

Te lucis ante terminum (1st setting)

Edited by Jason Smart

Thomas Tallis (c.1505-1585)

v.1 *1 from the senior stalls* *Chorus*

Te lu - cis an - te ter - mi - num, Re - rum Cre - a - tor, po - sci - mus

Ut so - li - ta cle - men - ti - a Sis prae - sul ad cu - sto - di - am.

v.2

Mean

Countertenor 1

Countertenor 2

Tenor

Bass

Pro - cul re - ce - dant so - mni -

Pro - cul re - ce - dant so - mni -

Pro - cul re - ce - dant so - mni -

Pro - cul re - ce - dant so - mni -

Pro - cul re - ce - dant so - mni -

3

- a Et noc - ti - um phan - ta - sma -

- a Et noc - ti - um phan - ta - sma -

- a Et noc - ti - um phan - ta - sma -

- a Et noc - ti - um phan - ta - sma -

- a Et noc - ti - um phan - ta - sma -

A musical score for five voices, arranged in five staves. The music is in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature. The lyrics are: - ta; Ho - stem - que. The first staff has a treble clef and a whole note. The second staff has a treble clef, an 8va marking, and a whole note. The third staff has a treble clef, an 8va marking, and a whole note. The fourth staff has a treble clef, an 8va marking, and a whole note. The fifth staff has a bass clef and a whole note.

- ta;
- ta; Ho - stem - que
- ta; Ho - stem - que
- ta; Ho - stem - que
- ta; Ho - stem - que

Te lucis ante terminum (2nd setting)

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v.1 *1 from the senior stalls* *Chorus*

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Ut so - li - ta cle - men - ti - a Sis prae - sul ad cu - sto - di - am.

v.2

Mean

Countertenor 1

Countertenor 2

Tenor

Bass

Pro - cul re - ce - dant so - mni - a

Pro - cul re - ce - dant so - mni - a

Pro - cul re - ce - dant so - mni - a

Pro - cul re - ce - dant so - mni - a

Pro - cul re - ce - dant so - mni - a

3

Et noc - ti - um phan - ta - sma - ta; Ho - stem - que no - strum

Et noc - ti - um phan - ta - sma - ta; Ho - stem - que no - strum

Et noc - ti - um phan - ta - sma - ta; Ho - stem - que no - strum

Et noc - ti - um phan - ta - sma - ta; Ho - stem - que no - strum

Et noc - ti - um phan - ta - sma - ta; Ho - stem - que no - strum

6

com - pri - me, Ne pol - lu - an - tur cor - po - ra.

com - pri - me, Ne pol - lu - an - tur cor - po - ra.

com - pri - me, Ne pol - lu - an - tur cor - po - ra.

com - pri - me, Ne pol - lu - an - tur cor - po - ra.

com - pri - me, Ne pol - lu - an - tur cor - po - ra.

v.3

Chorus

Prae - sta, Pa - ter o - mni - po - tens, Per Je - sum Chri - stum Do - mi - num,

Qui te - cum in per - pe - tu - um Re - gnat cum San - cto Spi - ri - tu. A - men.

Translation

1. Before the ending of the day, creator of all things, we pray that, with your accustomed mercy, you may watch over us.
2. Banish dreams and phantoms of the night, and restrain our foe lest our bodies be defiled.
3. Be present, Almighty Father, through Jesus Christ the Lord, who forever reigns with you and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Music

In the pre-Reformation Use of Salisbury, *Te lucis ante terminum* was the hymn at Compline on Sundays, simple feasts and ferias throughout the year, except from Christmas to the Octave of the Epiphany and from Lent until the Octave of Pentecost. It had two tunes and Tallis composed settings of both. What governed the choice of tune was not, as often thought, whether the day was ‘festal’ or ‘ferial’, but whether or not the main services of the day were observed with rulers of the choir (priests or clerks who directed the ceremonial aspects of the singing). Tallis’s first setting is of the tune used on Sundays, on simple feasts when the choir was ruled, on Commemorations of the Virgin and of the church’s patron saint, and during octaves when *Te lucis* was sung. The second tune was sung on simple feasts when the choir was not ruled and on ferias.

Tallis may have written his settings for use in the Catholic services of the 1550s or earlier, but their only source is the collection of *Cantiones Sacrae* (sacred songs) that he and Byrd published in 1575. Of the hymn’s three verses, Tallis set only the second. As usual in the sixteenth century, no music for the odd-numbered verses is provided. In a liturgical performance these would have been either sung in plainsong, or perhaps more likely, replaced by organ polyphony based on the chant or its faburden. However, as John Milsom has observed, it is questionable whether Elizabethan singers using the 1575 publication would have troubled to perform the plainsong.¹ Both settings are printed in tandem in the collection as item no.20 and could have been performed, had the singers so wished, as a single, bipartite motet. Alternatively they could have selected either verse and sung it either with or without the plainsong. Perhaps framing the verses with polyphony played on a domestic keyboard instrument after the old manner, would have been another possibility.

Editorial Conventions

The nomenclature of the voice-parts follows the Tudor convention.

The original clef, staff signature, mensuration symbol and first note of each part are shown on the prefatory staves at the start of the piece.

Dotted accidentals are the result of modernising the original staff signatures.

Repeat signs in the underlay have been expanded using italic text.

Sources

Polyphony: Thomas Tallis and William Byrd, *Cantiones quae ab argumento sacrae vocantur* (Thomas Vautrollier, London, 1575). Copy used: London, Royal College of Music G28/1–6 (*olim* I.E.9).

Superius	(M)	No.20	at top of page: HYMNVS. V. Voc. T. Tallis.
Discantus	(Ct1)	No.20	at top of page: HYMNVS V. Voc. T. Tallis.
Contratenor	(Ct2)	No.20	at top of page: HYMNVS. V. Voc. T. Tallis.
Tenor	(T)	No.20	at top of page: HYMNVS V. Voc. T. Tallis.
Bassus	(B)	No.20	at top of page: HYMNVS V. Voc. T. Tallis.
Sexta Pars	—	—	

Plainsong: *Hymnorum cum notis opusculum vsui insignis ecclesie Sarum subseruiens* (London, 1541), f.96^v, 97. Copy used: London, British Library C.35.g.13.

Notes on the Readings of the Sources

1st Setting

4 Ct2 *b* for E / 6 M *b* for E / 7 Ct2 new line in source begins with G, staff signature omitted in error (until end of verse) / 10 Ct2 *b* for E / 11 M *b* for E /

In the 1541 hymnal the penultimate note of the third line is flattened in verses 2 and 3, but not in verse 1. This error may have resulted from copying the tune verbatim from the Eastertide hymn Compline hymn *Jesu salvator saeculi*, where verses 2 and 3 only, out of six, again have this note flattened. The flat is not required in any Tudor setting of the tune.

2nd Setting

No variants

¹ John Milsom (ed.), *Thomas Tallis & William Byrd: Cantiones Sacrae 1575*, Early English Church Music 56 (London: Stainer & Bell, 2014), pp.304–7.