# 5.1.02

# Yevgenia Semeina Handel and Purcell sources, spring 2002

## **Henry Purcell’s Voluntary in D minor**

This piece- Z718- occurs without title in British Museum manuscript Add. 31446, ff 9v-10v. The piece starts with a terse fugal exposition in the traditional manner of voluntaries, almost the same with the Voluntary in for Double Organ, which appears in the same manuscript. These piece are very alike for the first page, but then gradually diverge until about halfway through, they go completely separate ways. According to Shay and Thompson’s book the copyist of the manuscript was George Holmes (1680-1721), pupil of John Blow, organist of Lincoln Cathedral from 1704 to 1720.

I would like to compare the manuscript of the Voluntary in D minor with one of the modern editions of this piece – The Novello edition of 1957, made by Hugh McLean, and with the edition of The Purcell Society made by Edward John Hopkins.

In the original the both hands are written on six-line stave, the right it is in treble clef, except for the very end, where it is in the alto clef. The left hand starts in tenor clef. A few times during the piece it will change to bass clef in which the piece ends. The key signature has B flat but it is missing in couple places thought the piece: bar 17 (left hand), bar 20 (left hand), bar 52 (left hand). There is also an Alla Breve sign in the beginning.

1. Hugh McLean changed the Alla Breve sign to the 4/4 sign, while Hopkins’s edition has Alla Breve in it.
2. In McLean’s edition in bars 8-9 the rhythm and the harmony was changed. In the manuscript the last beat of bar eight is the resolution of the previous dominant chord to the tonic sixth chord. It follows by a modulation through Major tonic sixth chord and the Subdominant to the A Major. This progression sounds very interesting with its natural seventh.

The editor takes away the resolution on the last beat of bar eight, he puts it on the first beat of bar nine. And then he puts the G sharp on the third beat and resolve it to the A minor chord on the last beat of this bar. By doing this he completely changes the color and the character of the cadence. The editor does not put these changes in brackets and in the editorial notes he does not explains why he did them.

In Hopkins’s edition rhythm of bar eight stays the same as in the manuscript. In bar nine the editor suggests to put g sharp for the third note in bass.

1. In bar thirteen in the manuscript the fifth note in soprano is F sharp, which is changed to F natural in the McLean’s edition.
2. In bar nine of the Hugh McLean’s edition rhythm of the second beat in right hand is changed.
3. Hugh McLean adds a few trills through the piece, but he put all of them in brackets. And it was very frequent at that period to put some additional ornamentation for the performance.

There are no additional ornaments in the Edward J. Hopkins’s edition.

1. In bar twenty-seven of the original there is a little cross above the f sharp in bass. Hugh McLean decided that this was an indication for the mistake, like it will be later in bar forty-seven, so he takes away the shake on that note. In the edition of Purcell Society nothing is left out in this bar.
2. In bar forty-seven is another cross mark but here both editions agreed that it was a mark for the mistake made by copyist of manuscript, he put in the wrong note.
3. In the same bar Mr. Hopkins adds the quarter rest for the last beat in left hand.
4. In McLean’s edition it is without rest like in the manuscript.

In general, edition of The Purcell Society is more accurate and less edited although Hugh McLean’s edition is also very close to the original and except for the changes in bars 9-10 there are not that many differences.

5.01.02

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