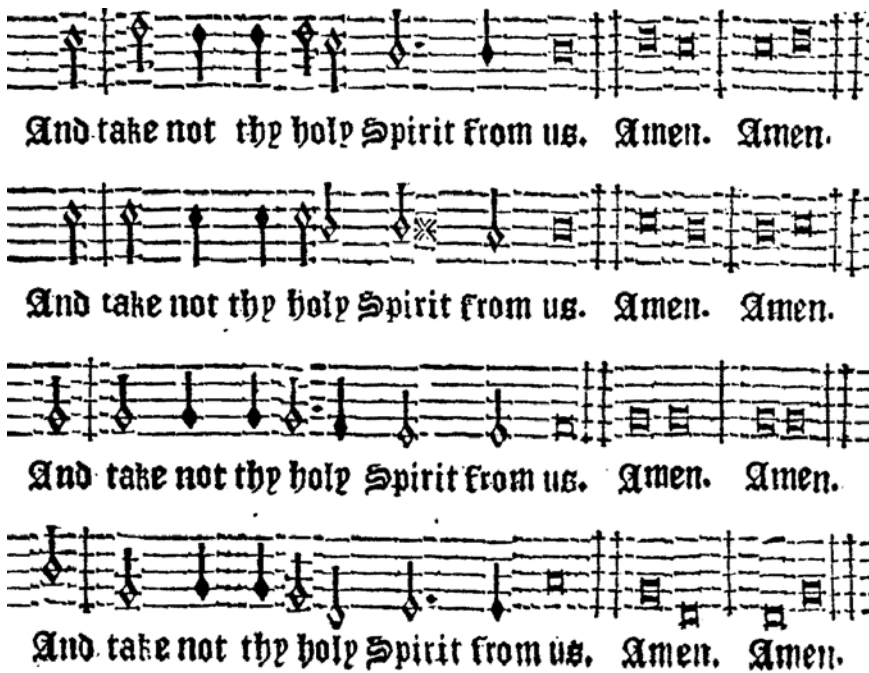


Figure 1.4 Example of authentic- and plagal-amen according to Lowe, p. 45.

Beyond the Lutheran and Anglican traditions, published *amens* in hymns are a rarity during this period. Through the course of this research, only a single Catholic songbook was located that included *amen*: *Das Liederbuch*, published in Germany in 1628 by Johann Degen. Although still associated with the Catholic Church, the structure and use of *amen* are similar to Lutheran publications of the time. From the New World, the earliest writing found to discuss *amen* in relationship to the singing of the Psalms comes from *The Bay Psalm Book* (1640). In the Preface, the compilers raise the question of how to properly sing the Psalms: “Thirdly, by whom are they [the Psalms] to be sung? Whether by the whole churches together with their voices? Or by one man singing alone and the rest joying in silece [*sic*], & in the close sayig [*sic*] amen.” The question posed is shortly answered in the continuing discussion that states that all those present should “be exhorted to sing with the congregation.”²⁸

From the eighteenth century onwards, *amen* is commonly found at the end of Protestant sacred music pieces, especially those coming from England and the British colonies of the North America. Moreover, directions for how and when to sing *amen* are given in many writings. Reverend John Jebb explained in his popular *Choral Service* the appropriate ways (contrasted with inappropriate ways) to conclude a Psalm. According to Jebb,

If the last verse of the Gloria Patri falls to the Clergyman, the Congregation often say the final Amen as a response. This is quite wrong. The Amen is an integral part of the verse, and is so printed in our Prayer Books. A like vicious method obtains in some places where the Psalm or Gloria Patri is chanted, Amen being

²⁸ *The Bay Psalm Book Being a Facsimile Reprint of the First Edition, Printed by Stephen Daye at Cambridge, in New England in 1640* (New York: New England Society in the City of New York, 1903), Preface (n.p.).

sung to a long protracted cadence; whereas it properly forms but the two last syllables of the verse.²⁹

Jebb’s distaste for *amen* appearing in a “long protracted cadence” was not a light subject to be argued in his day. A properly sung *amen*, which by Jebb’s time was often found paired with a plagal cadence, proved a worthwhile discussion among many church music writers.

It is not difficult to find hymnals and church music collections of this period with published *amens* following the pieces.³⁰ Publications in England and the colonies heavily outweighed other Protestant traditions in their inclusion of *amen* as a published closing response, though sporadic *amens* do appear in other European backgrounds. Table 1.1 demonstrates but a few:

Table 1.1 Sacred music collections containing published *amens*

TITLE	AUTHOR/ COMPILER	DATE	LOCALE
<i>A Compleat Melody</i>	William Tansur	1738	London
<i>Book of Psalmody</i>	John Chetham	1736	London
<i>New Universal Harmony</i>	Daniel Bayley	1773	Massachusetts
<i>The Gentleman and Lady’s Musical Companion</i>	John Stickney	1774	Massachusetts
<i>Select Harmony</i>	Andrew Law	1779	Connecticut
<i>A Compilation of the Litanies and Vesper Hymns and Anthems</i> (Catholic publication)	John Aitken	1787	Philadelphia
<i>Federal Harmony</i>	~	1788	Boston

²⁹ John Jebb, *Choral Service of the United Church of England and Ireland: Being an Enquiry into the Liturgical System of the Cathedral and Collegiate Foundations of the Anglican Communion* (London: John W. Parker, 1843), 316.

³⁰ I refrain from simply saying “songs” since *amens* were published within many genres, such as: motets, hymns, gospel songs, anthems, etc.

Though in no way an exhaustive list, the names and titles do convey a sense of how frequently *amen* appeared in publications in these particular geographic areas.³¹

Outside of British influence, *amen* is readily found in several non-consecutive editions of *Das Ausbund*, though curiously not all editions. The *Ausbund* was first published in 1564 by Anabaptists and continues to be used today in a revised edition by the Amish. Though tunes are lacking in the editions surveyed, *amen* generally closes the songs within *das Lieder* section of the book.

In 1861, one of the most influential hymnals of all-time was published. *Hymns Ancient and Modern (HAM)* would go on to become the most influential Anglican publication (although the Church of England has never officially endorsed a hymnal), reaching far beyond the British Isles by way of hymn texts and the hymns' endings. Every hymn in the early editions of *HAM* ended with *amen*, whether justified by tradition (i.e., hymns with doxological endings) or not.

While more will be discussed on this topic in Chapter 3, the influence of even a seemingly insignificant addendum like *amen* concluding every hymn was extensive. Hymnals began copying this feature and would continue to do so until as late as 1989, though the editors of *HAM* ceased this practice much sooner. One year after *HAM* was issued, R. R. Chope published an enlarged edition of *The Congregational Hymn & Tune Book* (1862). The 300 different tunes paired alongside the “hymns, ancient and modern” look suspiciously similar to *HAM* in structure, content, and that apparently necessary response, *amen* (see figs. 1.5 & 1.6). Giving even more weight to the influence that *HAM*

³¹ These titles and more will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

had on this specific hymnal, the original publication of *The Congregational Hymn & Tune Book* that occurred six years earlier included more than 1,200 hymn texts, none of which concluded with *amen*.

General Hymns.

Hymn 150.



"That rock was Christ."

<p>ROCK of ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee; Let the Water and the Blood, From Thy wounded Side which flowed, Be of sin the double cure, Save from wrath and make me pure.</p> <p>Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy Cross I cling: Could my tears for ever flow, Could my zeal no languor know, All for sin could not atone, Thou must save and Thou alone.</p>	<p>While I draw this fleeting breath, When mine eyelids close in death, When I rise to worlds unknown, See Thee on Thy judgment throne, Rock of ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee.</p>
--	--



A- men.

Figure 1.5 "Rock of Ages" as it appeared in *HAM* (1861)

Sundays after Trinity.

7s (6 of.) **HYMN 156.** J. B. DYKES.

Rock OF A - GES, cleft for me, Let me hide my-

self in Thee; Let the Wa - ter and the Blood,

From Thy wounded Side which flowed, Be of sin the

dou - ble cure, Save from wrath and make me pure. A - men.

2 Merit I have none to bring,
Simply to Thy Cross I cling;
Could my tears for ever flow,
Could my zeal no languor know,
All for sin could not atone,
Thou must save and Thou alone.

3 While I draw this fleeting breath,
When mine eyelids close in death,
When I rise to worlds unknown,
See Thee on Thy Judgment-Throne,
ROCK OF AGES, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee. Amen.

M

Figure 1.6 “Rock of Ages” from *CHTB* (1862)

Erik Routley blames the popularity of *amen* in nineteenth- and twentieth-century church music on *HAM*. He suggests that the imitation of *HAM* by other hymnal committees was “for no reason but the obscure and irrational notion that the Church of

England knew its work in matters of liturgy.”³² For this reason, the editorial committees of future hymnals assumed it must be correct hymnic practice to conclude every hymn with *amen*, doxological or not.

Regardless of the appropriateness of adding *amen* to each hymn, the popularity of *HAM* was phenomenal. The original publication in 1861 was followed by an Appendix (1868), a Revised Edition (1875), and a Supplement (1889); a new edition was published in 1904. *HAM* has continued on through the present day—the latest was published in 2013—and has sold more than 170 million copies to date.³³

The number of hymnals and sacred music collections published post-1861 that incorporated *amen* began to grow. By the early twentieth century, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist hymnals were complete with *amen* tagged onto a significant number, if not all, of their hymns.³⁴

Of special note is a publication by Michael Maybrick, *A Collection of Chants* (1824?), which makes significant use of *amen*. An anonymous article in passing mentions that “all the single and double chants...are furnished with Amens—sometimes plagal, and at others the perfect cadence, and the last in the book, a single chant, is enriched with an extended Amen...”³⁵ Might one argue that *HAM* is *not* the earliest sacred music

³² Routley, *Church Music*, 98.

³³ Accessed September 17, 2015, <http://www.hymnsam.co.uk/about-us/the-history-and-traditions.aspx>.

³⁴ Routley, 98.

collection to conclude every piece with *amen*? The only extant copy could not be examined during this research, but it is doubtful that every chant necessitates *amen* as a closing response, yet Maybrick includes one nonetheless.³⁶

While the adoption of this practice was a popular one indeed, some editors refused to adopt the custom, even mentioning the reasons in their respective hymnal prefaces. Edward Bickersteth, in the *Hymnal Companion* (1870), claims that the practice of closing each hymn with *amen* is already dwindling.³⁷ He places responsibility on the editors of *HAM* for this tradition, though he refrains from judging their decision.³⁸

Likewise, we read in the preface to the *People's Hymnal* (1868) that “Amen is printed at the close of such hymns only as end with a prayer or doxology. It ought not to be sung in other cases.”³⁹ Dean Alford goes beyond just the theology to address even the music in the preface to his well-known *Year of Praise* (1867):

³⁵ “Church and Organ Music,” *The Musical Times* 47, no. 763 (Sep. 1, 1906): 617.

³⁶ The only remaining copy is located in the British Library, under the identifier 004515766.

³⁷ Bickersteth’s claim hardly aligns with my findings throughout this research. Even the Anglican publications, which were to be the first ones to retract printing *amen*, would not start to dwindle this practice for another four or five decades. Moreover, other denominations continued printing *amen*, although not as a conclusion to *every* hymn, until nearly the twenty-first century.

³⁸ *The Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer*, ed. by Edward Henry Bickersteth (London: Sampson Low, Son & Marston, 1870), xviii.

³⁹ *The People's Hymnal* (London: Joseph Masters, 1868), iv.

The practice of concluding every Hymn with an “Amen” has not been followed in this book. The tune being complete in itself, no such termination is musically required; and the sense of the concluding verse not always admitting of the addition [i.e., lack of doxological or Trinitarian ending], incongruities are frequently produced by it.⁴⁰

The *Yattendon Hymnal* (1899) includes an *errata* page with the simple instructions:

“Hymns 9 and 52. Erase the *Amen* at the end of the words.”⁴¹ Moreover, *amen* rarely

appears in gospel-song publications of any time period.

The Oxford Movement and the Singing of *Amen*

To find one influential leader in the nineteenth century who put forth the suggestion of closing hymns with *amen* would be extremely difficult. However, finding an entire movement that influenced nearly every aspect of corporate worship—including hymnody and its features—and implicitly helped to foster the practice of singing *amen* is indeed possible. The Oxford Movement of the nineteenth century was a strong attempt to reform the Church of England back to its historical roots. Though a thorough analysis of the movement is beyond the scope of this research, it is important to note the main desire of its proponents: a turn back towards Catholic antiquity and its styles of worship. In other words, the leaders sought for a “higher church” experience than was currently being found in England. The promoters wanted to renew the connection between the Church of

⁴⁰ *The Year of Praise*, ed. by Henry Alford (London: Alexander Strahan, 1867), vi.

⁴¹ *The Yattendon Hymnal*, ed. by Robert Bridges and H. Ellis Wooldridge (London: Oxford University Press, 1899), iv. Hymn #9 concludes with a doxology, usually an appropriate instance to use *amen*. Hymn #52 includes *amen* as an addition.

their day and the liturgical Church of yesterday. And what better way to link to the past than to worship with the same elements that the early Church fathers had once used.

In 1827, John Keble (1792–1866) published *The Christian Year*, a collection of poems for Sundays and holy days. Many of the poems in this compilation actually provided hymn texts for the forthcoming *HAM* and other hymnals. This collection went beyond the topical English hymns of the day, however, to include an unashamed Catholic hymn to the Virgin Mary.⁴² With Keble’s mentality and the aforementioned publication, he became popular among like-minded circles. On July 14, 1833, Keble was invited to speak at Oxford University, and his speech that day officially began the Oxford Movement.

Working alongside Keble were John Henry Newman and Philip Pusey, both authors of original hymns, as well as John Mason Neale, who translated many hymns, especially from Latin. The perception of writing original hymns similar to those of the early Church (in structure and language), and translating hymns from an ancient language once used exclusively by the Church somehow seemed to give weight to their cause.

Doubtless, the idea was that if a text was originally in Latin, it must be ancient. (One will notice the word “ancient” appearing often during this era.) If the text was ancient, then it was surely distanced from the Romantic style of unrestrained and emotionally-charged music that was so present in daily life. Thus, something with ancient and restrained roots must have been viewed as a cure for the tent-revival, evangelical-excitement that so greatly offended the leaders of the Oxford Movement. After all, new-

⁴² See #82 in Keble’s *The Christian Year*, 122-23.

age Gospel songs could easily be replaced by translated plainsongs taken directly from the proper of the Mass. The editors of *HAM* must have agreed since their publication contained several translations of medieval office hymns. Phillips is much more succinct when he says that *HAM*'s "proprietors identified themselves with the Tractarians."⁴³ In a twist of humor, Routley explains:

Percy Dearmer (the archpriest of the second Tractarian movement) poked quiet fun at the early translators [this omits J. M. Neale] of Latin hymns for believing certain Latin originals to be ancient which were in fact written some years after the hymns of Isaac Watts, these being the texts of Charles Coffin...⁴⁴

"Tractarians" was a name bestowed upon those joining the Oxford Movement due to their circulation of propaganda tracts. Between 1833 and 1841, the writers circulated ninety *Tracts for the Times*. Most of their content was new, written by founding members of the movement or supportive clergy. Some, however, were simply reprints from texts of fellow high-churchmen of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The tracts were popular, not only among intended clergy readers, but also among lay people. Moreover, the Tractarians were able to use Oxford University as a training ground for future religious leaders. When one considers that the majority of church and political leaders were being, or soon would be, trained at Oxford, the Tractarians were able to infuse their beliefs and ideals into the culture of the university as a whole—and thus into England and abroad.⁴⁵

⁴³ C. Henry Phillips, *The Singing Church: An Outline History of the Music Sung by the Choir and People* (London: Faber & Faber, 1968), 228.

⁴⁴ Erik Routley, *The Music of Christian Hymns* (Chicago: G.I.A. Publications, 1981), 89.

No Tractarian publication has been located in the course of the present research that directly discusses *amen* as it pertains to singing. Nonetheless, there is sufficient evidence to believe that the Oxford Movement helped to propel this tradition forward during the nineteenth century. In the wave of hymn- and office-translations, from both Latin and German sources, doxologies were frequently included, complete with their concluding *amen*. Below, one can see two instances of translated hymn texts concluding with *amen* from *Tracts for the Times*, no. 75 (pp. 27 and 52, respectively):

[Nocte surgentes]

Let us arise, and watch by night,
And meditate always;
And chant, as in our Maker's sight,
United hymns of praise.

So, singing with the Saints in bliss,
With them we may attain
Life everlasting after this,
And heaven for earthly pain.

Grant it to us, O Father, Son,
And Spirit, God of grace,
To whom all worship shall be done
In every time and place. *Amen*.

Attrib. Pope St. Gregory the Great

[Ecce jam noctis]

Paler have grown the shades of night,
And nearer draws the day,
Checkering the sky with streaks of light,
Since we began to pray.

To pray for mercy when we sin,
For cleansing and release,
For ghostly safety, and within
For everlasting peace.

Grant this to us, O Father, Son,
And Spirit, God of grace,
To whom all worship shall be done
In every time and place. *Amen*.

Attrib. Pope St. Gregory the Great

⁴⁵ Nigel Yates, *The Oxford Movement and Anglican Ritualism* (London: Historical Association, 1983), 13.

Even though it would prove challenging to quantify the exact impact that the Oxford Movement had on churches that chose to end their hymns with *amen*, examining *HAM* contains plausible proof of great effect. This mid-nineteenth-century hymnal was surely a product of this movement and its desire to improve church worship and, thereby, church music.⁴⁶

Amen has varied significantly in its usage and context throughout its history: from a formulaic ending of prayers to combatting heretical teachings, and from its limited use of concluding doxological praise to appearing at the end of nearly every English hymn in the nineteenth and early-twentieth century. Thus far, the focus has been on its use solely as a text. But as early as the fifteenth century and continuing on through today's worship songs, *amen* began to be associated with one specific harmonic motion: the plagal cadence.

⁴⁶ One should consider the recurring names appearing in these and similar publications (e.g., Monk, Hopkins, Helmore, and Neale).

CHAPTER II: THE ORIGINS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE PLAGAL CADENCE

In contemporary music theory the plagal cadence has generally fallen out of favor as a legitimate closing device. To many writers the harmonic progression IV–I is not considered a true cadence since it lacks the leading tone found in the authentic cadence. Rameau also describes the falling fifth as acoustically superior, since it is heard as the return of an overtone to its fundamental and the falling fourth is not.¹

Such a progression is nowadays properly labeled a post-cadential codetta. Whether one believes the IV–I motion to be a cadence or not, this harmonic progression began appearing in church music during the fifteenth century and continues on in Protestant worship services even today. Many theorists from the Renaissance and onwards accepted IV–I as a viable internal cadence; however, the plagal cadence was almost always found in association with *amen* at the end of religious music. Just as *amen* was added onto a hymn text, the plagal cadence was often, though not always, added as a post-cadence progression, generally following an authentic cadence. This chapter will briefly survey the development of this popular closing formula, the use of this harmonic motion by particular composers, and theoretical aspects of specific time periods.

¹ Roland Eberlein, *Kadenzwahrnehmung und Kadenzgeschichte—ein Beitrag zu einer Grammatik der Musik*, trans. Jobst P. Fricke (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1992), 236.

Past Aliases of the Plagal Cadence

It was not until relatively recently that modern cadential terms (authentic, plagal, and so forth) came into standard use. Music theorists of the past did not need explicit terminology such as “perfect cadence” since, before the eighteenth century at least, it would have been quite rare to use other varieties of cadences, or closes.²

The term “plagal cadence,” designating a IV–I ending cadence, has only been in existence since the eighteenth century. However, earlier composers and theorists had already known this cadence by various names since the fifteenth century, depending on the era and locale. Before examining the development of the IV–I motion, it is worth mentioning some of these terms as they appeared in publications of their day.

In the German-Latin tradition, the terms *maior*, *minor*, and *minima* were used to distinguish between cadences of leaps and cadences of steps. According to Felix Diergarten, these alluded to our modern vocabulary of authentic, plagal, and ascending/descending seconds in the bass, respectively.³ Six examples plus a brief description of *minor* can be found in Gugl’s *Fundamenta Partiturae in Compendio Data*.⁴

² Rebecca Herissone, *Music Theory in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 171.

³ Felix Diergarten, “Beyond ‘Harmony’: The Cadence in the Partitura Tradition,” in *What is a Cadence? Theoretical and Analytical Perspectives on Cadences in the Classical Repertoire*, ed. by Markus Neuwirth, and Pieter Bergé (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2015), 68.

There is another category of cadential motion within this tradition that appears to be a falling-fourth ending on a half cadence (see fig. 2.1). However, a falling-fourth half cadence was neither a new idea nor used only in Germanic regions. Thomas Morley (1557-1602) had also suggested this harmonic progression as an approach to internal half cadences in his publication more than a century before. Morley gives six examples of rising fifth/falling fourth cadences, labeled “formall closes,” but he distinguishes these “middle closes” from “finall closes” (see two such examples in figs. 2.2 & 2.3). He does include one plagal cadence as final close (fig. 2.4), though the overwhelming majority of his illustrations for final closes are authentic cadences.⁵

In the 1695 publication *Phrynis Mitilenaeus, oder Satyrischer Companist*, German theologian and composer Wolfgang Caspar Printz (1641–1717) defined cadences, or “clausula formulas” as he referred to them, as such: 1) the imperfecta; and 2) the perfect or reposeful cadence. He then differentiated various types of the perfect cadence into smaller subgroups, shown in the diagram below.⁶

⁴ Matthäus Gugl, *Fundamenta partiturae in compendio data. Das ist: Kurtzer und gründlicher Unterricht, den General-Bass, oder Partitur, nach denen Reglen recht und wohl schlagen zu lehren* (Augspurg: Wolffs, 1757), 23.

⁵ Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (London: Peter Short, 1597), 132ff.

⁶ Wolfgang Caspar Printz, *Phrynis Mitilenaeus oder Satyrischer Companist* (Dresden: Berlegts Johann Christoph Mieth, [1695]), chapter 8, pp. 26ff.

Dahlhaus discusses Printz’s work in chapter three of his book. He gives two music examples (drawn from Jakoby’s research, 1955), one showing a perfect authentic cadence (*perfect tonalis*), and the second showing a plagal cadence (*dissecta acquiescens*), clearly a final close. Moreover, Dahlhaus interprets Printz’s category of *acquiescens* progression to refer to the tonal rest that comes from landing on the tonic from the subdominant (i.e., IV-I), p. 219. For additional studies on Printz and his work, see Lori Burns, 50ff, and the third chapter of Caleb Mutch’s dissertation.

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Cadenza minor
Simplex lingua
buendron

zisoluf *amirrit*

zisoluf *lipfwillig auf*

Cadenza minor
gebunden mit
der ist

sb 7

Figure 2.1 Plagal motion in the form of “Cadenza minor,” as explained by Georg Muffat in *Regulae Concertuum Partiturae* (1699), 109.



Figure 2.2 Morley's plagal cadence used as a "middle close"⁷



Figure 2.3 Another example of a "middle close" as used by Morley⁸

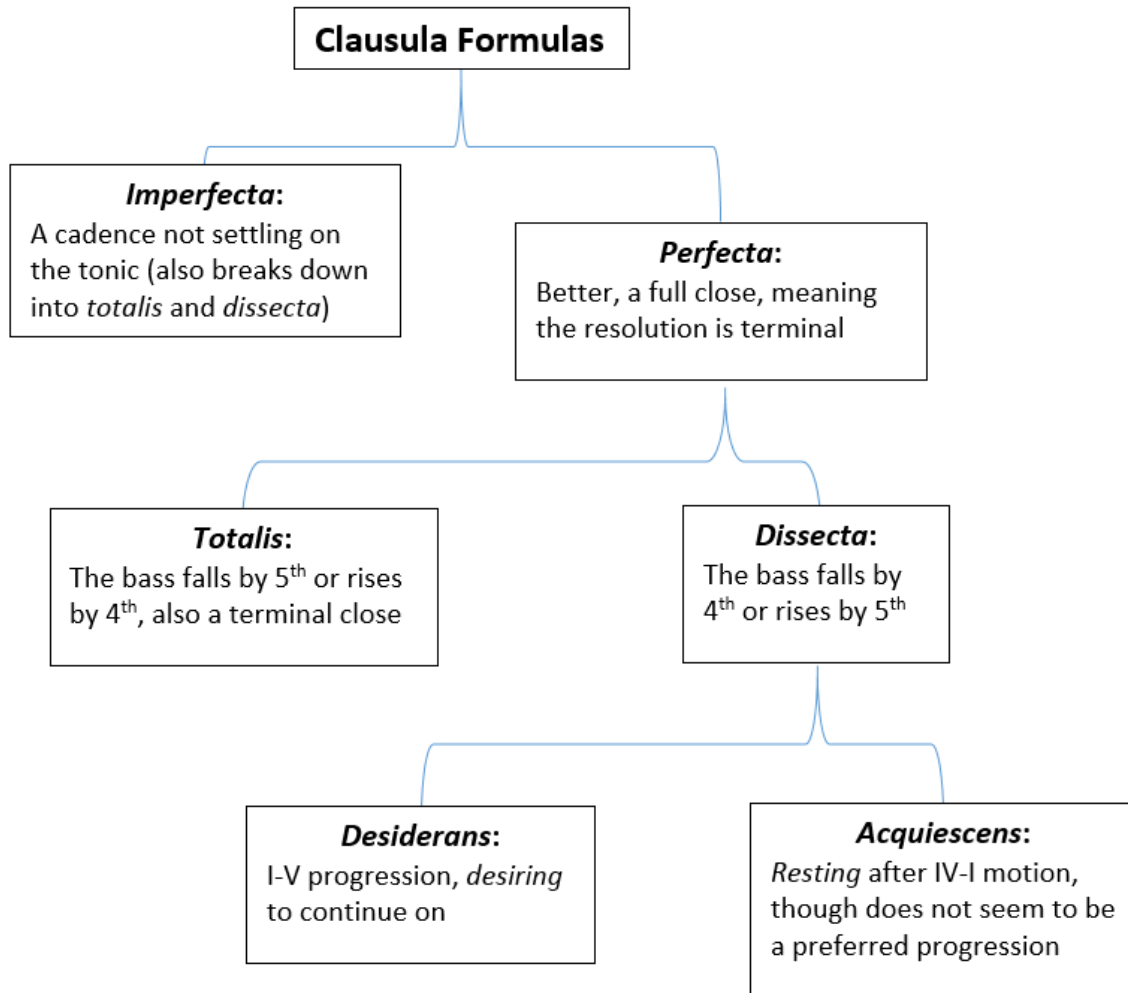
⁷ Morley, 134.

⁸ Ibid., 139.



Figure 2.4 Plagal cadence as a “final close” according to Morley⁹

⁹ Morley, 141.



Contemporary French theorists also wrote about the IV–I progression. According to Guillaume Nivers (1632–1714), the imperfect cadence occurs when the bass descends by the interval of a fourth, or climbs by the interval of a fifth.¹⁰ A half-century later in *Traité de l’Harmonie*, Rameau (1683–1764) uses the term “cadences” to refer to types of

¹⁰ Guillaume-Gabriel Nivers, *Traité de la composition de musique* [sic] (Paris: Chez l’auteur, 1667), 24. Nivers’s original French: *La cadence imparfaite est quand la basse descend par intervalle de quarte, ou monte par intervalle de 5me...* The translation is my own.

harmonic progressions, whether or not these progressions are used as concluding phrases.¹¹ In Chapter 16 of book 3, Rameau distinguishes the *parfaite* cadence (V–I) from the *irreguliere* cadence (IV–I).¹² In conjunction with earlier theorists, Rameau also suggests that a rising fifth/falling fourth progression in the bass may be used as either an internal close or a final close, ending on the dominant or tonic, respectively. These two separate *cadence irregulieres* are seen in figure 2.5, marked *a* and *b*. Rameau does mention however, that when using an irregular cadence, one must include the sixth above the bass of the penultimate chord, essentially creating a ii ⁶5–I progression with a rising fifth in the bass.



Figure 2.5 Examples of Rameau's *cadence irreguliere*, p. 221

¹¹ [Jean-Philippe] Rameau, *Traité de l'Harmonie...* (Paris: Jean-Baptiste-Christophe Ballard, 1722), chapters 5-9

¹² *Ibid*, 221f.

Preceding both Rameau and Printz was English theorist William Holder (1616–1698), who originally published his *Treatise of the Natural Grounds and Principles of Harmony* in 1694. In his treatise, rather than discussing harmonic progressions, Holder argues for the consonance of the fourth, even when it appears in a six-four chord, which he labels a “plagal” chord. He demonstrates such a chord in figure 2.6, and writes the following:

...the unison, third, fifth, and octave; or the unison, fourth, sixth, and octave may be sounded together to make a compleat close of harmony: I do not mean a close to conclude with, for the plagal is not such.¹³



Figure 2.6 Authentic and Plagal chords according to Holder, p. 66

Instead of a harmonic progression, Holder’s “plagal” and “authentic” chords represent two examples of proper voice closures, which, according to Holder, assure that

¹³ William Holder, *A Treatise of the Natural Grounds and Principles of Harmony* (London: J. Heptinstall, 1694), 68. For further information, see Stanley, 66-69 and Herissone, p. 137ff.

the resting pitches are all consonant with each other. So while Holder's uses of "authentic" and "plagal" do not refer to cadences or progressions, it is noteworthy that he is the earliest writer found to use these terms outside of purely modal discussions.

Current scholarship holds that the term "plagal cadence"—meaning a IV–I harmonic progression at the *end* of a piece, the same as in our modern terminology—began in the eighteenth century.¹⁴ Charles-Henri de Blainville (1711–c. 1770), a French theorist and composer, premiered his *Simphonie* in May, 1751. This work was the debut of Blainville's newly-discovered "third mode," a hybrid between the major and minor modes. (Although its relevance will be discussed later in the chapter, Blainville also correlates his mode to the Phrygian mode—a mode with great significance to early composers who worked to develop the plagal cadence.) Preceding the score of his symphony, Blainville self-published an *Essay sur un Troisieme Mode*. This essay, according to Caleb Mutch, includes "plagal cadence," defined as a IV–I *concluding* progression, for the first time in extant literature. Another writer was soon to follow: Guiseppe Tartini's treatise three years later also includes a final IV–I progression; Tartini calls this "la cadenza aritmetica plagale."¹⁵

In his essay on the third mode, Blainville writes: "The mixed mode has neither a dominant nor a perfect cadence. Very well; but it does have the plagal cadence of the

¹⁴ For a complete explanation of how the term came to appear in Blainville's writing(s), see Caleb Mutch's article, "Blainville's New Mode, or How the Plagal Cadence Came to be 'Plagal'," *Eighteenth-Century Music* 12/1 (March, 2015): 69-90.

¹⁵ Guiseppe Tartini, *Trattato di Musica* (Padova: Stamperia del Seminario, 1754), 103.

ancients. By which rule should we reject this cadence? Do we not have the motets of Lalande which end this way?”¹⁶

Before discussing the cadence of the ancients, Blainville’s example by Michel Richard de Lalande (1657–1726) is worthy of mention. According to Mutch, the motets Blainville references regarding the plagal cadence’s importance in early music history could possibly be “De profundis” and “Dixit dominus.”¹⁷ Both of these works conclude with a homophonic and syllabic “amen.” Blainville—and most eighteenth-century French musicians—were likely familiar with Lalande’s motets given his illustrious history in Louis XIV’s court. These works had been kept alive after Lalande’s death, unlike most music of the period, by a new edition of his *grands motets* appearing in 1729. Even with Lalande’s regional reputation, Blainville could have easily located earlier French/Burgundian composers to further his case of historical significance.

In his *Histoire general* (1767), Blainville explains the plagal cadence more clearly and directly than in his earlier essay. Here he mentions the cadence as a descending fourth going to the tonic as he had demonstrated previously, “*ou bein montant de la tonique a la dominante*” (or ascending from the tonic to the dominant).¹⁸ In this later

¹⁶[Charles Henri de] Blainville, “Essay sur un troisieme mode...” (Paris: par l’auteur, 1751), 5.

Original text: “*Ce mode mixte n’a ni dominante, ni cadence parfaite. D’accord; mais il a la cadence plagale des anciens. De quell droit la rejeterions nous cette cadence? N’avons nous pas des motets de Lalande qu’elle termine?*” The translation is my own.

¹⁷ Mutch, 78-79.

supplement to his original 1751 definition, he also documents the well-accepted theory of his contemporaries that the falling fourth can be used to end on a half-cadence (in modern terminology).

Though Blainville does appear to be the earliest to assign the term “plagal” to a concluding IV–I cadence, he was not the first to acknowledge its historical significance, particularly within sacred music. A certain Captain F. Prencourt included a plagal cadence in his early eighteenth-century treatise, which he labeled an “imperfect cadence,” and explains that they are “frequently used in church musick.”¹⁹ Another English theorist, William Jones (1726–1800), also gives an example and writes about “a cadence from the fourth [to the tonic], which is the more solemn of the two [the other being the authentic cadence], and is very properly applied by authors of sacred music.”²⁰

By the nineteenth century, the correlation between the plagal cadence and a sacred work seems to have been solidified. As early as 1806, John Wall Callcott not only differentiates between IV–I, which he calls the “plagal, or church cadence” and the I–V, labeled the imperfect cadence, but explains that the former “is used as a final cadence in church, particularly in the Hallelujah Chorus, Messiah, and in the Coronation Anthem,

¹⁸ Charles Henri de Blainville, *Histoire generale, critique et philologique de la musique* (Paris: Pissot, 1767), 75.

¹⁹ See Captain Prencourt, “Vol IV, no. 1,” British Library Add MS 32531, c. 1710, cited in Herissone, 172.

²⁰ William Jones, *A Treatise on the Art of Music* (Colchester, England: W. Keymer, 1784), 12. See his example #28 for a IV–I final close.

Zadock the Priest.”²¹ One should consider the possibility that the popularity of Handel and his use of the plagal cadence helped to influence the acceptance of the plagal-amen.²² In the mid-1800s, a critic for the *Musical Times* tells us that “the oratorio concludes with a chorus in which the ‘Amen’ is lengthened out with a plagal cadence, in the true conventional style of sacred finales.”²³

Though it is hard to measure just how influential Blainville’s terminology and definition of the plagal cadence was, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, “plagal cadence” (or variations in other languages) seems to be the choice term to use when referring to the IV–I concluding progression. Charles-Simon Catel adopted the phrase “cadences plagales” in his theory treatise of 1802 (see fig. 2.7).²⁴ This adoption remains noteworthy because Catel’s publication was a textbook for the Paris *Conservatoire*, founded only seven years earlier. One can imagine that a book in such an institution helped to popularize the phrase “plagal cadence” across France and beyond. Likewise,

²¹ [John Wall] Callcott, *A Musical Grammar in Four Parts* (London: B. MacMillan, 1806), 208.

²² Purcell’s use of the plagal cadence may have also influenced later English composers. Schjelderup-Ebbe discusses the use of plagal cadences in his book, *Purcell’s Cadences* (Oslo: Scandinavian University Books, 1962), pp. 25-28. Further, he states that “as one might expect, plagal endings are found in the composer’s music for the church, particularly in the anthems.” Additionally, he discusses a number of secular compositions that include plagal cadences.

²³ “Worcester and Norwich Festivals,” *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 11, no. 248 (Oct. 1, 1863): 136.

²⁴ Charles-Simon Catel, *Traité d’Harmonie* (Paris: C. F. Peters, 1802), 28f.

Jean-Georges Kastner also uses “*cadence plagale*,” deriving his terminology from “les tons d’église plagaux” (the plagal tones of the Church), in his textbook that was also adopted by the *Conservatoire* a short time later.²⁵ Outside of France, Johann Christian Kittel (1732–1809), Moritz Hauptmann (1792–1868), and Arthur Joachim von Oettingen (1836–1920) are further examples of writers who chose to use “plagal cadence” when referring to the motion from the subdominant to the tonic.²⁶

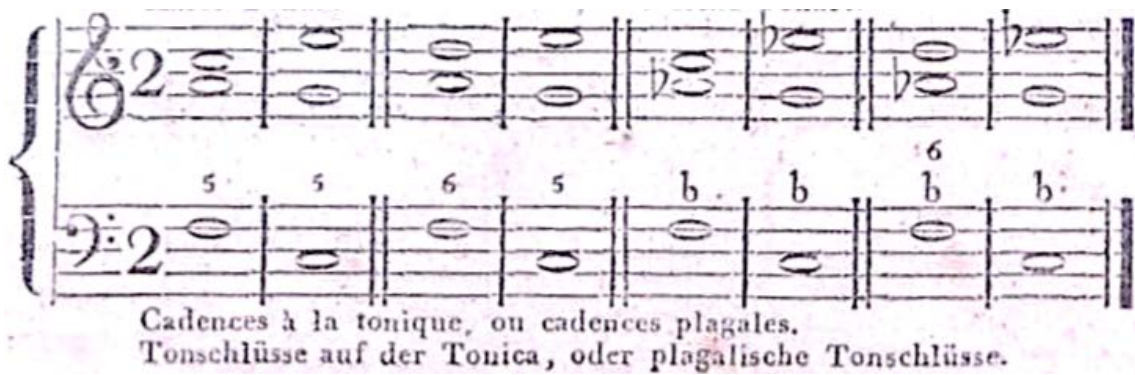


Figure 2.7 Catel’s example of “*cadences plagales*” in his *Traité d’Harmonie*.

The Beginning of the Plagal Cadence

For centuries, the terms “authentic” and “plagal” have been associated with the modes. Helmore wrote that these two modes run parallel with each other, just as “stripes, *plagæ* do.”²⁷ He considers the two modes as a “wedded couple—the Authentic being

²⁵ Jean-Georges Kastner, *Grammaire musicale* (Paris: Chez de Henry Lemoine, 1837), 148.

²⁶ See Hauptmann, 201; Kittel, §12-2, no. 1; and Oettingen, 76.

²⁷ Thomas Helmore, *Plain-Song* (London: Novello, [1877?]), 29.

manly, vigorous, and sublime, the Plagal feminine, gentle, and beautiful.” While it is rare for an author to assign genders to the modes, many do write about the authentic and plagal modes as they relate to punctuation symbols. A contemporary of Helmore, Albert Lavignac relates this “symbolism” to authentic and plagal cadences by comparing the authentic cadence to a period and the plagal cadence to an exclamation point. (One assumes an exclamation point is analogous because the plagal cadence’s common role is showing affirmation *after* the authentic cadence.) Moreover, he writes that “the plagal cadence is nothing else than the terminal, perfect cadence in the ancient plagal modes, where the fourth degree was the dominant.”²⁸

Final plagal cadences first appear in Western music in the late fifteenth century. The earliest examples found during the course of this research were composed by Johannes Ockeghem (c. 1410–1497).²⁹ Composers such as Obrecht, Josquin, and Lasso were soon to follow. The music of Obrecht and Josquin contains many plagal cadences used as extensions. Some theorists suggest that such plagal extensions help to balance the dominant-tonic cadence. For example, Newton Miller asserts that this contrast between plagal and authentic cadences helps to convey the “piece’s overall dependence on the

²⁸ Albert Lavignac, *La Musique et Les Musiciens* (Paris: Librairie Ch. Delagrave, 1895), 267.

²⁹ Suggesting Ockeghem as the earliest composer to use the final plagal cadence is understood to be speculative at best. This suggestion was shared with me by Dr. Roland Eberlein (University of Cologne) through personal correspondence. He assumes Ockeghem to be the inventor of the falling-fourth cadence since he has not found examples in compositions by earlier composers, though he admits there is no source to substantiate this claim. Personal correspondence, August 8, 2015.

dominant to articulate its structure, by shifting to the subdominant to define tonic with respect to the other side of the tonal spectrum.”³⁰

Before the development of the plagal cadence in the fifteenth century, composers ended pieces with prototype-authentic cadences, such as the 6–8 close (see fig. 2.8). This close followed the rule that required a perfect closing interval to be approached by an imperfect interval. Though authentic cadences had been well-suited to the theoretical rules for the previous two centuries, the complexities of music were changing. Some modes, like the Phrygian, were beyond the capability of standard cadences. Thus, composers needed to design a new cadence in order to compose in the Phrygian mode.³¹



Figure 2.8 6–8 close on *mi*

³⁰ Newton Ward Miller, “Subdominant Harmony” (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1979), 100.

³¹ From Brown and Stewart, p. 110: “As a consequence, the greatest number of final authentic cadences resolved on F, G, A, or B♭. Of those which did not, the plagal ending on E was the most numerous. Unlike the other modes, that on E was rarely considered to be transposable in writing. In addition, it was preserved for the most imposing of compositions.”

It can be seen in figure 2.6 why the authentic cadence cannot be used for closes on *mi*.³² The same 6–8 closing formula used for closes on *re*, *fa*, or *sol* cannot be used with *mi* because either a harmonic tritone (B-F) or a melodic tritone (B♭-E) would result (see figs. 2.9 & 2.10).

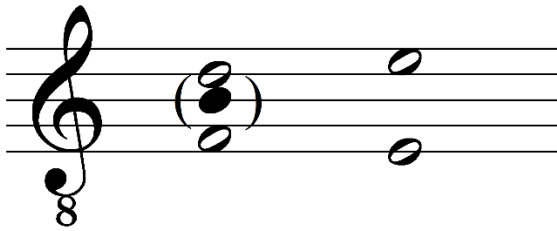


Figure 2.9 6–8 harmonic tritone

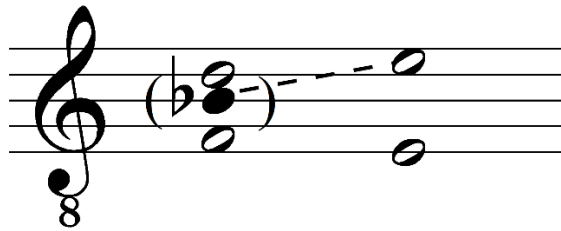


Figure 2.10 6–8 melodic tritone

For Ockeghem, a solution to this cadential problem came by completing the 6-8 cadence with a third below the tenor’s penultimate note and a fifth below the tenor’s last note. Roland Eberlein claims that this procedure had previously been used by composers, though only as an internal, not a final, cadence.³³ As demonstrated in figure 2.11, this solution placed the tenor on the final of the mode and created a falling fourth in the bass. Composers needing to place the final in the bass were required to use this formula a second time, as demonstrated in the “Credo” of Ockeghem’s *Missa mi-mi* (see fig. 2.12). However, to composers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries such a follow-up

³² Here *mi* indicates placement in the Guidonian hexachordal system, which usually occurred on the note “E”.

³³ For example, see Matteo da Perugia’s (fl. 1400–16) “Credo,” ed. by Fischer & Gallo, 148, mm. 91-92. Cited by Eberlein, 49.

harmonic progression would not have held any cadential function since the 6–8 frame was lacking.³⁴ Even so, this “frameless” cadence was soon imitated by many other composers.



Figure 2.11 6–8 framework with contratenor placed below the tenor

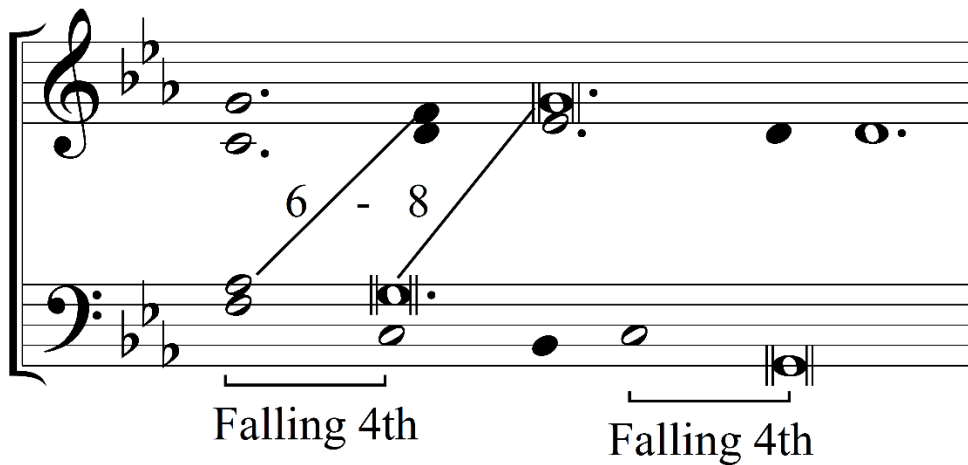


Figure 2.12 Ockeghem, ending of “Credo,” *Missa mi-mi*

³⁴ Eberlein, 224.

With their novel cadential interactions between the lower voices, these cadences added to an existing problem in modal theory. Confusion seems to have been widespread among musicians attempting to determine the *finalis* of a work. Does one look to the final pitch in the bass or the tenor? Zarlino gives an authoritative ruling in his 1558 work. He poses the problem in Part III:

Another difficulty arises when a composition ends otherwise, namely doubt concerning its mode, as we shall see in Part IV. This is judged by the last note, or, better, the chord based on it. If the last chord is not an octave or unison, it would be easy to mistake the mode by assuming the top or bottom note of the chord to be the final.³⁵

He presents his solution much later:

The tenor, which is the next part above the bass, is the part that governs and regulates the composition and maintains the mode upon which it is based. It must have elegant movements so arranged that they observe the natural order of its mode. Its cadences must be placed on the proper tones and introduced with good reason.³⁶

That Zarlino wrote about this problem reinforces that sixteenth-century musicians were struggling not only with cadential terminology but also how to determine the final.

A pupil of J.S. Bach, Johann Christian Kittel (1732–1809), shows us that musicians were still encountering issues with the terminology as it pertained to the final even during the Classical period; this was well after Blainville and others had already begun calling the IV–I progression a “plagal cadence.” In Kittel’s analysis of Bach’s “Durch Adams Fall,” he labels the last phrase as “Dorian, with a plagal cadence.”³⁷ Both

³⁵ Zarlino, Part III, 85.

³⁶ Ibid., 180.

³⁷ Kittel, 46. Original German text: *Dorisch, mit einem plagalischen Schluß.*

cadences, however, are V–I progressions, ending on A (see fig. 2.13). Lori Burns attributes Kittel’s plagal classification as demonstrating his “theoretical conception of the confinal ending. First, Kittel understands the cadences on A to be conventional with the Dorian modality... [Rather than referring to our modern-day plagal cadence], he is more likely referring to the higher-level function of the cadence on A within the harmony of D.”³⁸ Thus, two centuries later, theorists still lacked a standard terminology for how to name the final (or cadence for that matter) in irregular modes.



Figure 2.13 Kittel’s referenced ending in Bach, “Durch Adams Fall”

Selected Functions of the Plagal Cadence

Originally used by Ockeghem and his contemporaries as a cadence on *mi*, the falling-fourth cadence soon gained additional popularity as a close on *re*, *fa*, and *sol*. After a falling-fifth (i.e., authentic) close, composers often chose to add and embellish a further close, especially when *amen* was in the text, by way of extension. In these extensions, composers sustained the final in the soprano and/or tenor. With the final sustained in the voice(s), two harmonic progressions were possible: I–I or IV–I. An

³⁸ Lori Burns, “Modality Identity and Irregular Endings in Two Chorale Harmonizations by J.S. Bach,” *Journal of Music Theory* 38, no. 1 (Spring, 1994): 55.

example can be seen at the ending of the “Agnus Dei” in Josquin’s *Missa “Faisant regretz”* (fig. 2.14).

The musical score for Josquin's *Missa "Faisant regretz"*, Agnus Dei, measures 96-102. It features four vocal staves and a basso continuo line. The lyrics are: "cem, do - na no - bis pa - cem. do - na no - bis, do - na no - bis, do - na pa - cem. do - na no - bis, do - na no - bis pa - cem. pa - cem. do - na no - bis pa - cem." The score includes a measure number of 100 and a key signature change to one sharp (F#).

Figure 2.14 *Finalis* sustained in soprano and tenor, Josquin’s *Missa “Faisant regretz,”* Agnus Dei, mm. 96-102

In the event of a sustained *finalis*, composers almost always ended their work with a plagal cadence. Pietro Aron alludes to cadential extension in his 1525 publication, already calling such an ending a “custom.”³⁹ After discussing how composers should treat a sustained final, he gives several examples of “pleasing and appropriate progressions,” one of which can be seen in figure 2.15.

The musical score by Pietro Aron shows two examples of plagal extension. The first example shows a plagal cadence in G major with an extended final note. The second example shows a similar cadence with a different extension.

Figure 2.15 Pietro Aron, examples of plagal extension

³⁹ Quoted in Strunk, 212.

Nineteenth-century composer E. M. Lee also discussed plagal extension from its root in ecclesiastical music.⁴⁰ He distinguishes between the *clausula vera* and *clausula plagalis*; the former occurring when the melody $\hat{2} - \hat{1}$ is accompanied by $\hat{7} - \hat{1}$, and the latter being an appendix of the *clausula vera*, “in which the note four degrees above the final was of special prominence.” Moreover, the *clausula plagalis* was used “to intensify the feeling of repose, or ending, after the *clausula vera*, in such modes as this latter cadence did not produce the feeling of complete satisfaction.” The close was not completely satisfied in hypophrygian (mode 4), hypomixolydian (mode 8), and hypolocrian (mode 12) because the dominant turns out to be the fourth scale degree.⁴¹

Lee demonstrates the *clausula vera* and *clausula plagalis* in the figure seen below (fig. 2.16). In this example, he explains that, while this is similar to the progression of our modern plagal cadence, the A in the bass (penultimate measure) is the dominant of the fourth mode, not the subdominant to E.⁴²

⁴⁰ The following information comes from: E[rnest] M[arkam] Lee, “Cadences and Closes,” *Proceedings of the Musical Association* 31st session (1904-05): 63-65.

⁴¹ These mode numbers (quoted by Lee) reference William Rockstro’s organizational method of the modes.

⁴² Still using Rockstro’s modes, the Hypophrygian mode has E as the final; G as the mediant; A as a dominant; and a range from B-B’. Phrygian mode, on the other hand, uses E, G, C, and E-E’, respectively.

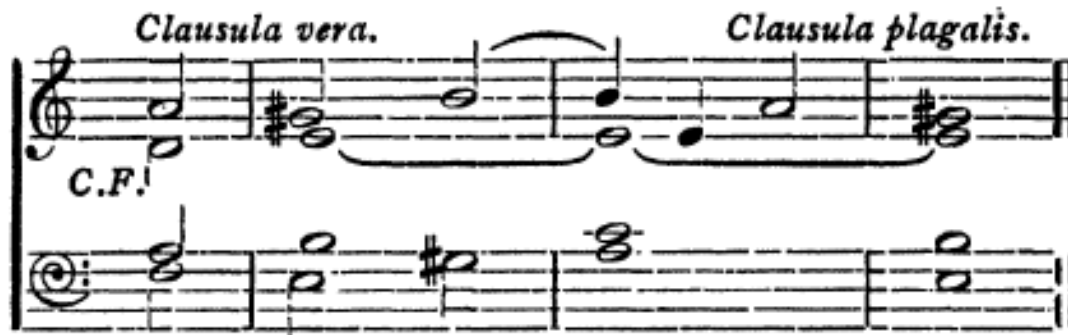


Figure 2.16 A dominant cadence in mode 4 according to E. M. Lee.

It would seem that one can create a general rule regarding cadences of this type: When there is no other guide, we may reasonably take the final *bass* note to be the tonal center. However, in Phrygian cadences we always have the double procedure to lead us. In these cadences, as has been shown, the soprano or tenor close lacks its distinguishing leading tone. In summation, while we continue to use this harmonic progression with little alteration, the theoretical perspective is quite different from pre-common practice composers.

In 1504, Johann Cochlaeus (1479–1552) noted the same rules for closing on *mi* as Ockeghem had formulated during the previous century.⁴³ Indeed he follows Ockeghem's rules exactly: When the tenor closes on *mi* in three-part counterpoint, the contra-tenor must be placed a third below the tenor on the penultimate chord, and the soprano should stay a sixth above the tenor. On the last chord, the contra-tenor is then required to be a

⁴³ The following rules were taken from Johann Cochlaeus's, *Musica Activa* (Cologne: N.p., [c. 1504]), 16ff. Kevin N. Moll translates Bernhard Meier's original German commentary into English in *Counterpoint and Compositional Process in the Time of Dufay*, pp. 150-159.

fifth below the tenor, i.e., leaping down a fourth just as does our modern plagal cadence (see fig. 2.17). Should the composer be writing for four voices, the penultimate pitch of the fourth voice should be a third above the tenor and the final note (in the fourth voice) must be a fourth above the tenor since the bass is already a fifth below the tenor (see fig. 2.18); placing the fourth voice below the tenor would produce parallel octaves.

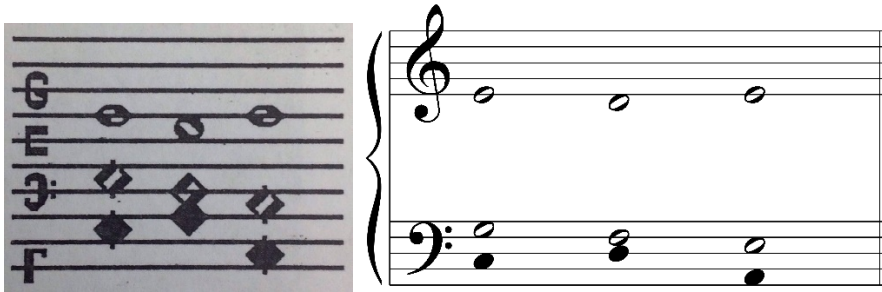


Figure 2.17 Cochlaeus's 3-part counterpoint cadence on *mi*

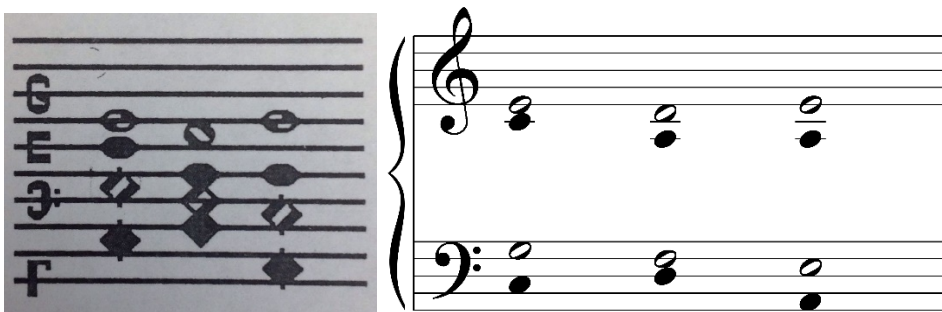


Figure 2.18 Cochlaeus's 4-part counterpoint cadence on *mi*

Alongside the plagal cadence, theorists also characterized modal differences. Giovanni Maria Bononcini (1642–1678) distinguished between the characters of the authentic and plagal modes. In his *Musico Prattico* (1673), he records that the authentic mode has properties of fire and the plagal mode relates to the grave. Moreover, the

authentic has a lively nature, and the plagal a sad nature.⁴⁴ Additionally, Burmeister associated the Phrygian and Hypophrygian modes—which we have seen to use the falling-fourth cadence—with similar characteristics. He states that those modes require “lamentful and doleful subjects.”⁴⁵

Discussions of the falling fourth became more popular from the seventeenth century onwards. Many writers mention the plagal cadence in association with “grave” music. In the mid-seventeenth century, Christopher Simpson briefly references the falling-fourth before wrapping up his discussion on cadences.

Having spoken of Cadences, I must not omit a close, which is made, without either of the before mentioned cadences, and used for a conclusion to some fancies, motets, or other grave musick; in which the basse falleth a 4th or riseth a 5th and part of the final note is commonly taken in to the descant in this manner.⁴⁶

Notable is Simpson’s last statement regarding the final note commonly taken in the descant. This aligns with previous composers (e.g., Ockeghem and Josquin, see fig. 2.14) who had the final note sustained in the tenor or soprano requiring the bass to fall a fourth or rise a fifth.

In today’s language, “grave” tends to hold a darker, more negative meaning than it originally did. The term once had a more religious connotation to it; one would have associated “grave” music with sacred music. As such, it might be suspected that Christian music came to be known as grave music. Douglas defines one of these shared

⁴⁴ G. M. Bononcini, *Musico Pratico* (Bologna: Monti, 1673), 123-4.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Strunk, 135.

⁴⁶ Christopher Simpson, *The Division-Violist: or An Introduction to the Playing upon a Ground* (London: William Godbid, 1659), 36.

characteristics as “a musical style of noble and grave dignity, sharply distinguished from secular or domestic song; a fit vehicle for the utterance of inspired liturgical worship.”⁴⁷

Additionally, in referencing the OLD HUNDREDTH, Sir John Denham called this tune “the most grave and graceful of tunes.” Havergal explains that by using “grave” as a descriptor, we must understand Denham to mean the commonly held definition during his day: “sober, temperate, devout.”⁴⁸

It appears that to Renaissance composers, the plagal cadence developed out of necessity due to modal requirements. But there remain two additional—and seemingly opposing—supporting reasons to use the plagal cadence: 1) composers were limited in their choices in harmonizing earlier monophonic endings used with *amen*; and 2) on the contrary, they desired a greater variety of cadences in their works.

Merbecke’s *Book of Common Prayer* (discussed in chapters 1 & 4) contains syllabic settings of the texts. A majority of the texts end with *amen* as a response, and are melodically closed in one of two ways: 1) $\hat{7} - \hat{1}$ for Ferial tones (used on weekdays); or 2) $\hat{1} - \hat{1}$ for Festal tones (used on Sundays and feast days; see fig. 1.3).⁴⁹ When later composers began to harmonize this latter monophonic setting (assuming that they kept the original pitch as the final), they were left with two harmonic options: I–I or IV–I.

⁴⁷ Douglas, 17.

⁴⁸ W. H. Havergal, *A History of the Old Hundredth Psalm Tune with Specimens* (New York: Mason Brothers, 1854), 44.

⁴⁹ Frederic Warren Homan, “Cadence in Gregorian Chant” (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1961), 4.

Musicologist Sue Cole agrees that this limited harmonic palette likely aided in the plagal cadence being associated with the closing *amen*.⁵⁰

Further supporting this view is that, during the eighteenth century, many small parishes in England were unable to afford an organ. Because of this, Methodists and likely other denominations during this time introduced the bass viol as the accompaniment to the leader's voice.⁵¹ *Amen*, having continuously been sung in Anglican services, was doubtless performed in the same fashion. Consequently, it seems likely that any accompanying instrument—continuo or not—would have chosen to harmonize the otherwise stale *amen* with the IV–I progression.

Newton Miller, however, argues that the limitation of harmonies was not the reasoning behind composers using the IV–I progression, but rather was an aid in completing the primary harmonies surrounding the tonic.

The presence of the subdominant is somewhat fortuitous since tonic and subdominant share a common tone. But it is doubtful that the harmonic force of the subdominant was inconsequential in these places [the monotonic endings], that it was merely convenient [to use IV–I]. Its use testifies, along with the growth of tonal coherence throughout musical works in the years around 1500, to the maturation of the tonal concept.⁵²

Miller goes on to write that the plagal cadence might have grown in importance as a tool to balance out the proportion of the work. He finishes the quote above by saying

⁵⁰ Personal correspondence with Sue Cole, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, October 14, 2015.

⁵¹ Louis F. Benson, *The English Hymn: Its Development and Use in Worship* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1962), 243.

⁵² Miller, 107.

that “it is not unlikely that the growth of a subdominant aesthetic even promoted in reciprocal fashion the evolution of tonality.”

Although Miller’s quote discourages this thought, if composers *did* choose to harmonize a $\hat{1} - \hat{1}$ melody with the IV–I progression simply due to a lack of variety (since there is only one other harmonic option), it seems strange that others suggest that it was used to provide more variety.⁵³ When discussing the popular *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (1861), Erik Routley notes that “since virtually every non-plainsong tune...ended with a perfect cadence the amens were set uniformly to a plagal cadence.”⁵⁴ Though evidence suggests differently, if that was the primary motivation for the editors of *HAM*, then it would mean that the popularity of the plagal-amen (which can safely be credited to them) during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was even more irrational.

Another example from this same period comes from the editor of *The Musical Times*. After a reader had proposed an amended ending for the “Gloria Patri,” which included two consecutive authentic cadences (the first for the hymn text, the second for the “amen”), the editor advised the following upon printing the new submission: “We would suggest the introduction of the plagal cadence, in preference to a repetition of the previous one.”⁵⁵

⁵³ A good many writers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries seem happy to use plagal and authentic cadences interchangeably, simply as a way to end monotony in cadences.

⁵⁴ Routley, *Church Music*, 98.

⁵⁵ Robert Stroud, “Original Correspondence,” *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 14, no. 317 (Jul. 1, 1869): 152.

The above examples may have questionable reasoning, but they might have historical merit on their side. The reader might recall William Holder and his rationale for alternating between authentic and plagal chords: “Moreover, on the continual shifting of these [chords], or often changing them, depends on the variety of harmony...in all contrapunct chiefly, but indeed in all kinds of composition.”⁵⁶ It is not likely that later English editors, like those of *HAM*, who chose to alternate the closes between authentic and plagal cadences were directly influenced by Holder and his argument, but it does suggest that, historically, theorists had argued for variety.

We see alternating cadences in another composer not yet discussed, Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625). In his anthem, “O Lord, increase my faith,” one can see just how precisely Gibbons arranged the perfect and plagal cadences so that no two similar cadences ever occur repeatedly. Henry Phillips comments on anthems and extended canticles constructed in parallel fashion with Gibbons’s work and states that “the variety of cadences saves them from becoming dull.”⁵⁷

It has been shown how the plagal cadence emerged out of necessity, yet subsequently became popular. Most composers who used the plagal cadence after the beginning of the sixteenth century did so by adding it after a perfect cadence, and by no means always with *amen*, *hallelujah*, or other sacred ending texts.⁵⁸ One last example of

⁵⁶ Holder, 68f.

⁵⁷ C. Henry Phillips, 89.

⁵⁸ Plagal cadences apart from *amen* are especially plentiful in music from the German tradition.

a closing formula that deserves reference is found in Baroque church music. In some church music (especially from the German heritage), after the voices reach a unison tonic, the figured bass notates $\hat{4} - \hat{3}$ for the instrument(s). As with the plagal cadence, this device was always implemented after the authentic cadence. In contrast, however, all voices are static while only the instruments imply the harmonic change.

A remnant of this practice is still ongoing today. The standard closing for Gospel songs is for the accompaniment to end in this fashion, after the voices have concluded on an authentic cadence. Interestingly, this device is generally transmitted aurally, and is no longer notated in the score. For early composers, however, this was a common trend.⁵⁹

This chapter has presented a brief history of the plagal cadence from its earliest development in the fifteenth century and some of its major roles. Moreover, many of the designated names historically associated with the IV–I progression have been reviewed in their respective spheres.

Though composers frequently utilized this cadence in the Renaissance and Baroque periods, its popularity reached a zenith in nineteenth-century church music with a much greater impact than had previously been known. It was during this period that the plagal cadence became so ingrained in sacred music that a new designation came about: the “plagal-amen” cadence. The following chapter examines the details surrounding the union of the plagal cadence and the *amen* text.

⁵⁹ For examples, see: Freylinghausen’s *Geistreiches Gesangbuch* (1708), Hymns #403 & #405; and *Psalmodia Germanica* (1732), “On the birth of Christ,” and “On divine providence.” Orlando Lasso also ends several of his *a cappella* works in this fashion. See endings of “Confortanini et Iam,” “Domine fac mecum,” “Exaltabo te,” “Timor et Tremor,” and several verses in his *Seven Penitential Psalms*.

CHAPTER III:

THE PLAGAL-AMEN CADENCE

The previous chapters have surveyed *amen* solely as a text, and the plagal cadence as it has historically functioned in Western music, but with little discussion regarding their position as a combined entity. The popular combining of these two components in sacred music has spawned the label of *plagal-amen*, or simply the *amen*-cadence in many musical circles. Textbooks and teachers alike refer to the closing IV–I progression nowadays in this fashion, even if the text *amen* is not present. This chapter will examine the plagal-amen cadence as it developed from its origin in the fifteenth century through its continued use in sacred music today.¹

The Renaissance and Reformation

In chapter two, Ockeghem was suggested as the earliest composer to use the plagal cadence, which was developed out of necessity for use in certain modes. However, Ockeghem also used the plagal cadence in association with *amen* (see the ending of the

¹ I chose not to keep a thorough record of every hymnal and sacred music collection surveyed throughout this research due to the large number of publications I perused. To view a general statement of the numbers of estimated sources, denominations, databases, and collections consulted (in addition to my bibliography), see Appendix A.

“Credo” in *Missa mi-mi*). Later composers soon adopted this method, almost always decorating *amen* in a coda-like fashion and using IV–I in the bass for the penultimate and final pitches while the soprano and/or tenor held the tonic pitch (see fig. 2.15 in chapter two). Though the adoption of the plagal-amen cadence seems to be found in most geographic areas, the greatest number appear in English Renaissance music; other areas where the cadence can be found include Lutheran Germany and Italy.

For many generations, English sacred music has included the anthem as a popular musical expression of worship. A general definition of an anthem is “any sacred song; such as may be used ‘in all places where they sing,’ as well as in choirs.”² A more etymological explanation may be that the word comes to us by way of a corruption of *antiphony* (although only the full anthem is performed by the choir antiphonally).³

Beyond the derivation of the word remains its historic association with *amen*. In his address to the reader in 1641, John Barnard records that he has “printed all the Anthems usually sung in any of our Cathedrals verbatim.”⁴ Nearly every anthem in four or five voices that follows includes a plagal-amen cadence, suggesting that plagal-amen cadences were indeed sung at this time. Two decades later, James Clifford, a pupil of

² Thomas McCart, “The Matter and Manner of Praise: The Controversial Evolution of Hymnody in the Church of England” (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1994), 137.

³ Carl Engel, *Reflections on Church Music* (London: Gustav Scheurmann, 1856), 75.

⁴ John Barnard, *The First Book of Selected Church Musick*, vols. 1-10 (London: Edward Griffin, 1641), “To the Reader.”

Byrd and thus accepted as an authoritative figure in English church music, published his collection of anthems which also included *amen* after a majority of the pieces, and often not in a formulaic manner.⁵ While this collection did not include music along with the texts, we might speculate that the *amens* were set to plagal cadences based on Barnard's preceding publication.

A fair number of Tudor anthems incorporate the plagal-amen cadence. In table 3.1, one can see a variety of composers during this time who closed their works with this popular cadence. Inspection of additional anthologies revealed the following information:

1) In a separate collection of Weelkes's anthems, six of the nine pieces conclude with the plagal-amen.⁶

2) Le Huray's popular collection contains the plagal-amen cadence in more than half of the 38 anthems (and the majority of the other anthems still end with a plagal cadence even when *amen* is not the closing word).⁷

Lastly, church musician Thomas Causton (c. 1525–1570) ended several of his pieces with plagal-amens in his well-known publication, *Certaine notes* (1560). These works, however, are a bit of an anomaly in that there does not seem to be any reason

⁵ J[ames] C[lifford], *The Divine Services and Anthems Usually Sung in His Majesties Chappell*, 2nd ed. (London: W.G., 1664).

⁶ Peter Phillips, ed., *English Anthems for four, five and six voices* (London: Novello), 1995.

⁷ Peter Le Huray, ed., *The Treasury of English Church Music 1545-1650*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

behind his choosing plagal over authentic cadences; the modes and texts do not appear to influence the choice of cadences in this collection.

Table 3.1 Examples of Tudor anthems using the plagal-amen cadence⁸

COMPOSER	WORK	DATE
Batten	<i>O Praise the Lord</i>	d. 1637
Byrd	<i>O quam gloriosum</i>	pub. 1589
Byrd	<i>Ave verum Corpus</i>	pub. 1605
Byrd	<i>Teach me, O Lord</i>	d. 1623
Farrant/Hilton	<i>Lord, for Thy tender mercy's sake</i>	late 16 th century
Gibbons	<i>Almighty and everlasting God</i>	pub. 1641
Mudd	<i>Let Thy merciful ears</i>	17 th century
Mundy	<i>O Lord, the maker</i>	pub. 1545
Parsons	<i>Ave Maria</i>	d. 1570
Tallis	<i>Salvator mundi</i>	pub. 1575
Weelkes	<i>Gloria in excelsis, Deo</i>	d. 1623

Following the Reformation, the Lutheran hymn rose to a level of great influence. Although Lutheran hymn-writers occasionally employed plagal-amens, more often Lutheran hymns ended with some other sacred text (e.g., *Kyrieleis*, *Hallelujah*, etc.). *Das Düsseldorfer Gesangbuch* (1612) is an example of a German hymnal that frequently uses both *amen* and *Kyrie* to close hymns.⁹

⁸ This list was assembled from *The Oxford Book of Tudor Anthems*, compiled by Christopher Morris (London: Oxford University Press, 1978).

⁹ For examples, see pp. 631, 634, 636, 646, 676, 690, 699.

Figures 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 demonstrate typical endings in Lutheran hymns up until the Baroque period.¹⁰



Figure 3.1 XXVIII, “Herr Gott, dich loben wir,” *harm.* Landgraf Moritz (1572-1632)



Figure 3.2 XXI. “Menich, willst du leben seliglich,” *harm.* H. Schein (1627)

¹⁰ The following figures are found in Leonard Woolsey Bacon’s *Hymns of Martin Luther set to their original melodies with an English Version* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1883).



Figure 3.3 XXVII, “Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich,” *harm.* Erythraeus (1608)

The Late Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical Periods

Composers of the Italian school chose to integrate the plagal-amen cadence along with their northern contemporaries. Palestrina (c. 1525–1594) and Giovanni Gabrieli (1557–1612) utilized plagal-amen cadences, along with lesser-known composers Giovanni Florimi (d. 1683) and Giovanni Mognossa (fl. 1673). Through a random sampling of ten Palestrina Masses, it was found that each one contained multiple plagal cadences; they were as common as authentic cadences. Exactly five of the ten masses surveyed used a plagal-amen close on either one or both of the “Gloria” and “Credo” movements.¹¹ Though usually extended by one or two measures with the tenor sustaining the *finalis*, these examples tend to be much less ornate than those by composers of the preceding generation.

In Gabrieli’s music, too, we find sparse examples (although there are many more plagal cadences not paired with *amen*). His 1597 composition “Anima mea Dominum”

¹¹ The following masses were examined: Ecce sacerdos magnus; Papae Marcelli; Beata Virgine; Veni Sponsa Christi; ad fugam; Brevis; Ascendo ad Patrem; aeterna Christi munera; Dies sanctificatus; and Assumpta est Maria.

closes with a plagal-amen, but not in an extended cadential form, as has been so frequently witnessed thus far; the closing harmony is nearly homophonic when examined solely with *amen* (see fig. 3.4).

By the time of Florimi and Mognossa, the plagal-amen was commonly used in a two-chord setting, i.e., homophonic with *amen*.¹² Similar to Palestrina and Gabrieli's music, there are far more plagal cadences in these composers' works than just those paired with *amen*. One additional well-known Italian composer who chose to conclude his music with plagal-amens was Monteverdi (1567–1643). Examples include movements from his *Vespro Della B. Vergine da Concerto*: “Dixit Dominus,” “Laetatus sum,” and “Nisi Dominus.”

During this era, the plagal-amen began to be used in a loose homophonic structure. No longer were composers writing melismatic lines underneath a sustained *finalis* eventually closing with a IV–I progression. Rather, the composer would finish highlighting the text and then close with a much simpler *amen*, rarely using more than two or three pitches to do so.

As seen in table 3.2, the geographic regions publishing plagal-amens began to shift. At one time the plagal-amen could be found in compositions all over Europe—England, Germany, Burgundy, and Italy—but by the eighteenth century it seems that there were only two prominent regions in which the plagal-amen was printed: England and the British colonies of North America.

¹² Some specific examples include the “Gloria” movement in Florimi's *Messa a 5 voci concertata con violini* and Mognossa's “Credo” from *Messa concertata a 4*.

Table 3.2 Selected eighteenth-century collections that include plagal-amen cadences

TITLE	AUTHOR/ COMPILER	DATE	LOCALE
<i>Book of Psalmody</i>	John Chetham	1736	London
<i>Otto Messe</i>	Pietro Aracelitano	1757	Italy
<i>The First 50 Psalms</i>	Benedetto Marcello	1757	London
<i>New Universal Harmony</i>	Daniel Bayley	1773	Massachusetts
<i>Gentleman and Lady's Musical Companion</i>	John Stickney	1774	Massachusetts
<i>Select Harmony</i>	Andrew Law	1779	Connecticut
<i>Federal Harmony</i>	~	1788	Boston

Perhaps more notable, however, is the infrequent use of the plagal-amen, even in the music collections listed above. Most eighteenth-century sacred music collections, such as William Boyce's three volume *Cathedral Music*, include only a handful of plagal-amens. At a time when most other countries had ceased publishing the plagal-amen (one can only speculate whether the convention was still sung during worship services), only the Anglican Church and its descendants in America would continue publishing it—though with its popularity greatly diminished—until the nineteenth century

The image shows a musical score for a plagal-amen cadence. It consists of ten staves of music. The lyrics are: "seculorum a - men seculorum a - men seculo - rum a - men". The music is written in a style characteristic of the late Renaissance, with a focus on the vocal lines and their rhythmic patterns. The cadence is a plagal one, meaning it moves from the fourth degree of the scale to the first. The score is arranged in a choir setting, with each staff representing a different voice part. The lyrics are written below the corresponding musical lines.

Figure 3.4 Plagal-amen cadence in Gabrieli's "Anima mea Dominum" (1597)

The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

To say that nineteenth-century church music saw a resurgence in the plagal-amen is an understatement. Seemingly overnight the plagal-amen appeared in hymnals of many denominations. Writers and critics also discussed its position in sacred music, though all of these events were limited to English and American publications. If there were publications outside of these geographic areas, they have been overshadowed by the plethora of examples coming from England and America even throughout the twentieth century.

Two writers, Robert Druitt and Frances Havergal, discussed *amen* in the mid-century.¹³ Druitt, who was by profession a medical writer, published extensively in his field as well as in theology; he was a staunch proponent of the Tractarian movement. In 1845, he published a work that explored the depravity of the current church music situation. Among his complaints of new music and adaptations of secular music we find him writing that modern music “never rises above the level of the dullest mannerism; the same whining cadences; the same crawling minor to represent contrition, and the jig-like dotted quavers for praise.”¹⁴ His discussion of cadences continues a few pages later when he implores the congregations to learn to sing well first, “then pains should be taken to learn a harmonized amen, so that this most important response may be given

¹³ At this point, writers and hymnal editors rarely mention *amen* in conjunction with any specific cadence; however, the plagal cadence was most commonly used.

¹⁴ Robert Druitt, *A Popular Tract on Church Music* (London: Francis & John Rivington, 1845), 42-43.

with the heart and the voice of the whole congregation.”¹⁵ This would seem to suggest that the convention of singing *amen* was monophonic, though perhaps an instrument of some sort harmonized with the voices. However, Drutt, who was enthralled with all worship elements that alluded to the past, encouraged congregations to participate in the historical practice of harmonized amens.

A few decades later, Frances Havergal, daughter of W. H. Havergal, briefly defended the use of *amen* in a tribute work to her father. Although *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (1861) was seen as the earliest hymnal to include *amen* after every hymn, many preceding sacred music collections included *amen* on most pieces (e.g., Helmore’s *Accompanying Harmonies* (1852) and Maybrick’s *A Collection of Chants* (1824)). Such an action had already warranted minor discussions among hymnal editors and critics as to the validity of this practice, but these discussions turned into debates among writers, such as Drutt and Jebb, as the popularity of *amen* continued to grow. In her supplemental remarks, Havergal states: “Amens have been appended for optional use, wherever such a close is not unsuitable to the ‘suitable words.’”¹⁶ It is clear from her terminology that there were circles who disagreed with the practice of *HAM* to conclude every hymn with *amen*, necessary or not. Similar “disclaimers” became rather widespread in hymnals of the late-nineteenth century.

¹⁵ Drutt, 47.

¹⁶ *Havergal’s Psalmody and Century of Chants from “Old Church Psalmody”:* *Hundred Tunes & Unpublished Manuscripts of the Late Rev. W. H. Havergal* (London: Robert Cocks, 1871), xxvi.

By the early twentieth century, plagal-amens were attached to most hymns in English-language hymnals, no matter the size of the collection or the denominational affiliation. This nineteenth-century trend continued to gain favor among the denominations which had been slower in adopting the practice. While nearly every Anglican and Episcopal hymnal embraced this practice immediately after *HAM* (1861), other denominations were years, even decades, behind. For example, nineteenth-century Methodist hymnals do not appear to have implemented the plagal-amen cadence until the 1905 publication of *The Methodist Hymnal*. Methodist hymnals continued this characteristic for more than half a century in the United Methodist Church’s hymnal *The Book of Hymns* (1966). Further denominational examples are shown in table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Earliest denominational hymnals found to wholly apply the plagal-amen

Denomination	Title	Date	Note(s)
Catholic	<i>Laudes Dei</i> , compiled by Samuel A. Baldwin	1894	Alfred Young’s earlier <i>Catholic Hymnal</i> (1885) also uses <i>amen</i> to conclude each hymn, but plagal-amen cadences are not used exclusively.
Presbyterian	<i>The Hymnal</i>	1895	~
Lutheran	<i>Hymnal and Order of Service</i>	1901	~
Baptist	<i>The Baptist Standard Hymnal</i>	1924	The editor notes: “The <i>amen</i> at the close of each hymn is optional.”

In the United States, publishers of hymnals continued to include plagal-amen cadences much later than English collections.¹⁷ Even the popular *Broadman Hymnal* (1940) includes plagal-amens attached to approximately twenty hymns (out of approximately 500). This seems to be a rarity in hymnals that consist mainly of gospel songs (as will be discussed later).

Perhaps the apex of the popularity for publishing the plagal-amen in hymnals is demonstrated in *A Treasury of Hymns* (1953); here the editors conclude “The Star-Spangled Banner” with such a cadence (see fig. 3.5). The hype in American publications began to abate by the mid-twentieth century, though the 1989 Church of God hymnal, *Worship the Lord*, still incorporated such a cadence on many of its hymns. This was the latest hymnal surveyed which added *amen* as a cadence in a significant number of hymns.¹⁸

¹⁷ According to David Eicher, “around 1920, the Church of England recognized this [adding plagal-amens] was an ‘odd thing to do,’ so they began to abandon the practice.” See his article, “Why Don’t Hymns End with ‘Amen?’” (Presbyterian Publishing, 2011), 2.

However, I examined a 1939 edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, and found that it still included plagal-amens with every hymn. Eicher’s statement is challenged even more by my findings in *The English Hymnal*’s inclusion of plagal-amens consecutively throughout its 1976 printing.

¹⁸ It should be mentioned, however, that *The English Hymnal with Tunes Centenary Edition* (2006) was a reprint of Vaughn Williams’s original publication; as such, it contains all the *amens* printed in that first edition at the turn of the century.



Figure 3.5 “Star-Spangled Banner” with a plagal-amen cadence¹⁹

The English Hymnal (1933) was found to include *amen*—mostly plagal-amens, though some harmonies follow the original chant notation—appended to each hymn, at least throughout the nineteenth impression printed in 1976. However, a decade later *The New English Hymnal* (1986) omitted *amen* and included the following note in the preface:

“Amen” is printed only at the end of the hymns of which the last verse is in the form of a doxology. Even there its use may be regarded as optional, except in one or two instances where it is musically the conclusion, and in the case of the plainsong melodies of the Office Hymns, with which it should always be used.²⁰

Thus, even as recently as thirty years ago, editors still felt it necessary to formally address the validity of singing *amen* to conclude hymns, attempting to re-formulate its position in church music.

¹⁹ Maria Leiper, and Henry W. Simon, eds., *A Treasury of Hymns* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1953), 119.

²⁰ *The New English Hymnal, Full Music Edition* (Norwich, EN: Canterbury Press, 1986), 1.

Non-Participants

In the early stages of this research, it appeared that every hymnal that was published before the turn of the twentieth century, regardless of denomination, included plagal-amens throughout. This hypothesis, as suspected, turned out to be false. As discussed above, many denominations (e.g., Methodists and Baptists) which seemed at first reluctant to publish *amens* did ultimately give in to the practice. Others, though, never seemed to have followed suit. Neither works by Watts nor the Wesleys were found to include *amen* (in any form) until years after their deaths. That cornerstones of English hymnody (particularly Watts, the “Father of English Hymnody”) by all appearances did not conclude their hymns with *amen* should be reason for us to ask why the convention became so popular a century later.

Not only specific authors, but also specific genres seem to be void of *amens*. In general, music in the gospel song tradition appears to exclude *amen*.²¹ Kirkpatrick and Sweney’s publication, *Precious Hymns* (1885), is one of the early sets of gospel songs that refrain from this convention. For a hymnal *not* to include the plagal-amen during this time in either the U.S. or England was rare indeed.

Most publications by the Rodeheaver Company, a popular publishing house for gospel songs throughout much of the twentieth century, do not include *amens*. One collection published by Rodeheaver, *Standard Hymns and Gospel Songs* (1930), actually

²¹ By “gospel songs,” I mean those songs which signify and speak of a person-to-person relationship. By contrast, “hymn” usually refers to songs whereby humans address God. To a Baptist, the definition I allude to here can be distinguished between the Sandy Creek and Charleston traditions, respectively.

goes so far as to separate hymns from gospel songs (see fig. 3.6). The hymns do contain plagal-amens; the gospel songs do not.

The Closing of a Tradition

Anglican hymnals began omitting *amen* from their publications within the first half of the twentieth century, and there is an especially sharp decline in hymnals of the 1940s and 1950s. Routley advises that the editors “recognized that adding amens had been an anachronism and an error, and began to abandon them.”²² Just as English editors failed to rationalize the commencement of this practice, it appears that no one addressed the ceasing of the practice either. (Of course, if it was viewed as an error on the editors’ parts, it is doubtful that they would have mentioned this termination in a preface.) Again following the Anglican model, other hymnals in England and the United States began to neglect the inclusion of *amens* as well.

Today, the plagal-amen is seldom sung in Protestant services, save its association with one hymn: “Doxology.”²³ As a church musician, I have been involved with three

²² Routley, *Church Music*, 98.

²³ In pre-1861 hymnals surveyed, “Doxology” was never found to be paired with the plagal-amen cadence. Moreover, in Havergal’s *History of the Old Hundredth Psalm Tune* (1854), the OLD HUNDRETH (the tune most commonly associated with “Doxology” in today’s Protestant worship music) includes specimens of this tune from 1563-1847, none of which conclude with *amen* or the plagal cadence. Even though American hymnals have retracted plagal-amens, the “Doxology” has continued to be paired and published with this cadence. Recent hymnals to still incorporate “Doxology” with a closing plagal-amen are *United Methodist Hymnal* (1989), *Baptist Hymnal* (1991), and *Celebrating Grace* (2010).

SUMMER SUNS ARE GLOWING

William Walsham How

RUTH 6. 4. 6. 5. D.

Samuel Smith

1. Sum - mer suns are glow - ing O - ver land and sea;
 2. God's free mer - cy stream - eth O - ver all the world,
 3. Lord, up - on our blind - ness, Thy pure ra - diance pour;
 4. We will nev - er doubt Thee, Though Thou veil Thy light;

Hap - py light is flow - ing Boun - ti - ful and free;
 And His ban - ner gleam - eth Eve - ry - where un - furled;
 For Thy lov - ing - kind - ness Make us love Thee more;
 Life is dark with - out Thee, Death with Thee is bright;

Eve - ry thing re - joic - es In the mel - low rays;
 Broad and deep and glo - rious As the heaven a - bove,
 And when clouds are drift - ing Dark a - cross our sky,
 Light of light, shine o'er us On our pil - grim way;

All earth's thousand voi - ces Swell the psalm of praise.
 Shines in might vic - to - rious His e - ter - nal love.
 Then, the veil up - lift - ing, Fa - ther, be Thou nigh.
 Go Thou still be - fore us To the end - less day. A - men.

285 WE HAVE HEARD THE JOYFUL SOUND

Priscilla J. Owens

JESUS SAVES

William J. Kirkpatrick

1. We have heard the joy - ful sound: Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!
 2. Waft it on the roll - ing tide: Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!
 3. Sing a - bove the bat - tle strife, Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!
 4. Give the winds a might - y voice, Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!

Spread the tid - ings all a - round: Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!
 Tell to sin - ners far and wide: Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!
 By His death and end - less life, Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!
 Let the na - tions now re - joice, — Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!

Bear the news to ev - 'ry land, Climb the steeps and cross the waves;
 Sing, ye is - lands of the sea; Ech - o back, ye o - cean caves;
 Sing it soft - ly thro' the gloom, When the heart for mer - cy craves;
 Shout sal - va - tion full and free, High - est hills and deep - est caves;

On - ward! — 'tis our Lord's com - mand; Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!
 Earth shall keep her ju - bi - lee; Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!
 Sing in tri - umph o'er the tomb, — Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!
 This our song of vic - to - ry, — Je - sus saves! Je - sus saves!

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Figure 3.6 The “dividing line” between hymns with the plagal-amen cadence and gospel songs without (SH&GS, 1930)

different denominations in three separate regions of the United States and can attest to this anomaly and one exception.

The suspicion is not in the way the plagal-amen cadence began to dissipate, for we know that denominations trusted Anglican publications and chose to play another high-stakes game of follow-the-liturgical-leader. More curious is the reason for the reactivation during the nineteenth century after laying mostly dormant for at least a hundred years. Among the Tractarians, writers, and countless hymnal editors, what became the catalyst that caused them to advocate for the plagal-amen cadence in church music? It turns out that it may not have been the Church's fascination with antiquated music in general, but rather with one specific composer and his popular *Responses*: that famed English chapel composer, Thomas Tallis.

CHAPTER IV: THOMAS TALLIS AND THE REVIVAL OF HIS *RESPONSES*

Today, Thomas Tallis (c.1505–1585) is largely regarded as a leader in sixteenth-century church music. Remembered especially for his nine Psalm tunes (published by Parker in 1567) and his mammoth *Spem in alium* (scored for forty voices), during the nineteenth century his fame rested more on his English service music, particularly his *Preces and Responses*. These *Responses* were in the foreground of the Tallis revival that fascinated nineteenth-century England. Furthermore, this research suggests the “Tallis Amens,” located at the end of his *Responses*, to be the root of the Church’s infatuation with the plagal-amen cadence throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and continuing into the twentieth century.¹

Much of the music composed by Tallis can be related to the political culture of his day. Without doubt he was an influential figure to later English composers, such as Byrd and Morley in their service music settings. His influence was again recognized through a revival of his music in nineteenth-century England, ultimately instigating a nineteenth-

¹ The “Tallis Amens” and the “Three Amens” are designations given to the final three amens appearing at the end of Tallis’s *Responses*. Bernarr Rainbow quotes Frederick Helmore as writing “the three amens” (Rainbow, 119). Such a title does not appear in Helmore’s *Memoir*, however, as Rainbow cites. Helmore merely notes “a few chants” (Helmore, 37.) Suzanne Cole calls them the “Tallis’s Amens” (Cole, 54), and E. J. Hopkins assigns the label “the three Amens” (Hopkins, 4).

century church music tradition in England and the United States that lasted more than a hundred years.

The Political Landscape

The sixteenth century was one of the most tumultuous periods in English church history. Tallis seems to have conformed to the rules put forth by church leaders, likely to avoid the unfortunate ending of many disdained church critics. In his eight decades, he experienced the ramifications of Luther's *95 Theses* and the subsequent Council of Trent. At the time of Henry VIII's separation from Rome in 1531, Tallis was a young man. He lived in an era when theologians such as fellow-Englishman William Tyndale were executed for following their convictions. Around 1543, he began serving in the Chapel Royal, including during the partial and full reigns of four English monarchs. Tallis served under Henry until the King's death in 1547, serving then the young King Edward VI until 1553. After Edward's death, "Bloody" Mary assumed the throne and established Catholicism throughout the Kingdom. Five years later, Elizabeth I became queen and reinstated Anglican Protestantism as the official religion. The church music culture in which Tallis functioned, even thrived, was one that surely caused hardships and confusion, though somehow he managed to carve his name into the chronicles of English history.

The church decrees of Henry VIII reached further than the dictating of his own matrimonial rules. On more than one occasion we find Henry dialoguing with his advisors on proper church music procedures, the most famous being Thomas Cranmer's letter to the King in 1544, the year after Tallis began his full-time position at the Chapel.

Amidst the comments about his English translations, Cranmer explains his expectation of church music:

In mine opinion, the song that shall be made thereunto *should not be full of notes*, but as near as may be *for every syllable a note*, so that it may be sung distinctly and devoutly, as be in the Matins and Evensong, Venite, the hymns Te Deum, Benedictus, Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, and all the Psalms and versicles, and the mass Gloria in excelsis, Gloria Patri, the Creed, the Preface, the Pater Noster, and some of the Sanctus and Agnus.²

During the second year of Edward's reign, we find the Lincoln Center Injunctions (dated April 14, 1548), which contain further instructions pertaining to church music. The Royal Visitors, a group sent to visit English parishes to ensure that certain practices and ceremonies had ended, decreed the following in their twenty-fifth injunction:

[The Choir] shall from henceforth sing or say no anthems of our Lady or other Saints, but only of our Lord, and them not in Latin; but choosing out the best and most sounding to Christian religion they shall turn the same into English, *setting thereunto a plain and distinct note for every syllable one*: they shall sing them and none other. And for them read the collect for the preservation of the King's Majesty and the magistrates, which is contained and set forth in the English suffrage.³

Within the turmoil of the sixteenth century English Church came some standardization of worship elements. With Merbecke's choral book, Tallis's service music, and later seventeenth-century English composers, we see the essential part of the service being formed by the singing of the *Preces and Responses*. The testimony of composers like Merbecke, Tallis, Barnard, Playford, and Low demonstrates that the singing the *Preces and Responses*—beginning at the Reformation, continuing until the

² Quoted in Henry John Todd, *The Life of Archbishop Cranmer*, vol. 1 (London: C. J. G. & F. Rivington, 1831), 355-357, italics added for emphasis.

³ Quoted in Peter Le Huray, *Music and the Reformation in England 1549–1600* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1967), 9, italics added for emphasis.

Great Rebellion, and then resuming at the Liturgy of the Restoration—has a historical significance worthy of reenacting in worship services centuries later.⁴

The harmonized Litany was common throughout the sixteenth century, likely influenced by Tallis. A note in *The Musical World* from 1851 claims Tallis was “the first who enriched the cathedral service with harmony,” though it falls short of noting what exact work(s) were initially involved.⁵ Whether Tallis was the first to harmonize the Litany or some other element of worship, harmonized Litanies were prevalent in sixteenth-century England. A fragmented collection of a harmonized Litany ostensibly dating from 1547-48 is held in the British Museum.⁶ The second edition of Cranmer’s *Letany* (1544) is also harmonized for five voices.⁷ Additionally, following Mary’s death and the re-establishment of the Anglican liturgy under Elizabeth, a collection of English services—complete with anthems—that included a harmonized Litany was published by John Day.

Throughout his development as a composer, Tallis continued to write in a choral and homophonic fashion, rarely implementing melismatic writing. By this, we realize

⁴ Jebb, *Choral Service*, 259.

⁵ “Commemoration of the Organists of St. George’s Chapel, Windsor,” *The Musical World* 25 (1851): 741, n. 2.

⁶ J. M. Duncan, “The Preces, Responses, and Litany of the English Church,” *Musical Times* 61, no. 930 (Aug. 1, 1920): 552.

⁷ Andrew Deakin, *Outlines of Musical Bibliography*, part 1 (Birmingham: Andrew Deakin, 1899), 25.

that, on the whole, Tallis's works do tend to reflect the aims expressed by Cranmer, whereby they are structured in a palpable and syllabic setting. Later composers, such as Byrd and especially Gibbons, used Tallis's models for their own service settings. Tallis, then, might be remembered as a founding composer—even a pioneer—who began to shape the Anglican liturgy into a functional *and* chordal style, eschewing the elaborate textures and indiscernible texts of the preceding generations.

Service Music

The Oxford Companion defines the liturgical *Response* as the reply of the congregation or choir to a versicle.⁸ Though versicles and responses were once a usual feature of the Roman Office, they are less frequently used now, having been replaced by intercessions. Originally, the Anglican responses were adapted from the Roman rite translation made popular in Merbecke's 1550 publication, *The Book of Common Prayer Noted*. While the practice of singing the *Responses* in unison appears to have been the norm in the pre-Reformation era, Elizabethan composers frequently took Merbecke's monophonic formulae and harmonized them; as expected, Merbecke's tones are often found in the tenor of these harmonizations.⁹

Tallis was one of many composers to rework Merbecke's monophonic settings. Others included Byrd, Morley, and Gibbons, though today Tallis's are probably best

⁸ *The Oxford Companion to Music*, s.v. "response," accessed January 11, 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e5600>.

⁹ Paul Doe, *Tallis* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 56.

known. Like the majority of Tallis's works, his *Preces and Responses* are harmonized in a choral and homophonic fashion. Though scholars today are not certain, it has been suggested that Tallis composed his harmonized *Preces and Responses* in 1570, although there are no surviving manuscripts before 1625. Paul Doe believes that this compositional date is based on nineteenth-century English musicologist Edward F. Rimbault's account that James Clifford copied Tallis's *Litany* with the title, "Maister Tallis's Letanie, Anno Dom. 1570."¹⁰ There seems to be some discrepancy among sources, however, since another scholar suggests that Clifford probably added the date 1570 simply as his own guess at the date of Tallis's composition.¹¹ Queen Elizabeth recognized the importance and originality in Tallis's music in 1575, and granted him a copyright for twenty-one years.

Tallis composed two separate *Responses*, both in five parts and each found in three pre-Restoration sources, the first being Barnard's *Selected Church Musick* (1641).¹² Barnard published a combination of the *Preces I* (which come before the Psalms) and the *Responses II*, creating the set of *Preces and Responses* most commonly used since the seventeenth century, simply known as the *Tallis Responses*. Barnard's

¹⁰ Doe, viii.

¹¹ Duncan, 692.

¹² Interestingly, in Barnard's collection of church music, Tallis is the only composer who utilizes a homophonic plagal amen (in fact, several times) other than Byrd, who uses just one in the first Psalm to his second *Preces*. See the bassus part-book, fol. 86r.

synthesis of Tallis's original sources is explained by J. M. Duncan: "It seems therefore more probable that the music written by Tallis is that given here as Set I; and that in course of time, as the taste for melody grew at the expense of polyphony, the original was gradually modified [to become] Set II."¹³ Barnard's collection represents the two stages in this development. Tallis's remaining *Preces II* and the *Responses I* were published only in John Jebb's collection during the nineteenth century, and have otherwise been left alone.¹⁴

The *Tallis Responses* do not appear to have been intended for use as ordinary, or traditional, responses (called Ferial Responses); instead they were to be reserved for Church Festivals. Jebb writes that according to "documents and traditionary custom, [the Tallis Responses were to only] be used upon the greater festivals, or more solemn occasions."¹⁵ Jebb concludes that this custom was a result of Edward Lowe's 1661 publication that included Tallis's *Responses*, although Lowe failed to credit them to Tallis. Lowe titles the section containing the *Responses*, "Extraordinary Responsalls upon Festivalls in Foure Parts" (fig. 4.1).¹⁶ Jebb, however, warns his readers that it was never intended that Tallis's *Responses* be ordinary Responses; they were merely subjoined to

¹³ Duncan, 626.

¹⁴ Suzanne Cole, *Thomas Tallis and His Music in Victorian England* (Woodbridge, ENG: Boydell Press, 2008), 135.

¹⁵ Jebb, 260.

¹⁶ L[owe], 45.

the ordinary Responses in Lowe's book. Further, Jebb informs that "against this common mistake I think it the more necessary to give a caution, because of late there have been professed republications of Tallis, which are, in fact, a garbled mixture of his compositions."¹⁷

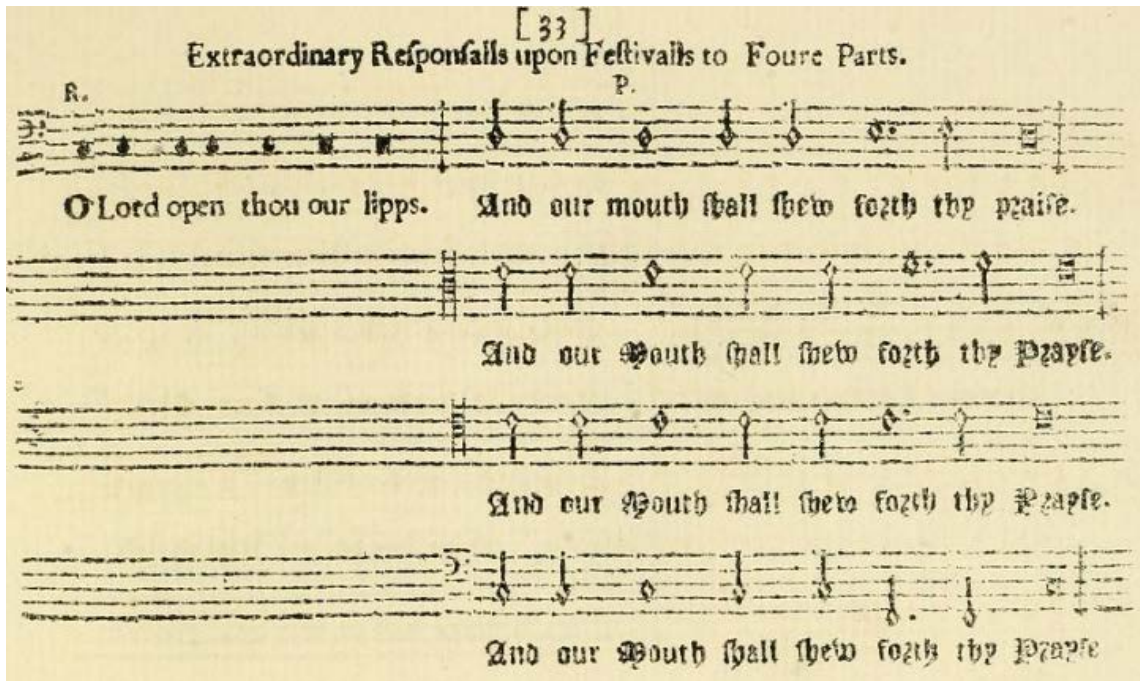


Figure 4.1 Title page for the *Responses* copying Tallis's in Lowe's 1661 work

The Tallis Responses

It is ironic that, as a masterful composer in the Chapel Royal, some of Tallis's most discussed works were his simple *Responses*. Tallis scholar Suzanne Cole elaborates when she writes:

These fragments [the *Preces and Responses*] of harmonised plainchant were more frequently published and performed, more intensely debated and more highly

¹⁷ Jebb, 260.

regarded than any other portion of Tallis's output, or indeed almost any other piece of sixteenth-century music.¹⁸

As will be seen, nineteenth-century writers were highly interested in this work of Tallis's.

Most important to this research is Tallis's "three *amens*," found at the end of the setting (see fig. 4.2). According to Barnard's publication, the first of the three is to be used after the collect for the day, the second after the collect for peace, and the final following the collect for grace.¹⁹ Significantly, Tallis harmonizes these three-*amen* cadences as: plagal, authentic, and plagal. The famed English composer and organist, E. J. Hopkins (who was instrumental in performing the *Tallis Responses* during the nineteenth century), discusses the cadential difference:

To attach harmonies to the short Answers was a task of comparatively little difficulty. The two chords, for instance, adapted to the General Confession...are simply the so-named "imperfect cadence" selected by Tallis for the first of the three Amens in his well-known "Responses." For the Amen at the end of this confession, the order of these two chords may advantageously be reversed, to mark the close; for as there are many clauses, forming one General Confession, so there will then correspondingly be many imperfect cadences, and one perfect.²⁰

¹⁸ Cole, 130.

¹⁹ Barnard, fol. 89v.

²⁰ Edward J. Hopkins, ed., *The Temple Church Choral Service* [Book], 2nd ed. (London: Metzler & Co., 1889), 4.

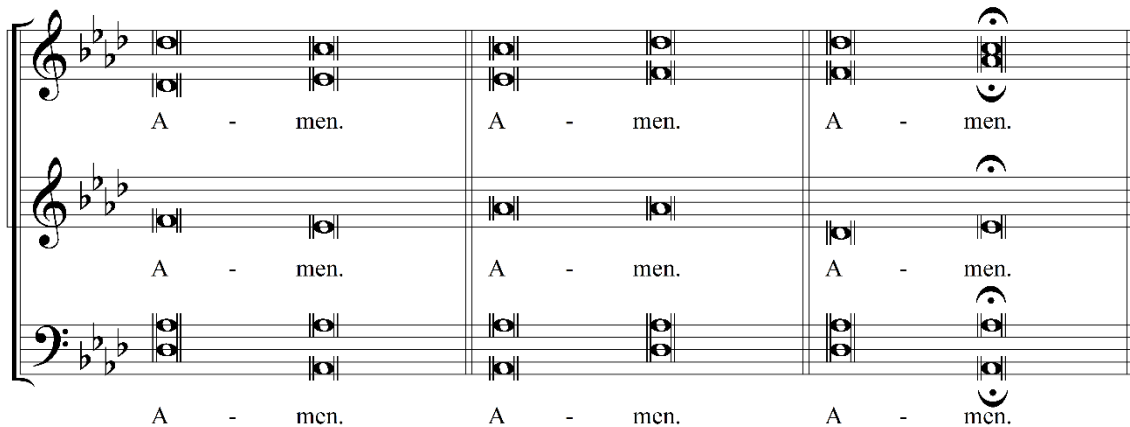


Figure 4.2 Tallis’s “three *amens*” found at the end of his *Preces and Responses*

Throughout the whole of Tallis’s *Responses*, however, he alternates between the plagal and authentic cadences, though there does not appear to be a rationale governing the choice of cadence, unlike the situation with the final three *amens*.²¹ Of the seventeen harmonized cadences, ten are plagal and seven are authentic.

In Robert Druitt’s nineteenth-century tract, he encouraged church music composers to craft music reminiscent of earlier styles. Druitt chose to demonstrate his proposal using a plagal cadence attributed to Tallis (without *amen*, however). In figures 4.3 & 4.4, Druitt compares a regal setting of a Tallis plagal cadence to a cadence by a modern composer. Note the syllabic writing in Tallis’s work contrasted against the modern composer’s example. Druitt’s comment on this is revealing:

Tallis gives it as one exulting acclamation [fig. 4.3], but not so a modern composer; he spins out [fig. 4.4]. Then we would urge that church music should be chaste, severe, and simple in its style: that is to say, that all superadded

²¹ It would seem likely that Tallis derived the harmonies from the melody; however, as can be seen in some instances, Tallis has no trepidation in adding non-harmonic tones to create plagal-cadences regardless of the tenor melody (see Skinner, 23, final cadence).

embellishment, any phrase introduced for mere effect, should be rigidly excluded.²²

It should be clear, then, why Tractarian-sympathizers like Druitt were eager to use Tallis as a standard for contemporary church music.²³ If, after all, Tallis's music had sufficed for the compositional needs of the Anglican founders, there was surely value left in his musical works three centuries later.

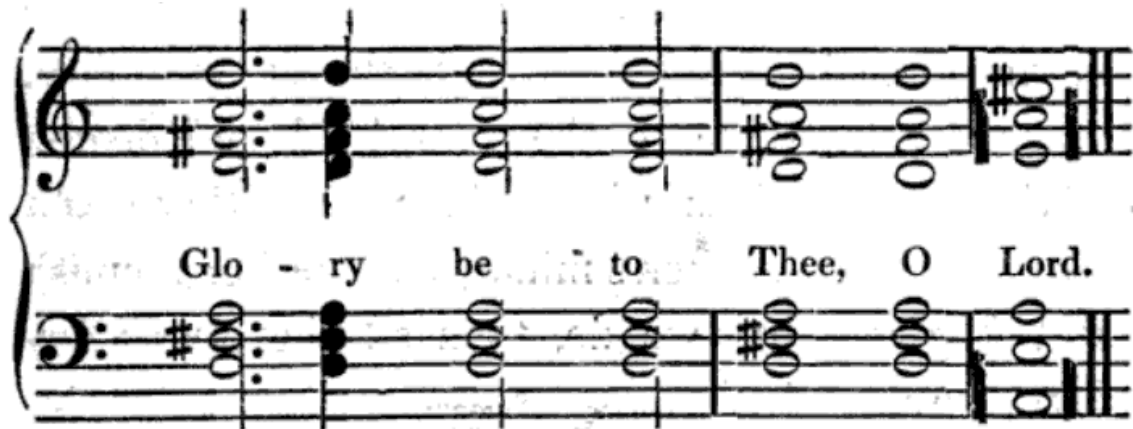


Figure 4.3 “Doxology,” before the Gospel, attributed to Tallis by Druitt

²² Druitt, 37-38.

²³ Recall from chapter one that “Tractarians” was the name given to those supporters of the Oxford, or “Tractarian,” Movement due to the circulation of their propaganda tracts.



Figure 4.4 Druitt’s example of a modern composer’s “Doxology”

It is unjustified to assign authorship to such simple harmonic progressions like IV–I and V–I, which constitute Tallis’s “three *amens*” and the conclusion of the “Doxology” as put forth by Druitt. Cole points out, however, that ascribing the name *Tallis Amens* gives them authority, and assigning authorship of such a bare cadence or harmonized chant responses to Tallis only adds to his “compositional gravitas.”²⁴ Moreover, Tallis’s association with Archbishop Parker (through the publication of the nine Psalm tunes) yielded even more weight to his name.

Circulation of the *Tallis Responses* through the Eighteenth Century

As noted earlier, no manuscript copy of the *Tallis Responses* exists today. Most sources claim Barnard as the earliest publisher of the responses, though Duncan does seem to suggest an earlier date of 1625 but fails to give details on whether or not this

²⁴ Cole, 54.

conjecture is based on a publication or a manuscript that surfaced.²⁵ Lowe's publication (which failed to credit Tallis) came forth in 1661; however, the time period between this and Barnard's publication two decades earlier had been treacherous for the Church. From the beginning of the Commonwealth (1649) until after the Restoration (1660), choirs were disbanded, music books destroyed, and church music traditions were left behind. After choirs were reinstated, the five-part music from Tallis's day was found to be too difficult; this led most choirs to arrange works, including the *Tallis Responses*, into three or four parts.²⁶

Many Church conventions and traditions have origins based on confused interpretations or blatantly erroneous reports, and it seems that the fame and the popularity of the *Tallis Responses* in later centuries may have started in a similar fashion (although Tallis's *Responses* do appear to have had some prevalence in his day as well). One can fairly question whether or not the *Responses* we so readily attribute to Tallis today are even similar to what he originally conceived in 1570. This question is validated when one considers the following: 1) the *Responses* were not published until more than half a century (likely more) after their completion; and 2) many publications that occurred up until the nineteenth century (e.g., Barnard, Lowe, Aldrich/Clifford, and Boyce) have discrepancies in many places, namely in the number of parts and pitches.

²⁵ Duncan, 692.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 693.

It does not appear too likely that Tallis's service music enjoyed much popularity in circulating publications before the nineteenth century.²⁷ By the middle of the eighteenth century, Barnard's 1641 publication had become a rarity due to its age and the wholesale destruction during the English Civil War. Boyce's first edition of "Cathedral Music" (1760) was unsuccessful with an average of only 200 copies of each volume sold (the second edition in 1788 was better received, but still with fewer than 500 copies sold).²⁸ Another eighteenth-century manuscript collection containing the *Tallis Responses* was sold by Maggs Bros. Ltd. in 1744, and today this single copy is held at Yale University.²⁹ A brief note inside the cover suggests that this work might have been prepared for Boyce while he was working on his *Cathedral Music*. It is not, however, the small circulation throughout Tallis's lifetime or even the two centuries after that deserves our attention, but rather what began to happen during the nineteenth century.

²⁷ The following statistics come from H. Diack Johnstone's article, "The Genesis of Boyce's 'Cathedral Music'," *Music & Letters* 56, no. 1 (Jan., 1975): 27-40.

²⁸ The practice of subscription publishing had already begun to diminish greatly by the late eighteenth century, so we might not expect Boyce's circulation to be large, though surely larger than 200 copies for this 20-year research project. Although I was unable to find circulation numbers for church music collections like Boyce's, I did locate information on two books by Fanny Burney (coincidentally, the daughter of Charles Burney). Within the first year of publishing, *Cecilia* (1782) sold out the 2,000-copy first edition and was already in its third print; 500-copies was the common number. (Ellis, 307)

Another of Burney's subscription-based publications, *Camilla* (1796), contained 38 pages of names of subscribers—with an average of 30 names per page—a great deal more than those who subscribed to Boyce's collection. (Accessed January 22, 2016, <https://www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/rbm/agents/case2.html>.)

²⁹ Cataloged in the Osborn Music Collection, MS 512.

Revival of the *Tallis Responses*

The Responses and their function in the Anglican liturgy were of great interest in the nineteenth century. This enthusiasm led to a lengthy article on “Responses” in the first edition of George Grove’s *Dictionary* in 1879.³⁰ Further, William Rockstro’s article on “Versicle” in this edition states the following:

The Responses...have been harmonised by Vittoria, Rossi, and other composers: but none of them will bear any comparison with the matchless English Responses...by our own Tallis, whose solemn harmonies have never been approached, in this particular form of music.³¹

The examination of the resurgence of the *Tallis Responses* will begin chronologically with an article found in the *London Evening Post* during the mid-eighteenth century. In 1752, organist John Alcock begins a discussion with readers about the need for correcting certain aspects of the English services. He concludes his proposition in the following way:

Having observed how incorrect the Services, &c. are at Cathedrals, and as I have now by me an exceeding valuable Collection of the choicest antient [*sic*] and modern Services, I purpose [*sic*] publishing one every Quarter of a Year, completely in Score, and figured for the Organ...The first...will be the famous Mr. Tallis’s...³²

It is doubtful that this proposition, found buried in a London newspaper, launched the revival of Tallis’s service music; however, it is noteworthy that he was being placed in

³⁰ George Grove, ed., *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, s.v. “Responses,” (London: Macmillan & Co., 1890).

³¹ *Ibid.*, s.v. “versicle.”

³² John Alcock, “To all Lovers of Cathedral Musick,” *London Evening Post*, Issue 3870, August 6, 1752, accessed November 17, 2015, Gale Cengage Learning.

the public's eye, and not merely limited to circles of clergymen initiating the Oxford Movement.

Whether Alcock had any direct influence on the popularity of the *Tallis Responses* cannot be known. But, according to Jebb, the length of time that congregations were exposed to this music may be a clue to its revival.

The Service of the celebrated Tallis is the earliest of those which have been published or practically known in our Choirs...who can object to the Service of this admirable composer. The resources of his most religious harmonies are unrivalled...and there is the most evident recognition of the devotional spirit of antiquity.³³

Beyond the appearances of the *Responses* in earlier publications, one of the earliest nineteenth-century publications to include them was Thomas Oliphant's *The Full Cathedral Service as Used on the Festivals and Saints' Days of the Church of England, Composed by Thomas Tallis* (1841); this date is exactly twenty years before *Hymns Ancient and Modern* was published. Likewise, the British Library's *Catalogue of Printed Music* lists ten additional publications of the *Responses* during the 1840s; another twenty-four were published between 1850 and 1914.³⁴

Between 1858 and 1882, the proportion of London parish churches who maintained choral services increased from 5% to more than 38%.³⁵ Tallis was not the only composer represented in this "service music revival" of the nineteenth century, for

³³ Jebb, 337.

³⁴ Robert Balchin, ed., *The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980*, vol. 55 (London: K.G. Saur, 1986), 315-16.

³⁵ Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 279.

many writers allude to performance of other composers' works. In the case of Tallis, however, there is frequent praise of his music's beauty and an expressed preference for it.

E. J. Hopkins shares a comparison between Tallis's and others' *Responses*:

Tallis's complete setting of the Preces, Responses, Litany, &c., however, proved so superior in treatment to the combined productions of all other pens—on account of their greater devotional character, religious beauty, and expressive appropriateness—that they gradually met with general favour, and...ultimately were universally accepted and adopted for use on the Church Festivals.³⁶

As discussed earlier, there was a dialogue among Church leaders as to the appropriate time during the Church Year for Tallis's service music. The overall agreement seems to have been a lax rule that they were most suitable for Church Festival days, as directed by Hopkins above. However, as local parishes and cathedrals continued to individualize their corporate worship, the *Tallis Responses* appears to have been used much more frequently, much to the dismay of strict adherers like Jebb. He states his complaints in the following way:

On certain great festivals (e.g., Christmas, Easter, Whitsunday, etc.), the proper usage of the Church of England, laid aside in many places, but still observed in some, is to sing the Responses and Litany of Tallis's arrangement to the organ. [However,] in Christ Church, in Dublin, Tallis's Responses, but without the organ, are now used *every Sunday*. But I am bound to express an opinion, that this service *should be reserved for more solemn occasions*, according to the ancient practice of the Church. The discrimination of our higher festivals has been too much subjected to the levelling principle of modern times.³⁷

It is unknown whether men like Jebb wanted the festival responses such as Tallis's to be limited in use because of the propriety of separating ferial and festival days, or because

³⁶ Hopkins, 8.

³⁷ Jebb, 261f, italics added for emphasis.

they relished Tallis's masterpiece and desired that it remain a special setting of the *Preces and Responses*.

During the nineteenth century the *Tallis Responses* were not limited to performances in only worship services of local parishes or great cathedrals. Their popularity is also demonstrated by the number of performances in music festivals. Cole calls the *Responses* "a standard feature at large choral festivals and services."³⁸ Two journal reviews, written thirty years apart, reflect this trend. In 1831, the *Harmonicon* featured a glowing review, noting the effect of Tallis's *Responses* on audiences.

Every one must recollect, who has ever attended divine service on the three great festivals of our church at St. Paul's Cathedral, the magnificent effect produced in Tallis's responses...the effect must be such, that the introduction of these responses at the approaching festival must ever be remembered in the annals of church music.³⁹

The responses were still being used in festivals three decades later, two years after *Hymns Ancient and Modern* was first published. A *Musical Times* review from the Festival of the Charity Children at St. Paul's Cathedral includes the following:

The "Preces" and "Responses" were those of our Elizabethan Tallis—whose music to this part of the Church Service seems to be a solid rock of harmony, against which the waves of time are likely to beat, for century after century, without producing any appreciable effect. There it has been; there it is; and there it is likely to remain—massive, solid, and indestructible, because built upon the eternal principles of truth.⁴⁰

³⁸ Cole, 132.

³⁹ "Festival of the Sons of the Clergy," *Harmonicon* 9, no. 5 (May 1831): 119.

⁴⁰ "The Charity Children at St. Paul's," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 11, no. 245 (Jul. 1, 1863): 83.

Reviews were also found in others forms of the media. London's famous newspaper, *The Times*, periodically included brief praises of Tallis's service music. An 1858 article says that:

No one would wish to banish the responses of Tallis, since no one believes that anything better could be supplied than those solemn, unaffected strains which have been the principal means of conferring immortality upon Queen Elizabeth's organist.⁴¹

Four years after *HAM* began circulating, we find another article in *The Times*, a new review from a festival. The writer compliments Tallis's music.

The music was really first-rate. That the "Suffrages" were by Tallis may be taken for granted. A century hence it might be foretold that any reporter of the 311th anniversary of the Festival of the Sons of the Clergy would have to write the same sentence, or words to the same effect: On the "Preces and Responses" of Thomas Tallis time has written "no wrinkle."⁴²

It should now be quite evident just how widely circulated (and perceived) Tallis's service music actually was, not only in worship services but also outside of the Church for the general public.⁴³

⁴¹ "Meeting of the Charity Children" *Times* (London), Issue 23011, Friday, June 4, 1858, accessed November 15, 2015, Gale Cengage Learning.

According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *The Times's* circulation was 40,000 subscribers in 1850. Accessed January 14, 2016, <http://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Times>.

⁴² "Festival of the Sons of the Clergy," *Times* (London), Issue 25188, Thursday, May 18, 1865, accessed November 15, 2015, Gale Cengage Learning.

⁴³ Assuredly, not every listener would be inclined to speak positively about the *Tallis Responses*. After one reader complains to *The Times* editor about the trend of Tallis's service music, W. H. Monk presents a rebuttal in the following issue. He writes that "no church, continental or insular, Roman or Greek, ancient or modern, can produce music, used in a similar way, of so grand and spiritual a type as this." See "Music in the Church Service," *Times* (London), Issue 29456, January 4, 1879, accessed November 15, 2015, Gale Cengage Learning.

If hearing Tallis's music in festivals throughout Britain or reading boastful reviews about his heavenly harmonies did not suffice to capture the average person's interest, perhaps another celebration was: "Tallis Days." In the early 1840s, a festival of Tallis's music was instituted at Westminster Abbey by James Turle, the Abbey organist and a founding member of the Musical Antiquarian Society.⁴⁴ These annual fall celebrations appear by historical accounts to have been well received. An 1845 publication states that these celebrations were immensely popular (though not as favored as "Purcell Days" and "Handel Days," also promoted by Turle), and that Westminster Abbey was "thronged with hearers" of Tallis's music.⁴⁵ One journal reported that the 1841 congregation "must have exceeded a thousand persons."⁴⁶ An ending date for such celebrations has not been located, though an article from 1847 shows they were still ongoing at that time.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Cole, 38.

⁴⁵ Edward Taylor, *The English Cathedral Service* (London: Simpkin, Marshal & Co., 1845), 32. Regarding Tallis versus Purcell, some years later *The Musical Standard* wrote the following comparison:

"In his Service Music it cannot be said that Purcell was happy; his compositions in this department are certainly more tuneful and accentuated than those of the earlier writers; but we miss the calm, majestic grandeur of Tallis..." (See John S. Bumpus, "A Short History of English Cathedral Music," part 2, *Musical Standard*, December 20, 1884, 377.)

⁴⁶ "Musical Intelligence. Metropolitan. Westminster Abbey," *Musical World* 16, no. 289 (Oct 7, 1841): 232.

⁴⁷ See *The Spectator* 20 (January 16, 1847): 67.

While not a "Tallis Festival" to the nineteenth century extreme, the Exmoor Singers of London continue to host an annual Tallis Festival, featuring the composer's

The *amen* cadences in the *Tallis Responses* are also discussed independently of the rest of the setting. Jebb describes *amen* as something frequently sung upon a cadence closing with a sharp seventh (i.e., leading tone), but reminds the reader that this is not found in Merbecke's 1550 hymnal that Tallis harmonized.⁴⁸ He continues to say that while such a cadence may be a "most appropriate and solemn conclusion," it is to be considered "an improvement of later times: this cadence not having been in use in the ancient Breviaries." Tallis, on the other hand, harmonized each *amen* differently after each Collect (the alternating cadences mentioned earlier in the chapter). Jebb labels this effect the "most sublime and devotional."⁴⁹

The harmonies and ordering of Tallis's *amen* cadences are copied not only in Lowe's seventeenth-century collection, but they are also found in Thomas Helmore's *Manual of Plain Song* from 1850. (fig. 4.5).⁵⁰ Furthermore, Helmore again borrowed Tallis's harmonies in his *Accompanying Harmonies* published three years later, with more explicit instructions (figs. 4.6 & 4.7).⁵¹ Notably, these use the same ordering as

works. See their website, accessed January 14, 2016, <http://www.exmoorsingers.org/tallis-festival/tallis-festival-2016/tallis-festival-2016-calling-all-singers/>.

⁴⁸ Jebb, 366.

⁴⁹ Jebb, 366.

⁵⁰ Thomas Helmore, *Manual of Plain Song* (London: Novello, 1850), 6.

⁵¹ Thomas Helmore, *Accompanying Harmonies to the Brief Directory of The Plain Song* (London: J. Alfred Novello, 1853), 13.

Tallis's three *amens* (fig. 4.2). Indeed, all the cadences are harmonized with IV–I unless they are after the second collect or benediction.



Figure 4.5 Helmore's directions for *amen* cadences, *Manual of Plain Song*, 6.

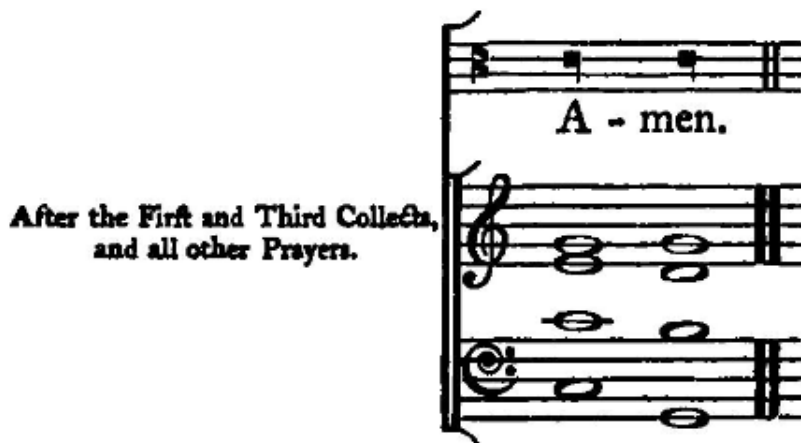


Figure 4.6 Helmore's cadential instructions for specific collects



Figure 4.7 Helmore's cadential instructions for specific parts

Conclusion

Tallis's *Preces and Responses*, which appear to have started their revival even as early as the eighteenth century, clearly saw a resurgence in the nineteenth century in England. Their prominent featuring at festivals, community celebrations, and in worship services throughout the country helped to spawn appreciation, even reverence, for Tallis's work. The many reviews highlighting the beauty of his setting combined with the lack of discussion, publication, and widespread performances of others' settings prove that the homophonic harmonies Tallis chose were seen as timeless and appropriate to the past, present, and future of church music.

The plagal-amens, more numerous than the authentic-amens, occurring in Tallis's *Preces and Responses* were acknowledged by many composers and writers from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. Abandoning the tradition of elaborate and melismatic *amens* found in music of the continent was likely out of respect for Anglican rules; however, the harmonies Tallis utilized in the *amens* were of his own choosing and were copied scrupulously by later composers. Up to the middle of the nineteenth century, the Church was set to embrace almost anything from antiquated religious traditions. The Oxford Movement was garnering great support and challenged the thriving church music scene to imitate historical sacred music. Likewise, evangelistic messages were being preached to thousands through revivals. Thus, the Church seemed to be flourishing and all denominations wanted to be a part of that celebration.

The nineteenth century Church appears to have accepted the *Tallis Responses*, to the extent that the Tallis's plagal-amens began to be transplanted into its own modern repertoire. It is almost as if church musicians desired to incorporate a small fraction of

historical custom into their contemporary practice, and by so doing, would somehow impart authority from the past into their current musical traditions. After Tallis's plagal-amens were copied and used by the Tractarian advocate Thomas Helmore, it was less than a decade later before the plagal-amen found itself so faithfully attached to the contents of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Then, for nearly a century, the plagal-amen became a predictable sight in hymnals and a sound in corporate worship.

Today, the plagal-amen has once again fallen back into neglect, being sung only in accordance with very few of the early Church hymns. Whether or not church music will ever recover the early Church context of singing *amen* after a doxological stanza is questionable; however, it would somehow seem inappropriate not to sing *amen* paired with a plagal cadence. Considering the future of the plagal-amen, the last verse of Adelaide Procter's poem, "The Lost Chord," rings most appropriate:

I have sought, but I seek it vainly,
That one lost chord divine,
Which came from the soul of the Organ,
And entered into mine.
It may be that Death's bright angel
Will speak in that chord again,
It may be that only in Heaven
I shall hear that grand Amen.

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**APPENDIX A:
RESOURCES EXAMINED**

This table gives the reader a scope of the number and types of sources consulted throughout the course of this study.

Name Type Location	Approx. # of Hymnals Examined	Approx. Total # Available	Specific Types or MSS Surveyed
Michael Morgan Private Collector Decatur, GA	150	1500	English hymnals & Psalters
Cook Library Indiana University Bloomington, IN	300	550	Variety of Protestant publishings, and other major religions, e.g., Judaism, Mormonism, Christian Science
Lilly Library Indiana University Bloomington, IN	75	560	Collection and Corresponding dates: Poole MSS, 200-1500 Rappite MSS, 1810-1939 Ricketts MSS, 800-1800 Medieval & Renaissance MSS, 700-1600

Name Type Location	Approx. # of Hymnals Examined	Approx. Total # Available	Specific Types or MSS Surveyed
Kalona Mennonite Museum Museum Archive Collection Kalona, IA	10	50	Mennonite & Amish hymnals
America's Historical Imprints Online Subscription Database	250	730, with duplications	Various denominations
Hymnary.org Online Database <a +in:hymnals"="" href="http://www.hymnary.org/hymnals?qu=">http://www.hymnary.org/ hymnals?qu="+in:hymnals	200	5681, not all are fully digitized	Various denominations
Imslp.org Online Database http://imslp.org/wiki/Category: Hymnals_and_Psalters	20	610	Various denominations

Name Type Location	Approx. # of Hymnals Examined	Approx. Total # Available	Specific Types or MSS Surveyed
Pitts Theological Library Emory University Atlanta, GA	30	Unknown	<p>North Dutch Book of Hours, MSS 086</p> <p>Les Heures de nostre dame, MSS 161</p> <p>CAWOOD, John, "Hymns," MSS 152</p> <p>COLLISHAW, George, "Original hymns on various subjects," MSS 226</p> <p>HOLIDAY, Richard, "Hymn book," MSS 155</p> <p>MEALY, Norman, "Research material on the British Library hymn collection," MSS 253</p> <p>PAINE, Silas, "Hymnody Collection," MSS 198</p> <p>Psalms and hymns, MSS 165</p> <p>Office de l'Eglise hymnal, MSS 019</p>