

Aeterne rex altissime

Edited by Jason Smart

John Sheppard (d.1558)

v.1 *2 rulers of the choir*

8 Ae - ter - - - ne ____ rex ____ al - - - tis - si - me
Chorus
8 Re - dem - - ptor ____ et fi - de - li - um: Quo mors so - lu -
- ta ____ de - pe - rit, Da - tur ____ tri - um - phans ____ gra - ti - ae.

Mean 

Countertenor 1 

Countertenor 2 

Tenor 

Bass 

v.2

Scan - dens _____
8 Scan-dens tri - bu - nal dex - te - rae,
8 Scan-dens tri - bu - nal dex - te - rae, scan -
8 Scan - dens tri -
8 Scan - dens tri -

4

tri - - - bu - - - nal _____
8 scan-dens tri - bu - nal dex - te - rae, scan-dens tri - bu - nal dex -
8 - dens tri - bu - nal _____ dex - te - - - - rae, scan-dens tri - bu - nal dex - te -
8 - bu - nal dex - te - rae, scan - dens tri - bu - nal dex - te - rae, [scan -
8 Scan-dens tri - bu - nal dex - te - rae, scan-dens tri -

9

dex - te - rae Pa - tris po - te - stas o - mni - um, Pa - tris po - rae Pa - tris po - te - stas o - mni - dens tri-bu - nal dex - te-rae] Pa - bu - nal dex - te - rae Pa - tris po - te - stas o - mni - um,

14

te - stas _____ o - mni - - -

- te - stas o - mni - - - um Col - la - ta est

- um, Pa - tris po - te - stas o - mni - um, Pa - tris po - te - stas

- tris po - te - stas o - mni - um, Pa - tris po - te - stas o - mni -

Pa - tris po - te - stas o - mni -

18

- um Col - la - ta est Je - su cae - um
Je - su cae - li - tus, cae - o - mni-um Col - la - ta est Je - su cae - li - tus, cae - um Col - la - ta est Je - su cae - li - tus

27

hu - ma - ni - tus, quae non e - rat hu - ma - ni - tus.

- rat hu - ma - ni - tus, quae non e - rat hu - ma - ni - tus.

non e - rat hu - ma - ni - tus, quae non e - rat hu - ma - ni - tus.

non e - rat hu - ma - ni - tus, [quae non e - rat hu - ma - ni - tus.]

quae non e - rat hu - ma - ni - tus, hu - ma - ni - tus.

v.5 *Chorus*

Tu e - - sto no - strum gau - di - um
Qui es fu - tu - rus prea - mi - um, Sit no - stra in
te glo - ri - a Per cun - cta sem - per sae - cu - la.

v.6

32

∅ [Faster]

Gloria

Glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do-mi - ne, glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do - mi - ne,
 Glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do-mi - ne, glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do - mi - ne,
 Glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do-mi - ne, glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do - mi - ne,
 Glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do-mi - ne, glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do - mi - ne,

38

Do - mi - ne, Qui scan -
glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do - mi - ne, Qui scan-dis
- ri - a ti - bi, Do - mi - ne, Qui scan-dis su - pra si -
Do - mi - ne, glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do - mi - ne, Qui scan-dis su - pra si - de -
glo - ri - a ti - bi, Do - mi - ne, Qui scan-dis su - pra

44

The musical score consists of four staves of music for voices and piano. The top two staves are soprano voices, the third is a basso continuo part, and the bottom staff is the piano's bass line. The lyrics are written below the notes in a cursive script. The music is in common time, with a key signature of one flat. The piano part includes harmonic indications such as 'F' and 'G' above the staff.

- dis _____ su - pra _____ si - de - ra, Cum
 8 su - pra si - de - ra, qui scan-dis su-pri si - de - ra, qui scan-dis su-pri si - de - ra,
 8 - de-ra, qui scan - dis su-pri si - - - de - - - ra, Cum Pa - tre et
 - ra, _____ qui scan-dis su-pri si - de - - - ra, su-pri
 si - de-ra,
 qui scan-dis su-pri si - de-ra, _____

50

Pa - tre et San - cto Spi - ri - tu
 Cum Pa - tre et San - cto Spi - ri - tu In
 San - cto Spi - ri - tu, et San - cto Spi - ri - tu In sem - pi -
 si - de-ra, Cum Pa - tre et San - cto Spi - ri - tu, _____
 Cum Pa - tre et San-cto Spi - ri -

55

In sem - pi - ter - na - sae - cu -
 sem - pi-ter - na sae - cu - la, in sem - pi - ter -
 - ter - na sae - cu - la, in sem - pi - ter - na sae - cu - la, in sem - pi -
 Spi - ri - tu In sem - pi - ter - na sae - cu - la, in sem - pi - ter - na sae - cu -
 tu In sem - pi - ter - na sae - cu - la, in sem - pi -

61

la. A - - men.
 na sae - cu - la. A - - men, A - - men.
 ter - na sae - cu - la. A - - men, A - - men.
 la. A - - men, A - - men.
 ter - na sae - cu - la. A - - men, A - - men.

Translation

1. Eternal king most high, redeemer of the faithful, who makes death perish in ruins, bestow the triumph of your grace.
2. As you ascend the throne on the right hand of your father, all power is conferred on you, O Jesus, in heaven, which you did not have among men.
3. Be now our joy, you who are our future reward; may our glory ever be in you throughout all ages.
4. Glory be to you, O Lord, who is ascended above the stars, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, for all eternity. Amen.

Liturgical Function

In the pre-reformation Use of Sarum *Aeterne Rex altissime* was the hymn at First Vespers, Matins and Second Vespers on Ascension Day and daily until Pentecost, except on feast days having proper hymns.

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. Where the mensuration changes, the new symbol is shown above the staff.

Editorial accidentals are placed above the notes concerned and remain operative throughout the bar.

Ligatures are denoted by the sign .

Spelling of the text has been modernised.

Text repetition signs in the underlay have been expanded editorially in italics.

Sources

Polyphony: **A** Oxford, Christ Church, Mus. 979–83 (c.1575–1581 with later additions; lacking T).

979	(M)	no.79	at end:	m ^f : shepperd:-
980	(Ct1)	no.79	at end:	m ^f : shepperd-
981	(Ct2)	no.79	at end:	m ^f : John: shepperd:-
982	—	—		
983	(B)	no.79	index heading: at end:	m ^f : shepperde: 5: voc. m ^f : shepperde:-

B Oxford, Bodleian Library, Tenbury MSS 341–4 (c.1610; lacking B).

341	(M)	f.23 ^v	at end: in index:	mr Tallis. Mr Tallis Hymns [a block ascription for seven hymn settings]
342	(Ct2)	f.23 ^v	in index:	Mr Tallis Hims [block ascription as in 341]
343	(Ct1)	f.23 ^v	[no ascription]	
344	(T)	f.23 ^v	at end: in index:	mr Tallis. The Hyms of: Tallis [block ascription as in 341]

C London, British Library, Add. MS 32377 (c.1584–90; M only, textless).

(M) f.28^v [no attribution]

D Oxford, Bodleian Library, Tenbury MS 1464 (c.1575; B only).

(B) f.63 [no attribution]

Plainsong: *Hymnorum cum notis opusculum usui insignis ecclesie Sarum* (Antwerp: Catherine van Ruremund, 1541), f.53. Copy consulted: London, British Library C.35.g.13.

Notes on the Readings of the Sources

None of the sources has any polyphony for verse 4. This is one of several hymns by Sheppard that lack a setting of one of the even-numbered verses. It is likely that these hymns were simply shortened in performance by omitting a pair of verses to maintain the *alternatim* structure of the setting. Here verses 3 and 4 are omitted.

The attribution in source **B**, a set of partbooks from the household of Edward Paston of Norfolk, inspires little credibility. It appears that, in the later sixteenth century, a group of hymns was circulating in the eastern counties under Tallis's name: with one omission they also occur in source **D** with a similar blanket attribution after the final

hymn. In this latter source the group is followed by Osbert Parsley's hymn *Jesu auctor clementiae*, which prompts the question whether the hymns were acquired from Norwich Cathedral where Parsley was a lay clerk. The scribe of A, John Baldwin, had an especial interest in the music of John Sheppard. Contrary to some claims in older literature, his attributions are generally trustworthy and the style of *Aeterne Rex* is entirely characteristic of Sheppard, but not particularly so of Tallis.

In the notes below, each reference to a bar or group of bars is separated by an oblique stroke. Within these references multiple readings in the same voice are separated by commas and readings in different voices by semicolons. The order within each entry is: 1) bar number; 2) voice; 3) source 4) reading of the source. For extended references subsequent bar numbers are in brackets. Pitches are those of the edition and are in capital letters, preceded by a number where necessary, e.g. ²G = second note G in the bar.

Abbreviations

amb	ambiguously aligned	M	Mean	sl	slur
B	Bass	<i>m</i>	minim	SS	staff signature
<i>cr</i>	crotchet	MS	mensuration symbol	T	Tenor
<i>dot-</i>	dotted	om	omitted	+	tie
Ct1, Ct2	Countertenor 1, Countertenor 2	<i>q</i>	quaver	↗	underlay repeat sign
lig, ligs	ligature, ligatures	<i>sb</i>	semibreve		

Staff signatures and accidentals

1 Ct2 **B** SS lacks upper b for first verse / 6 Ct2 **A** no # for F / 10 M **A** ♫ for E / 12 Ct1 **B** ♫ implied by SS / 16 B **D** b for E / 21 M **B** # for F (probably intended for E) before ²G, (22) incomplete # sign for F before E / 24 M **BC** no b / 29 M **B** no ♫ / 32 Ct2 **B** SS b for upper B only (=Eb in the transcription) / 33 Ct1 **B** no ♫ / 34 Ct2 **B** b for E (not ♫) / 37 Ct1 **B** no ♫ / 38 Ct2 **A** no ♫ / 39 Ct1 **A** b for E / 41 M **BC** no ♫ / 45 Ct1 **A** ♫ for E; Ct1 **B** b for E; Ct2 **B** b for E / 46 Ct1 **A** b for E / 53 M **BC** no ♫ (but C has b for E in 55) / 55 M **B** no b / 56 Ct1 **B** deleted ♫ for E / 60 M **B** no ♫ /

Ligatures and underlay

2 M **A** tri- below A, (3–5) -bunal amb below ¹G¹FE²G²F³G; 2 M **B** tri- below A, (3) -bu- below G (and in 5) / 3–8 M **BC** ¹G not in lig, ligs for FE GF GA BA GF; 3 Ct1 **A** dexte- amb below ABC, (5) -re below ¹B; 3 Ct2 **B** ↗ (for *scandens tribunal*) below G / 4 Ct1 **B** dexte- below BA, (5) -re below ¹B / 4–5 Ct2 **A** sl for E²D / 5 Ct1 **B** ↗ (for *scandens tribunal dextere*) below ²B / 6 Ct2 **B** -tere below GF, (7) ↗ (for *scandens tribunal dextere*) below ¹G²G / 7 Ct1 **B** ↗ (for *scandens tribunal*) below B / 8 Ct1 **A** sl for DB; **B** ↗ (for *scandens tribunal dextere*) below G / 9 Ct1 **A** -re amb below CBA; **B** dex- below ²D, (10) mC is dot-cr C qC, -te- below qC / 12 Ct2 **B** -um below B (not in 14) / 13 Ct1 **B** ↗ (for *Patris potestas omnium*) below F; Ct2 **B** ↗ (for *Patris potestas omnium*) below G (not in 14) / 16 Ct2 **B** ↗ (for *Patris potestas omnium*) below ¹BG; **B** ↗ (for *Patris potestas omnium*) below E / 19 Ct1 **B** ↗ (for *collata est Jesu*) below G, no tie, (21) caeli- amb below ¹BED / 20 Ct1 **A** sl for AD / 21–22 Ct2 **A** caelitus amb below C¹B¹A²G²A²B, ↗ below ³G, (24) humanitas (sic) amb below ¹BEDC²B / 22–23 Ct1 **B** -tus ↗ amb below CA²D, (25) ↗ amb below AG / 24 Ct2 **B** caeli- below BE, (25) -tus below C, (26–28) Quae non erat humanitus amb below DDCFEEDCD / 28–31 M Ct1 Ct2 **A** -tas for -tus; 28 B **D** ↗ (for *Quae non erat humanitus*) below F / 29 Ct1 **B** ↗ (for *Quae non erat humanitus*) below ¹A (no room below previous note); Ct2 **B** ↗ (for *Quae non erat humanitus*) below ²C / 30 Ct1 **A** sl for A¹F; **B** ↗ (for *humanitus*) below A / 33 M **A** -a below A (not in 35), (34) ti- below G (not in 36) / 34 M **B** -a below G, (35) ti- below ¹F; 34 Ct1 **B** -mi- below ²C; Ct2 **B** ↗ (for *gloria tibi Domine*) below ¹F / 35 Ct1 **B** ↗ (for *gloria tibi Domine*) below ²A / 37 Ct2 **B** ↗ (for *gloria tibi*) below C / 38 M **C** no lig; Ct1 **B** ↗ (for *gloria tibi Domine*) below B, (39) C is qCqC, (4141 Ct1 **B** G is dot-cr q with underlay Domi- / 39 M **A** Do- below F, **B** -mi- below F (not in 41); **B** ↗ (for *gloria tibi Domine*) below B / 43–44 M **C** lig for BA (not FB) / 44 Ct2 **B** ↗ (for *qui scandis supra sidera*) below F, (47) si- below D, (48) -de- below E / 45 Ct1 **B** ↗ (for *qui scandis supra sidera*) below ²C / 46–47 M **B** lig for AG, *supra* below BA, (47) si- below F; 46 B **D** ↗ (for *qui scandis supra sidera*) below A / 47 Ct1 **B** ↗ (for *qui scandis supra sidera*) below A / 50–52 M **B** -tre et Sancto Spiri- all one note later; 50 Ct2 **B** Sancto undivided below ¹EF²E, *Spiri-* one note later / 51 Ct2 **A** -tu cum Pa- below BA²D, (52) -tre et Sancto below ¹CBD²C, (53) *Spiri-* amb below BAGC / 52 Ct1 **A** -tu *Spiri-* below CDE / 53 Ct1 **B** -tu below B (not in 54); T **B** ↗ below C / 56 Ct2 **A** -la below C; **B** -cu- below A / 57 M **B** -ter- below ²B, (58) -na below G, (59) sae- below G, (60) -cu- below G / 58 Ct1 **B** -la below A (not in 59), ↗ below ²C; Ct2 **B** ↗ (for *in sempiterna saecula*) below D, (60) ↗ om below C / 60 B **D** ↗ (for *in sempiterna saecula*) below A / 62–63 M **A** -la A- one note earlier / 64–65 Ct2 **B** -men A- om; **B** **D** -men A- om /

Other readings

1 M **BC** void mensural notation throughout; **B** **D** ‘Eterne rex’ in left-hand margin / 10 M **B** E is dot-cr / 11 Ct1 **B** ¹A is G / 17 B **D** EDCC are cr cr dot-cr q / 24 Ct2 **A** extra qE before D / 30 Ct1 **B** m for dot-cr q / 32 all parts **ABC** MS ♩; **B** **D** MS ♩ after deleted MS ♩ / 50 Ct1 **B** ²G is A / 63–65 M **A** sb+sb+sb is sb sb (without tie) /