

# CAECILIA

*A Review of Catholic Church Music*



Aftermath of Assisi . . . . . Dom Ermin Vitry

Plainsong Rhythm . . . . . Dom Gregory Murray

VOLUME 84, NO. 1

FEBRUARY, 1957

## **CAECILIA**

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*A Quarterly Review devoted to the liturgical music apostolate.*

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It is our earnest hope and prayer that the Caecilia Magazine will happily continue to fulfill the mission for which it was established so many years ago. For the first time in a generation it appears as the journal of the Society of St. Caecilia, a group devoted to the study and the presentation of the finest in sacred music.

This reunion of the society and the magazine was encouraged by and reflects the words of our beloved Pontiff, Pope Pius XII, who said in his recent encyclical on the discipline of Sacred Music: "Pious associations of this kind, which have been founded to instruct the people in sacred music or for advanced study in this subject, can contribute greatly by words and example to the advance of sacred music."

We therefore ask God's blessing upon this venture that it may play its part in abetting the dignity and force of sacred music, more especially as it reaches its highest function in the supreme act of Christian worship, the Eucharistic sacrifice of the altar.

G. T. Bergan  
Archbishop of Omaha

Disciplina.” It is too outstanding a document ever to need, in basic concept at least, a quinquagesimo anno. It will receive, by way of an editorial roundtable, a detailed commentary. The second will be a complete reissue of Dr. Peter Wagner’s monumental “Introduction to the Gregorian Melodies”. Out of print in every language, this basic piece, so recognized in universities throughout the world, ought to be worth its weight in uranium to all of us.

### *Caecilia and the Caecilian School*

As we go to press, we have the uneasy feeling that we are being followed. Not so much followed, really, as preceded. One magazine, the englished *Gregorian Review*, has erringly announced the “revival in the United States of the so-called Caecilian movement.” One wonders why it should now be a “so-called” movement, except that it was called so. Now anyone with a knowledge and sense of history could make a better case for the Caecilian school than any number of current movements we can think of. The astounding thing is that there should be a kind of fear about the Caecilian movement, like the fear about the K. K. K., when everybody knows that the Caecilian movement is as dead as Marley’s ghost. But it was an historical event, whether one would like to have it in history or not. The astounding thing is that after all these years it is still badgered with that biblical and beleaguered misnomer, sterility. Whatever the trouble with the Caecilian Movement was, it was not sterile, it was far too fertile, and its fertility made many too small stalks. If our masthead is notable for anything, it would seem to be notable that its members have ventured into the very new and have gone so far back to the very old that it seems very new. The same people who cry “sterile!” are the ones who cry “ivory tower!” when one insists on adhering to first class composition. Something must be “written” for the others—mostly something that pretends to be what it isn’t. And so the presses remain too fertile, and deadly. What must be sought are the simple things of the masters, old and new.

Anyway, the *Gregorian Review* extends its sincere good wishes, for which one must be grateful. Only it is too bad that they must be accepted in the spirit in which they are given—a spirit of caution indeed, the caution with which it minds its readers to put on their blinkers now! Lest they see or hear that which they ought not to see or hear.

### *Liturgical Music and the Liturgical Movement*

Historically, it is a matter of keen regret that these two apostolates seem to drift further and further apart. What has happened,

it seems to us, is that the liturgists have run a long, long way, tossing aside this music and that, until they have come to a point of assigning new roles for music, and indeed have faced themselves with the necessity of inventing a new music altogether. The trouble is that in their meanderings they have tossed the liturgical musician aside too, and they begin to look frightfully like children at play.

It is not so with the related arts of painting, sculpture and architecture. Here the artists and artisans have been brought in. But contemporary composers are at least as far along as these, further, perhaps, than at any time since the decline of polyphony. Please invite them into your new temples. They are more important "because sacred music enters more intimately into divine worship than many other liberal arts, such as architecture, painting, and sculpture. These last serve to prepare a worthy setting for the sacred ceremonies. Sacred music, however, has an important place in the actual performance of the sacred ceremonies and rites themselves." (Pius XII., *Mus. Sac. Disc.*)

The official attitude of the American Liturgical Conference that "the liturgical movement is not 'arty'; it is rather almost brutally practical in its view of arts and aesthetic values", seems some distance away from the discussion of art and aesthetic value in Pius XII's Christmas Encyclical of 1955. He says: "With the favor and under the auspices of the Church the study of sacred music has gone a long way over the course of the centuries. In this journey, although sometimes slowly and laboriously, it has gradually progressed from the simple and ingenious Gregorian modes to great and magnificent works of art. To these works not only the human voice, but also the organ and other musical instruments, add dignity, majesty, and a prodigious richness . . . The progress of this musical art shows how sincerely the Church has desired to render divine worship ever more splendid and more pleasing to the Christian people."

Even after Assisi (and what happened there could easily have been predicted from *Musicae Sacrae Disciplina*) the starry-eyed did not seem to understand what the Pope and Cardinal Cicognani had said, and went about talking as if the Latin and the Latin chant were trifles that would soon be done with, and that, in any case, what had been said did not refer to the Mass of the Catechumens.

But there are hopeful signs. Father Reinhold has decried the possibility of Gregorian Chant, Palestrina, Vittoria and Lassus being exiled to traveling choirs and Protestant churches. If memory serves, this is a tall drink of water away from his writings in *Amen*. And

one is genuinely warmed by Dom Gajard's memorandum to the S. Congregation of Rites, an eloquent plea, not only for the retention of Latin, *but of the traditional Latin as it is wedded to the Gregorian melodies.*

### *Under the Big Top*

Musart, the journal of the National Catholic Music Educators Association has been up and about—editorial-wise—stirring a controversy. We say bless you, bravo, and yea, for it is a deep-seated and ill-advised custom, though quite in keeping with the times, to suppress controversy. The main issues seem to line up something like this: 1) The efforts of NCMEA should be confined to the schools. 2) The music programs provided for the schools should embrace all phases of music, instrumental, vocal, secular and sacred. Right off anyone who has spent any time at all at music education must agree. There is not even anything to discuss. It is simply the commonest of truisms to say that only under such terms will musical tastes be advanced in our schools, and that the end result will better the climate for the “specialists”, among whom we are here concerned directly with the practitioners of liturgical music. After all, one can hardly be called a liturgical musician, unless he is a musician in the first place; and this is one of the really great problems about liturgical music, especially the chant, which suffers perennially from non and even anti-musical enthusiasts.

For the rest there is a good deal of chest pounding about class room teaching and screening, what the superintendents want, or don't want, and what they are liable to get. It is all a big question, and one not yet or so simply solved. Who is to decide what—the superintendent, the class room teacher, or the musician? And are we to limit our aims and tastes to the general level of the educators, to whom one “must listen . . . and also learn how the total school music program must develop”? In nearly every University in the land there are the teachers colleges and the art colleges; one learns how to “educate” or he becomes a musician, with the stuff to teach, and not soon, we guess, the twain shall meet.

As for the liturgical musician and his “specialist” organizations, it is more than a little ungracious to declare: “After years of effort what have liturgical societies accomplished in the way of educating the catholic population to appreciate and want the right church music?” or to say that “this failure is due to the fact that the liturgists did not get into the schools forty years ago.” Well, the facts are these: first, well over forty years ago numbers of liturgical musicians got out of the schools, and these were taken over by class room

teachers whose constitutions in many cases forbade them to go from the school to the church, especially with young men. Second, even so, there has been church music a plenty in our schools during the past forty years, most of it as good as anything that goes on now. Finally, the whole problem of church music in this country centers on what happens when the children leave the schools! About this the educators have done nothing and are not likely to. The liturgical musicians might. And not to us, but to the church, the music that is part and parcel of her worship is mighty in degree of importance.

On all counts, who is to measure the good that flowed from the music programs of the many communities of nuns all these years, many of which were taught by men like John Singenberger or Father Finn? How can you measure the effect of, say, the Ward system, which was in our schools at least thirty five years ago? How discover the sure impact of the dynamism of Mother Stevens, Dom Gregory Hugle, or Father Vitry, and that of a score of lay men and laywomen. It is dashing, but supremely witless, to say that every single page and article in liturgical music journals have been wasted. Or that the hymnals of Mr. Montani and the St. Gregory Society, that of Pius Xth, of Sir Richard Terry and Dom Gregory Murray have not or will not affect public taste.

It is perfectly true that all these efforts need the help of the schools. But there is a question about whether they are considered there sufficiently even now, or whether we are becoming enmeshed in ever-new labyrinths of methodology, reducing high aspiration to the least common denominator, in the fashion that everyone can now have the same kind of blue-berry muffins every morning, because a monster called ready-mix is choking the fine art of cookery.

One may or may not quarrel with the NCMEA or its points of view. That is simply his freedom. But suspicion toward "splinter organizations" or the "some who even want to organize a new group," a darkling hint that "if these associations ever want their objectives to be realized they had better join NCMEA" is pretty bizarre. A plea for all to "get under one tent" can be well taken. The show will be biggest there. But by no means or necessity the best.

## PLAINSONG RHYTHM\*

### The Editorial Methods of Solesmes

by *Dom Gregory Murray*

Enthusiasm for a 'cause' is likely to lead to overstatement, especially in making generalizations. Even without intending it, the earnest apostle runs the risk of misleading his audience or his readers. This no doubt, explains the following oversimplified declaration by one of the leading preachers of Solesmes doctrine:

'Modern rhythmic signs, in our Solesmes choir-books, are no new invention, an innovation calculated to deprive us of our liberty; they are merely a modern way of reproducing the rhythmic signs found in the best MSS, and we have no more right to neglect them, if we wish to sing the melodies as they were intended to be sung, than we have to change the notes themselves.'<sup>1</sup>

The impression this gives is clear enough, viz. that the modern rhythmic signs of Solesmes merely represent those of the ancient MSS. As the writer of this passage must know well enough, many of the modern rhythmic signs do not represent signs in the ancient MSS, but are purely editorial additions. Such purely editorial additions include practically all the rhythmic signs which are to be found in the simpler melodies. Unfortunately, it is impossible to tell from the Solesmes editions whether there is MS warrant for a particular rhythmic sign or not, for the printed books make no difference between a MS sign and an editorial sign. Furthermore, a particular sign in the MSS is liable to be given three different interpretations according as one or other of the modern signs is selected to represent it. The matter, therefore, is not quite so simple as Dom Dean's statement might lead us to suppose. Indeed, without qualification the impression it gives is quite false.

The best corrective is provide by another apostle of Solesmes, Dom Desrocquettes, who writes as follows:

'I shall always remember the 'indignation' of Dom Mocquereau being warned that a friend of his, in his "simplicity", had written somewhere that all the vertical

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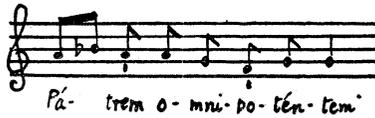
\* *This article is reprinted from THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW, Autumn, 1956, by kind permission of the Reverend Editor.*

<sup>1</sup> Dom Aldhelm Dean, *Solesmes—Its Work for Liturgy and Chant* (published by The Society of St. Gregory), p. 18. These 'modern rhythmic signs' have been added by the Solesmes editors to the official notes of the Vatican Edition. They are of three kinds: the dot indicates a doubling of the note, the horizontal line (or episema) slightly lengthens notes, the vertical line (or episema) indicates an 'ictus' or downbeat, i. e. the first beat of a binary or ternary measure.

episemas of this Credo (viz. Credo I in the Kyrie) were found in the MSS! No, of course, none of them, and even no indication of any length or stress could be found in the MSS that could indicate the 'validity' of any of these vertical episemas. In that particular case *all* came from Dom Mocquereau."<sup>2</sup>

In fact not only the vertical episemas, but also the doubling dots of this Credo '*all* came from Dom Mocquereau', as he himself made abundantly clear in his Monograph<sup>3</sup> on the piece to which Dom Desroquettes refers us.

When we turn to this Monograph we naturally expect to find Dom Mocquereau's detailed reasons for inserting the episemas and dots in the places where we find them. Certainly some explanation is necessary to justify his treatment of the Vatican text. Yet the Monograph is far from satisfactory, especially in those places where the reasons for the treatment are least obvious. For example, we naturally want to know why the very first phrase (after the intonation) is treated as it is, with only one doubled note at its cadence and with an 'ictus' sign<sup>4</sup> under the F;



All that the Monograph tells us is (1) that this cadence is one of less importance and therefore does not require two doubled notes;

<sup>2</sup> Article 'The Rhythmic' Tradition in the MSS and the Rhythmic Signs of Solesmes' in *Liturgy* (the organ of The Society of St. Gregory), July 1953, p. 95. Dom Desroquettes is referring, not to Dom Dean, but to a much earlier writer.

<sup>3</sup> Number III of the Solesmes series of 'Monographies Grégoriennes', *Le Chant 'Authentique' du Credo* (Desclée, 1922).

<sup>4</sup> According to Solesmes theory the indivisible, basic unit in plainsong is the simple note, represented in modern notation by a quaver. The quaver units are grouped into binary and ternary measures in free sequence, with an 'ictus' (or down-beat) on the first quaver of each measure. The 'ictus' sign (↓) placed under a note (as in the musical illustrations in these pages) indicates that a binary or ternary measure begins with that note. Every doubled note (crotchet) automatically has an 'ictus' and normally also the first note of every neum (group of notes on one syllable); in these cases no additional sign is necessary to indicate the 'ictus'. Thus in the musical illustration that follows, the 'ictus' falls on the first note of 'Pa-', on 'trem', on 'po-', and on 'tem'. Readers unfamiliar with the word or the sign are recommended to draw a bar-line before each 'ictic' note. In that way they will clearly distinguish the binary and ternary measures. Although this exclusively binary and ternary grouping is an essential element in Solesmes theory. It is unsupported by any literary evidence from the past. Similarly the Solesmes writers can adduce no ancient description or definition of the 'ictus' in their special sense of the word, as a down-beat essentially without impulse, actual or implied. (See, for instance, Dom Desroquettes, *Plainsong for Musicians*, p. 22). Furthermore there is not a single 'ictus' mark as such in any ancient MS; all the authentic rhythmic signs concern the lengths of the notes. Dom Mocquereau and Dom Gajard admit this in Monographic Grégorienne IV, p. 11.

and (2) that correct Latin accentuation of a spondaic cadence<sup>5</sup> is best achieved by not doubling the accented syllable (p. 38). Both of these statements are gratuitous assertions, and it is peculiarly piquant to be told that a spondee is best interpreted by being changed into an iamb! 'In rising cadences', continues the author, 'the lengthening of the tonic accent is ordinarily forbidden' (p. 39). By printing this statement in italics he makes it emphatic. But no amount of emphasis can take the place of logical reasoning and explanation. We may well ask: By whom is the lengthening forbidden?

If we turn to *Le Nombre Musical Grégorien*<sup>6</sup> for further enlightenment, we find a fuller statement, though, once again, without explanation or logical argument. The same phrase from the Credo is quoted as an example of a spondaic cadence at the unison approached from below, and Dom Mocquereau continues:

- 'It is difficult to give a rule which applies to all cases:
- (a) in general the doubling of the accent serves no purpose;
  - (b) ordinarily it is forbidden;
  - (c) sometimes it is allowed;
  - (d) at other times, less often, it is necessary.

It is the musical context and taste that decide for or against the doubling; it is absolutely necessary to study each case on its merits. In practice one can follow the indications of the 'rhythmed books' (Tome II, p. 313).

Surely we do not need to be told that we 'can follow the indications of the rhythmed books'; but what we should be told is why the books have been so rhythmed. To give a list of vague rules, unexplained and unjustified by scientific evidence, is yet another instance of Dom Mocquereau's tendency to substitute an *ipse dixi* for a positive proof. But since he has told us that 'it is absolutely necessary to study each case on its merits', there can be no harm in following his advice and subjecting the cadence in question to a careful scrutiny.<sup>7</sup>



<sup>5</sup> The terms 'spondaic cadence' and 'dactylic cadence' are employed in these pages according to accepted plainsong usage. A 'spondaic cadence' has the accent on the penultimate syllable (e.g. 'Redemptor'), a 'dactylic cadence' has the accent on the antepenultimate syllable (e.g. 'Dóminus').

<sup>6</sup> This is considered to be Dom Mocquereau's most authoritative exposition of Solesmes theory.

<sup>7</sup> In the examination that follows I must acknowledge my debt to the late Canon Collard's admirable articles in *La Petite maîtrise*, 1935.

Here the spondaic cadence at the unison is preceded by a group of three notes (A-G-F), a melodic motive which occurs in various forms no less than twenty-seven times during the Credo, eleven times as above. Its rhythm is as clear as could be, especially when it emerges as pure 'vocalise' (without separate syllables to the individual notes) in the 'Amen':



The identity of this phrase with that at 'omnipoténtem' is emphasized by the identity of the melody immediately before it ('saeculi') with the melody of 'Pátrem' (A-B flat-A).

Once we have perceived the unmistakable rhythmic character of this motive (A-G-F) from the purely melodic point of view, it is interesting to see how the words are fitted to it. The first note (A) coincides in every case save one (*de Déo véro*)<sup>8</sup> with a tonic accent, either principal or secondary. The following table marks this clear:

	A	[A]	G	F	G
	o-		mni-	po-	téntem
invisi-	bí-		li-		um
uni-	gé-		ni-		tum
	saé-		cu-		la
	de		Dé-	o	véro
	fá-		cta		sunt
	Vír-		gi-		ne
	fá-		ctus		est
	Pón-	ti-	o	Pi-	láto
se-	púl-		tus		est
se-	cún-		dum	Scrip-	túras
	déx-		te-	ram	Pátris
	mór-		tu-		os
	vi-		vi-	fi-	cántem
con-	glo-		ri-	fi-	cátur
ec-	clé-		si-		am
	A-				men

Certain points call for comment:

(1) All three compound words have their secondary accents thus: *ómni-poténtem*, *vivi-ficántem*, *conglóri-ficátur*—not according to the usual rule of counting back in twos from the principal accent.

<sup>8</sup> One exception out of seventeen!

(2) In one case ('Póntio Pilátó) an extra note (A) is added to accommodate an extra syllable. This is a recognized procedure in plainsong, and raises no problem.

(3) But in nine other cases the G and F are united as a clivis<sup>9</sup> and set to the weak penultimate syllable of a dactylic cadence. According to a rigid law—decreed by Dom Mocquereau—such a clivis should have an 'ictus' on its first note, which would necessarily destroy the ternary rhythm of the group A-G-F. But is this Solesmes rule about the 'ictus' at the beginning of such neums a sound one? How does it stand up to the test of the internal evidence of 'the notes themselves'? I need only quote two or three other phrases from the Kyriele to expose its lack of solid basis in the Chant:

Gloria V  
Glá-ti-as / Dó-mi-ne = Fí-li-us Pá-tris<sup>10</sup>

Gloria VI  
mún-di / Pá-tris = Dó-mi-ne

Gloria XI  
Jé-su Chri-ste = mi-se-ré-re no-bis

These examples are sufficient to show that for the Gregorian composers the first note of a neum—if immediately preceded by an accent—did not always have what Solesmes call an 'ictus'; for the neum in such circumstances may be the second part of a disintegrated larger neum, the first note of which has been separated to accommodate the accented syllable. This is exactly what happens to the initial neum of the Credo 'Amen' when its three notes (A-G-F) are divided to fit dactylic cadences. In every case, as the 'Amen' proves, it is a ternary group, with the 'ictus' on the A.

If we look closer at this Credo, we find that the same melodic motive (A-G-F) occurs twice over when it is used for a dactylic cadence:

<sup>9</sup> According to accepted terminology, a clivis is a descending neum of two notes on one syllable.

<sup>10</sup> The 'ictus' marks in these three pairs of parallels have been added to clarify the point. Those in the first example of each pair are according to Solesmes; those in the second example are not.

	A	[A]	G	F	A	G	F	G
	in-		vi-	si	bi-	li-		um
	Dé-	i	u-	ni-	gé-	ni-		tum
	ó-		mni-	a	saé-	cu-		la
	ó-		mni-	a	fá-	cta		sunt
	Ma-		rí-	a	Vír-	gi-		ne
	hó-		[ ]	mo	fá-	ctus		est
pás-	sus		et	se-	púl-	tus		est
ví-	vos		[ ]	et	mór-	tu-		os
apo-	stó-	li-	cam	ec-	clé-	si-		am

If we study the first column here we shall again find that the initial A is in nearly every case associated with tonic accents, either principal or secondary. The apparent exceptions may be briefly examined:

(1) The word 'invisíbilium' may certainly be regarded as having its secondary accent on the first syllable, the emphatic negative of which is all-important in contrast with 'visíbilium'. Even in English, although the normal emphasis is on the second syllable of 'invisible', it frequently moves to the first syllable when the word is contrasted with 'visible'.

(2) 'Pássus' and 'vívos' each have two notes on the first syllable, and this phenomenon naturally tends to give a sort of (musical) secondary accent to the final syllable.

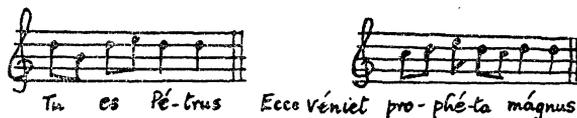
(3) The only difficult case is 'Maria', the first syllable of which cannot by any means be regarded as accented. It is the one genuine and clear exception (like 'de Déo véro' above) that proves the rule.<sup>11</sup> In every other case the A coincides with an accent or a pseudo-accent.

In two cases we notice that the middle note (G) of the ternary group (A-G-F) is missing (at 'hómo' and 'vívos'). This point will be mentioned later.

In two other cases ('Déi unigénitum' and 'apostólicam') an extra syllable is accommodated (as in 'Póntio Piláto' above) by adding another A.

When the Solesmes *Antiphonale Monasticum* appeared in 1934, one of its most notable editorial improvements was in the treatment of spondaic cadences: at last they were (in many cases, though not all) given their natural, normal, spondaic treatment—two doubled (dotted) notes:

<sup>11</sup> It is a recognized phenomenon in all vocal music that sometimes the musical rhythm overrides the natural rhythm of the words.



It is interesting to notice that these particular cadences are of no greater importance as cadences than that of 'omnipoténtem' in the Credo! In previous Solesmes editions the first syllable of 'Pé-trus' was left as an ordinary (i.e. short) note, while the first syllable of 'mágnus' was marked (somewhat equivocally) with a horizontal episema.<sup>12</sup> Such an improvement in the editing of the *Antiphonale Monasticum*, although not consistently maintained, gives grounds for hope that ultimately Solesmes may altogether abandon their abnormal, unnatural, affected treatment of the accented syllable.

Now the second of these examples provides a close melodic and rhythmic parallel to the phrase of the Credo we have been studying:



The antiphon melody in which this cadence occurs is frequently employed in the *Antiphonale*, and often enough (as when set to the word 'tardábit') the middle note of the ternary group is omitted—just as we found that the word 'hómo' in the Credo. Clearly the cadences are identical: a sort of conventional 'turn' about the final note. There can therefore be no scientific reason whatsoever for not treating such cadences consistently in every case, and as Solesmes now treat them in the *Antiphonale Monasticum*: with two doubled notes at the conclusion. The Credo must be corrected and brought up-to-date.<sup>13</sup>

The phrase we have examined, then, is composed of two parts: (1) a ternary group (sometimes extended to accommodate an extra syllable, as in 'Póntio', sometimes contracted by the omission of the middle note, as in 'hómo'); (2) a spondaic cadence of two doubled notes, the second of which disappears when the formula is adapted to dactylic cadences (as in 'fáctus est').

In this Monograph on the Credo, Dom Mocquereau is so blinded by his peculiar theories about the rhythmic importance of word-endings and the relative unimportance of the accented syllables, that he never even notices the melodic existence, not to say

<sup>12</sup> Denoting, not a doubling, but a slight prolongation without having the 'ictus'!

<sup>13</sup> For this reason alone the F would have to lose its 'ictus', quite apart from the other fact we have established: that it is the third note of a ternary group.

significance, of the group A-G-F.<sup>14</sup> Having decided—on what evidence?—to mark the F with an ‘ictus’ in order to give the spondaic cadence an iambic interpretation (!), he quite fails to observe what is manifestly a characteristic melodic feature of the piece, occurring (as we have seen) no less than twenty times, with its rhythm unmistakably defined in the ‘Amen’.



We can now pass to a second musical motive of Credo I: Here again we have a ternary group (G-F-A), leading to a spondaic cadence at the unison. This cadence Dom Mocquereau treats in a normal spondaic fashion, although it would seem to be of even less importance as a cadence than that at ‘omnipotentem’. However, let that pass.

The ternary group (G-F-A) occurs nine times during the Credo, and in every case save one the initial G coincides with a tonic accent, principal or secondary:

	G	F	A	G
	caé-	li	et	térrae
	Dé-	um	de	Déo
	lú-	men	de	lúmíne
de-	scén-	dit	de	caélis
	non	é-	rit	fínis
Fili-	ó-	que	pro-	cédit
locútus	est	per	pro-	phétas
	sán-	ctam	ca-	thólicam
	ú-	num	bap-	tísma

The solitary exception—if it really be an exception—is at ‘non érit fínis’. But it is at least arguable that the emphatic ‘non’ may here be regarded as accented, as monosyllables often are.

Dom Mocquereau, once again, fails to observe the melodic significance of this ternary group, the rhythm of which is clearly indicated by the accent on its initial note. He is prevented from seeing this obvious truth by his fixed determination to mark as many word-endings as possible with the ‘ictus’, serenely oblivious that, in default of positive melodic, harmonic, metrical or quantitative indication to the contrary, *an accent of itself indicates rhythm*.<sup>15</sup> Indeed

<sup>14</sup> The reader who finds this difficult to believe is invited to consult the Monograph for himself, especially the analytical melodic charts there provided.

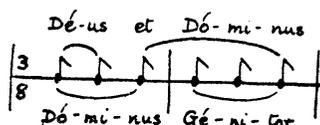
<sup>15</sup> Not recognizing this, he regards the two words ‘Dóminus’ and ‘Redémptor’ as having exactly the same rhythm! (See *Le Nombre Musical Grégorien*, II, p. 254, and I, p. 60).

at 'sánctam cathólicam' he completely obliterates the melodic identity of the ternary group by adding an unnecessary and undesirable doubling on the last syllable of 'sánctam'—as undesirable and as unnecessary as the similar doubling of 'únam'.

As an example of accent defining rhythm where no overriding melodic, metrical or quantitative indication intervenes, we can see at once that the rhythm of the following two word-groups is identical:

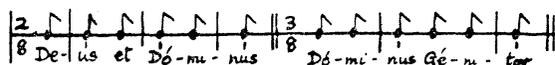
Déus et Dóminus,  
Dóminus Génitor.

The varying positions of the word-endings make no difference to the *rhythm*,<sup>16</sup> though they alter the *phrasing*:



The rhythmic identity is due to the identity of the accentual schemes.

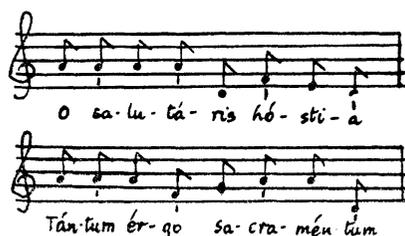
But Dom Mocquereau, with his penchant for putting the 'ictus' on word-endings, would regard these two phrases as rhythmically distinct:



On the other hand, he is unable to appreciate the obvious rhythmic difference between the two lines:

O salutáris hóstia,  
Tántum érgo Sacraméntum.

Each line, it is true, has eight syllables, but rhythmically that is all that they have in common. Nevertheless in syllabic plainsong settings Dom Mocquereau would offer us the following 'authentic' rhythmicings:



Could anything be more absurd? Would any intelligent musician fail to observe that the first line is iambic and the second trochaic? Could any musician worthy of the name be permanently

<sup>16</sup> Except in languages in which the final syllable of the word is accented, e.g. French!

satisfied with a theory whereby words in contradictory metres are sung to syllabic melodies of identical rhythm?

So relentless is Dom Mocquereau in his campaign against the word-accent as rhythmical determinant, that, rather than be guided by it, he would advocate the quite mechanical process of counting back in twos from the 'next certain ictus' as a means of discovering the *objective rhythm* (!) of a syllabic phrase. This verges on the comic when the 'next certain ictus' is itself fixed by the application of his own arbitrary rules. We thus find almost identical melodies edited with contradictory rhythms—each claiming to be the objective rhythm inherent in the melody. Here, for example, are two lines from two plainsong settings of the same words, printed on opposite pages of the latest Solesmes edition of the *Graduale*:

A

Pange lingua glo-ri-6 - si ..... sanguinisque pre-ti-6 - si....

B

Pange lingua glo-ri-6 - si ..... sanguinisque pre-ti-o - si....

Obviously these are two versions of the same melody, derived either one from the other or both from some common melodic source. Such melodic variants as they contain are easily understandable. But to me it seems quite inconceivable that, if the rhythm of one or other version was originally as Solesmes have indicated, the melody should then have been subjected to such flagrant 'counter-rhythm' as Solesmes have indicated in the alternative version. I would willingly stake my reputation as a musician that in a hymn-melody of this kind a melodic variant in one part of a phrase ('pretiósí') would not involve an essentially different rhythm in another part of that same phrase where the melody remains unaltered ('sanguinisque'). Nobody knowing one version *with Dom Mocquereau's rhythm* could evolve the other version *with Dom Mocquereau's quite different rhythm*. It is musically unthinkable.

But, of course, these particular Solesmes markings have no MS warrant whatever; they are simply the result of Dom Mocquereau's home-made rules. Having decreed that the first note of a neum has an 'ictus' (word-accentuation and even metrical considerations notwithstanding), he has to put an 'ictus' in version A on the second syllable of *língua*. From this 'next certain ictus' he has (by another of his own rules) to count back in twos and mark an 'ictus' on the

second syllable of 'Pänge'. According to him we now have the 'authentic Gregorian rhythm!

In fact, of course, the unassailable Solesmes rhythming of version B proves that their rhythming of version A must be wrong. As the metre is undeniably trochaic, the 'ictus' should come on the first syllable of 'língua' in both versions. (We have already seen that the Plainsong composers did not always attribute the 'ictus' to the first note of a neum immediately after a tonic accent.)<sup>17</sup>

In the other line ('sanguínisque . . .') the (obviously correct) rhythming of B again shows that of A to be incorrect. But, here again, Dom Mocquereau is the victim of his own arbitrary rules. Having decreed that spondaic cadences such as this are best treated without doubling the accented syllable and that the accent is best separated from the 'ictus', he automatically puts an 'ictus' on the final note of the phrase in version A, and then counts back in twos from this 'next certain ictus' and (there being no neums to interrupt his progress) mechanically drops 'ictus' marks on alternate notes. It is idle to pretend that this is a scientific method of discovering the authentic rhythm; it is nothing better than a children's game. And a rhythmic theory which can readily accept the results so obtained is altogether too good for this world.

It is almost certain that version B is earlier than version A, but in any case the neum on the accent of 'pretíosi' in B shows that the corresponding syllable in A must have been 'ictic'—even apart from metrical considerations. Nobody knowing one version could have evolved the other (taking them both in Dom Mocquereau's rhythm) except in a mood of deliberate perversity. Obviously the phrase in version A has a feminine cadence, a trochaic cadence. Several valid interpretations are possible, the most natural being with two doubled notes.<sup>18</sup> Only one interpretation is quite impossible — Dom Mocquereau's!

If these examples have not been found sufficiently compelling as a *reductio ad absurdum* of Solesmes editorial methods, a glance at the 'rhythmic edition' of 'Adéste fidèles' will show to what depths of musical insensitivity it is possible to be reduced by living exclusively on the self-administered drug of a home-made theory, however

<sup>17</sup> See above, p. 6.

<sup>18</sup> Even if we were to double neither note—an unlikely rendering—but, instead, were to pause on the last note, such a pause would not be equivalent to Dom Mocquereau's rhythming. A pause is a different thing from a positive doubling. A pause may occur independently of the 'ictus', as in so many trochaic hymn tunes, both of plainsong and later music, and in countless feminine cadences. Dom Mocquereau never understood this distinction. For him a different treatment of a cadence in syllabic phrases necessarily altered the rhythm of what had preceded it! (*Le Nombre Musical Grégorien*, II, p. 310.)

plausible or ingenious. In the end the vision becomes so clouded that everything looks the same—and nothing can be seen:

ADÉS-TE FI-DÉ-LES LAÉTI TRI-UMPHANTES: VE-NÍ-TE, VE-  
 NÍ-TE IN BÉTH-LE-HEM: NÁTUM VI-DÉ-TE RÉGEM ANEE-  
 LÓ-RUM: VE-NÍ-TE A-DO-RÉ-MUS, VE-NÍ-TE A-DO-  
 RÉ-MUS, VE-NÍ-TE A-DO-RÉ-MUS DÓ-MI-NUM

A printed copy of this version—bearing the Imprimatur of the Patriarch of Constantinople!—is amongst my treasured collection of musical curiosities. I am not sure that it is not the gem of the entire collection. I need offer no comment beyond saying that it shows where the ‘word-ending’ mania and the ‘un-ictic word-accent’ theory and the ‘counting-back-in-twos’ trick logically lead us—to musical Bedlam! In the Chant the futility of such editorial methods can be concealed, because the results can be accepted (up to a point) as part of that ‘strange unworldly, spiritual, Gregorian rhythm’, which is so different from the familiar, mundane, coarse, everyday habits of other music! But when applied to a tune we already know, these same editorial methods are revealed for what they are.

But the ‘un-ictic word-accent’ theory can so easily be refuted by looking at some of the simplest and most familiar of plainsong formulae. If, for instance, the ancient method of singing the ferial ‘Dóminus vobiscum’ at the Preface was as Solesmes would have us believe (with the accent ‘vobiscum’ ‘un-ictic’):

vo- BÍ-S-CUM

then how did the cadence ever come to be sung as in the festal Preface:



and definite,<sup>21</sup> so that by knowing the Solesmes rules for recognizing where every 'ictus' falls, it is comparatively easy to achieve uniformity of interpretation and consequently a polished performance, as everyone knows. When I say that this can be done without looking too closely at the music for oneself, I am speaking from experience. Indeed, the Solesmes editions, being assumed to be authoritative and scientifically reliable and claiming to incorporate the rhythmic signs of the ancient MSS, positively discourage their users from critically scrutinizing either the music or the printed rhythmic signs.

There must be thousands who have sung Credo I hundreds of times according to the Solesmes books (many of them may even have read Dom Mocquereau's 52-page Monograph on it) who have never yet paused to examine the structure of the melody even as briefly as we have attempted to do in these pages.

Very few, if any, of those who use the Solesmes method and the Solesmes editions ever seem to object that it is impossible to know whether a printed rhythmic sign is purely editorial or has MS warrant. Many are blissfully unaware that innumerable MS signs are not represented at all, and that those that are represented have been somewhat arbitrarily selected and somewhat arbitrarily interpreted, either as a doubling or as a lesser lengthening (a 'nuance') or (quite unwarrantably) as a mere 'ictus'. They do not realize that the proportion of authentic rhythmic signs in the music they sing most often (viz. the Kyriale) is quite negligible. Nearly all, if not all, of the rhythmic signs printed there are purely editorial additions.

Many Solesmes experts,<sup>22</sup> indeed, have acquired their reputations solely on the strength of their mastery of Dom Mocquereau's ready-made rules and their own vocal proficiency. In most cases they have never queried the soundness of their Master's theories or editorial methods, and they are probably unaware of the many problems awaiting solution. They are not exercised or worried about recovering the original Gregorian interpretation of the Chant,<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> We have seen at what a cost this 'simplicity' is achieved and by what methods.

<sup>22</sup> One of whom I was formerly reckoned to be! 'Cette etude, que l'on sent ecrite par un artiste tres fine en meme temps que par un musicien tres su lui, revele egalement une remarquable assimilation de la theorie de Solesmes, qui nous fait voir en Dom Gregory Murray l'un de plus brillant disciples de Dom Mocquereau' (Dom Gajard, quoting Dom Desroquettes, in *Monographie Grégorienne XIII*, p. 5). I have learned a little since those words were penned (1934).

<sup>23</sup> In these pages nothing has been said about a fundamental principle of the Vatican Edition (ultimately dictated by Solesmes): that the notes are all basically equal in length. The fact must be faced that all the literary evidence of the Gregorian centuries points in another direction. Similarly, nothing has been said about the Solesmes interpretation of the rhythmic signs that actually do appear in the MSS. On both these points independent scholars are at work, and one book is already in the press which may necessitate a drastic revision of accepted ideas.

because they sincerely believe that this has been made available for them in the Solesmes editions. In their view 'the modern rhythmic signs . . . are merely a modern way of reproducing the rhythmic signs of the best MSS, and we have no more right to neglect them . . . than we have to change the notes themselves'. Such happy mortals enjoy an enviable peace of mind: 'Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise!'

If these pages have succeeded in their object, such blind trust in Solesmes will have been exposed as unwarranted. It will have been realized that Solesmes theory and Solesmes editorial methods are indeed very much open to criticism. The reader will know that in fact we have every right to 'neglect' the rhythmic signs whenever (as is so often the case) we find them to have no MS warrant—especially when careful study shows them to be actually opposed to the musical implications of 'the notes themselves'.

One final point. To welcome the Solesmes interpretation as a justifiable 'modern' interpretation of the Church's ancient music, and therefore to discourage and forbid the continuation of conscientious attempts to discover the authentic ancient interpretation, is to abandon the only valid justification for singing the Chant at all, viz. that it is the Church's traditional music. Apart from the fact that the Solesmes interpretation can hardly be accepted as 'modern' (it differs fundamentally from modern musicians' ways of thought), we have to remember that if we sing the Chant in a manner demonstrably different from its original interpretation, then we are no longer singing the Church's traditional music but a modern parody deserving of scant respect. If that is all it can claim to be, it is causing more trouble than it is worth. In its place we must use every endeavor to re-establish the authentic Gregorian Chant with its authentic Gregorian Rhythm. In the words of Giulio Bas, one of Dom Mocquereau's early collaborators who later rejected the Solesmes theories: 'We should have the courage to revise everything from top to bottom, not to destroy, but to rectify.'

## THE MUSIC COLLECTIONS OF THE VATICAN LIBRARY

Rev. Richard J. Schuler

Until I saw it for myself during the fall, winter, and spring of 1954-55, the Vatican Library in my mind was a kind of great storehouse of the past combined with the awesome inaccessibility of the Taj Mahal. I knew editions of music based on manuscripts in the Vatican, and musicology books made frequent references to the fabulous collections of all kinds of music that the Vatican housed. But not until I passed the Porta Sant' Anna and secured permission to present my credentials from the American Fulbright Commission to the secretary of the library did I begin to know what the Vatican Library is and how truly extraordinary is its treasure, its history, and above all its service to scholarship.

The library occupies part of the Belvedere Palace and is entered through the Belvedere courtyard. The reading rooms are on the second floor (an Italian would call it the first floor), and in contrast to so many European libraries, they are well lighted, both by large windows and by well engineered artificial illumination. To the utter joy of all students who are in Rome in the winter, the Vatican Library has heat, a rare find indeed for any research scholar! One large reading room serves for that section of the library made up of printed books (*stampi*); another room is given over to the study of the manuscripts (*manoscritti*). There are today some 70,000 manuscripts and a half million printed books in the entire collection. The cataloging systems that are employed for the printed books are modern and efficient for the most part, much of the work being American, but so much of the manuscript library remains inadequately catalogued, and where catalogs exist, they are frequently only handwritten lists often dating back centuries.

My particular interest in seeking entrance to the library was to study the polyphonic choral manuscripts of the Renaissance, and when I assured the secretary of the library that I could find what I wanted to study in the Vatican collection I was given a *tessera* which granted me access to the Vatican City and the library each day for a year. It was admission to a treasure house of the Renaissance. Most of the great composers of the 15th and 16th centuries were associated with the Papal court in some way or other, and their music, composed often especially for Roman functions or brought to Rome for use at those functions, has been preserved in the various collections now housed in the Vatican Library.

The manuscripts are divided into various collections, named usually after the donor whose library they once were. Thus there is the Chigi collection, formerly the possession of the family that gave the Church Pope Alexander VII and many cardinals. Or the Palatini collections, once the library of the Electors of the Palatinate of the Rhine. Pope Alexander VIII, who was cardinal Ottoboni, enriched the library with his books, now known as the Ottoboniani. Within each of these divisions, further subdivision is made according to the language employed in the manuscripts. Thus we find Palatini Latini, Urbinates Graeci, Barberi Orientales, and many, many others.

Music in manuscript or in early printed editions is found in many collections: Cappella Sistina, Cappella Giulia, Archivio di San Pietro, Fondo Barberini, Biblioteca Chigiana, Vaticani Latini, Palatini Latini, Urbinates Latini, Ottoboniani Latini, Fondo Rossi, and Santa Maria Maggiore. Of these, undoubtedly, the richest in Renaissance church music are the Cappella Sistina and the Cappella Giulia. The Chigi and Santa Maria Maggiore collections have less.

The music in the collection entitled Cappella Sistina has been accumulated over the centuries by the Papal choir. Historically this group of singers can be traced back to the Schola Cantorum of Saint Gregory the Great. With the building of the Sistine Chapel in 1471-84 by Pope Sixtus IV to be used for all Papal functions, this Pontifical choir came to be known as the Sistine Choir. The vast collection of manuscripts and early printed works used by this group, which in the 15th and 16th centuries numbered among its members the musical great of Europe, is today housed in the Vatican Library. There are 703 separate items in the collection. Most of them are great choir books, but some of them are highly interesting financial accounts, lists of choir members, Papal directives, and correspondence of the various *maestri di cappella*, not to mention the records of controversies between the directors and the singers. Names such as Dufay, Mouton, Busnois, Josquin, Regis, Gaspar, Morales, Palestrina, Festa and a host of other Renaissance masters abound.

The Cappella Giulia is a younger institution, its foundation dating to Pope Julius II in 1512. This choir was intended to be a kind of preparatory group to supply members for the Sistine Choir. For over four hundred years it has functioned in Saint Peter's Basilica. Because of its later date of founding, the music collection of this choir does not contain early manuscripts, but there is a vast amount of Renaissance music and a rich collection of Baroque music, including many poly-choral works. Many of these were composed

to be sung *alla cupola*, with four four-voiced choirs, one situated in each of the galleries built into the four great piers supporting the mighty dome of Michelangelo. Fifteen masses of Orazio Benevoli for eight, twelve and sixteen parts testify to the grandiose spirit of the 17th century in Rome. The collection contains works of Carissimi, both the Scarlattis, Crivello, Paciotti, Ratti, Orgas, Dal Pane and other lesser known names. Of course, Palestrina, Nanini, Suriano, Cifra and other representatives of the Roman School are in great prominence. The collection is loaded with the works of 19th century choirmasters. The catalog lists 1357 separate items arranged in seventeen sections.

Research scholars are interested in catalogs of library possessions, and for the music research scholar a thematic catalog, which gives the first few bars of the composition in addition to the usual information about the title and composer, is a wonderful tool. Unfortunately, the music manuscripts of the Vatican are not as yet so cataloged. In fact, the only existing printed inventory is that made by Fr. Haberl a hundred years ago, and it is only concerned with a part of the Sistine collection. The remainder of that treasure is listed in two handwritten volumes. The Cappella Giulia I found cataloged on small slips of scratch paper, filed in two boxes about the size and shape of a shoe box. These are in handwriting, some in ink, some in pencil, with many corrections added which will be used some day to establish a system of cataloging for a printed volume scientifically describing those treasures of music. The other collections are cataloged in a similar fashion. A whole room is devoted to these manuscript catalogs; its shelves reach to the vaulting; they hold books themselves hundreds of years old. A thematic catalog of all the music contained in the Vatican and in all the other music libraries of Rome is a much discussed and a much to be desired undertaking. But the time and the money such a project will consume make it, unfortunately, something far in the future.

I made an inventory of both the Cappella Sistina and the Cappella Giulia, and then I set out to see and to study the manuscripts. A whole lifetime would not be sufficient time, of course, but even a year can put one into close contact with many of those jewels of Renaissance polyphony. This music of the 15th and 16th centuries is in large choir books, intended for the use of about twenty singers, all of whom sang from the single copy. The dimensions of these great books are about 36 inches by 24 inches and about six or eight inches thick. The notes are very large and the paper is heavy. Writing in score is not used; it fell into disuse with the rise of the multi-texted motet in the fourteenth century. In these choir

books each part is written separately, the cantus or soprano occupying the top left quarter of the double page; the alto, to the right at the top of the other page; the tenor, beneath the cantus; and the bass, beneath the alto. This method later gave way to the practice of putting all the compositions for each voice into a separate volume. The Cappella Sistina contains many of these. Score writing again became common in the seventeenth century, and one can see many printed editions written in score dating from that time in the Cappella Giulia.

Many of these choir books, written between 1450 and 1600, are in an advanced state of deterioration, caused to some extent by careless handling, exposure to dampness, and the unskillful attempts at restoration. Under Napoleon, the Cappella Sistina was taken from the Vatican and transported to France. Occasionally the illegible condition of a manuscript is explained in the catalog by a note stating that it had been under water. Some well-meaning librarians of past days attempted to make all the books of uniform size, and as a result one comes upon manuscripts with the top line of notes neatly cut off. But perhaps the most deadly enemy of these Renaissance choir books is the very ink with which they were written. A change of notation in the mid-fifteenth century brought into use the open, unfilled notes. Less ink was required in writing this "white note" music than was formerly needed for a notation like that employed in Gregorian chant. It was discovered that paper could sustain this amount of ink, and the far more expensive parchment, necessary for the black notes, could now be substituted for. All went well for a while, but the chemical action of the ink on the paper through these centuries has caused the paper to be eaten away. Where there once were lines and clefs and notes and text, now in many manuscripts there are holes, and where these are extensive enough, the whole page has become brittle and turned to dust. Meanwhile, the parchment manuscripts of the 9th and 10th centuries, twice as old as the polyphonic compositions, remain intact and almost in their pristine beauty. The work of restoration is underway, and these deteriorated manuscripts are being repaired with all the know-how of modern library science, but once the notes are gone these can never be replaced. Restoration consists only in filling the holes with a white substance that makes the page intact, and then the covering of the whole sheet with a seal to prevent further decay.

Interest in the study and performance of the music of the past is a modern phenomenon, just as musicology itself is a modern discipline, so modern, in fact, that in Italy, which is a kind of land "flowing with milk and honey" for musicologists, no chairs of mu-

sicology exist in the universities. Other ages before our own were interested in their own contemporary music almost exclusively, and as a result the works of the preceding age were all but discarded. These are now being rediscovered. Librarians are attempting to restore them and make them available for scientific study. Musicologists are preparing new editions based on these ancient manuscripts. Just as it was the Church who preserved the writings of the ancient Greeks and Romans to transmit them to the Middle Ages, so again it has been the Church through her libraries who has preserved for us these jewels of the Renaissance and the Baroque. The Vatican Library is open to all qualified scholars. Every aid is given to advance the study of the past. The library operates a very efficient and economic microfilm service, making it possible to reproduce this choral music. Of all the things I brought back from Europe, I think I am proudest of my roles of microfilm of Renaissance music from the Vatican Library.

Saint Pius X called for a restoration of Gregorian chant. In the past fifty years extraordinary progress has been made in that task. He also called for a restoration of this classical polyphony. Research and scholarship have made it available. It no longer rests only in libraries in manuscript form. A phenomenal number of new editions are on the market. It only remains for us to start singing the polyphonic masses and motets of the Renaissance.

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## AFTERMATH OF ASSISI

*By Dom Ermin Vitry, O.S.B.*

The Liturgical Congress of Assisi is now history. History it made, not only because it was the first truly international gathering about sacred liturgy, but much more because it will be a milestone in its restoration to a vital place in the Catholic life of our day. This has been properly said by the press in recent months; and yet Caecilia may be permitted to add, after many liturgical comments, a musical note.

This writer gratefully journeyed to Assisi as a member of the American delegation. To him, the spectacle of an ardent plea, rising as the voice of the flock of all lands, and crowned by the official blessing of the church, was the sign of a pontifical blessing: henceforth, the sacred liturgy would resume its rightful mission in the care of souls. Having known the birthday of the liturgical movement in Europe years ago and having taken his share in its growing pains, he approached Assisi with a bias, a bias which Arnold Lunn

defines as the conviction borne of experience without which nothing vital is accomplished. This bias, developed through a lifetime committed to sacred music, was musical, not liturgical, viz: that the fortune of the liturgy proper and sacred music are inevitably tied to each other. Why not confess frankly, that from this bias, the Congress appeared to raise inconceivably grave issues which it was unprepared either to meet, still less, to solve. Most certainly, the general theme which filled the meetings was a magnificent and timely one; and most of the papers read in succession covered adequately its varied aspects notwithstanding the fact that they had to remain within the limits of generalities. Most certainly again, the prevailing atmosphere was one of intense spiritual longing and sincere charity; but one might also regret that, while some essential aspects of the "care of souls" hardly received a passing notice, any anticipation of a reference to the vernacular question would unleash a flood of enthusiasm not always well controlled. Looked upon from the above mentioned musical bias, such an impulse as witnessed daily at the Congress will likely impose upon the liturgical movement musical issues which the leaders ought to take in serious consideration for the benefit of the liturgy itself.

During the years from 1942-1950 the columns of *Caecilia* insisted repeatedly upon the dangers of a liturgical movement and a musical movement going their own separate ways. Although church musicians have by no means always shown a sufficient liturgical fervor, their ignorance is perhaps more excusable than the attitude of the liturgical defenders who are seldom aware of the tremendous spiritual impact that music exercises on worship. It is to be remembered that the *Motu Proprio* of Pius X is not so much to have provided the first synthesis on sacred music, but rather to have vindicated its being an integral element of the liturgy. Thus, both liturgy and sacred music find their justification in their being integrated together. And, should one want to gain the consciousness of this, let him just imagine a Christian liturgy devoid of song; the chances for its survival would not stand the test of time. Do not say that since the object of the Congress of Assisi was the care of souls, music had no place therein, or a very scant one. For it might be retorted that even liturgy is not necessary for salvation, except in so far as it is the channel of sacramental grace. And so is sacred music, as a factor of sacramental integration.

Of course, the writer would not expect that a Congress on liturgy should be turned into, or confused with, a Congress on music. However, he would have welcomed a better chanting of the office and a more exact rendition of its musical part, as a proof that the

members at large were aware of the paramount importance of the spirit of integration.

But the main problem raised by Assisi before the musical life of the Church is a direct consequence of a general demand for the vernacular in the celebration of the liturgy. Whether they want to or not, the apostles for the vernacular must face it, unless they are willing to assume before the future some risks fraught with disaster. Do not conclude that the writer is prejudiced against the use of the vernacular; for you would be greatly mistaken. Today, the use of the vernacular in a measure desirable for the care of souls is no longer a matter for discussion, but rather a subject for fresh agreement. Yet, once the need for the vernacular is acknowledged, a most serious issue looms in the background. Granted that we accept the fundamental principle of an inseparable union between liturgical life and its expression, as Pius X envisioned fifty years ago, what are we going to do with the music?

More specifically, what shall become of the chant, called, for its misfortune, Gregorian, which the *Motu Proprio* emphatically proclaimed to be liturgical song by excellence, because its tradition possesses, to the highest degree, the aesthetic and spiritual qualifications which make music sacred?

There has been, all around, for several years, a vague feeling that song has to be saved somehow; and this is, at least, a favorable omen that no one would dare to forsake liturgical music in behalf of a vernacularized liturgy. Thus, two main trends have gradually gained a noticeable impetus, though not always discreet or artistic; and these two trends could be felt as an undercurrent at Assisi. The first is the most daring and radical: the chant either does not respond to the modern feeling for music or is an insurmountable obstacle to the advent of the vernacular; then, put it aside or back on the shelves of archeology where it remained shamefully for centuries, and let us make a new music fully adequate to the needs of our day. Without going extensively into the criticism of this first trend, may the writer exclaim in dismay "Oh! The productive folly of a people who, after a lapse of musical living of four centuries, find suddenly without even returning to the school of its tradition, the fullness of inspiration to create a music which is destined to endure the test of time". The second trend appears at first more humble: we should retain the chant, but submit it to revision, simplification or transformation to the service of an all dominating and uncompromising vernacular. The writer is much aware, that, in spite of difficulties, a certain measure of adaptation is possible and could bring satisfactory results. But he would like to know the

principles that competent adaptors would follow in order to serve the legitimate interests of the vernacular and, at the same time, to leave intact the imperishable beauty of the chant melodies. If he should pin his hopes on the samples which he has had ample opportunities to study, then we are in for a full destruction of our treasures, just recently unearthed.

Thus, presently, we are faced with the alternative of death or mutilation. It is difficult for one to make a choice; for each one is against nature. Yet, we persist in hoping that the sacred chant, that incomparable voice of the soul of the Church, will meet and survive the challenge of a true revival, maybe in some measure, in the tongue of those who sing. But, if it should come to pass, it will be not the fruit of the flimsy essence of amateurs, but of the mutual collaborations of scholars and musicians. We are grateful to Assisi to have urged us to face this problem and to solve it.

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## MODERN MUSIC: LET'S FACE IT!

*Fidelis Smith, O.F.M.*

In the recent encyclical, *Musicae Sacrae Disciplina*, Pius XII reaffirms the sentiments of St. Pius X, stated succinctly in the *Motu Proprio*, that the Church has at all times favored the progress of the arts, admitting to Church use all that is found good and beautiful through the centuries.<sup>1</sup> The Catholic Church, then, is professedly not reactionary, even though it holds up plainsong and Renaissance polyphony for admiration and use. Since the Church is not a recent institution, one could hardly expect it to renounce the treasures of centuries. Yet, while we cultivate and make use of the musical materials of the past, veneration for sacred tradition must never be permitted to blind us to the beauty and goodness of the art in our own times. In *Music and Imagination* Copland deftly states that a love for tradition must never turn into discrimination against the present.<sup>2</sup>

The Church, wise with the experience of centuries, takes the *via media* between fadism and reactionism, and while it does not make laws regarding techniques and musical aesthetics,<sup>3</sup> nevertheless, it does ask that the music of the sanctuary be accommodated to its august and liturgical end. The encyclical *Mediator Dei* states much to the point that modern compositions should not be excluded from

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<sup>1</sup> Pius XII, *Musicae Sacrae Disciplina*, in *Acta Apostolica Sedis*, Jan. 28, 1956, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Coplan, Aaron, *Music and Imagination*, (Harvard, Cambridge 1953) p. 61ff.

<sup>3</sup> Pius XII, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

liturgical use by those who unfurl the banners of historicism. If modern compositions are in line with the holiness of the sacred liturgy and are not composed merely for artificial effects or as a stunt, they too can definitely add to the splendor of the liturgy and raise the minds of the faithful to God.<sup>4</sup>

The same applies to modern art and architecture. Modern art must not be rejected out of prejudice. There are elements of deep aesthesis in works by Raoult, Matisse, Picasso, Lipchitz, Zorach, and even Bracque and Dali, to mention but a few. Here the Church also strides between the extremes of mere representational art and extreme symbolism, approving that art which will help the voice of our age to join that of the centuries past in artistic praise of God.

Unfortunately in our times there are those who cling so fervently to the masterpieces of times long departed, that they are unable or unwilling to take heed of the artistic events swirling about their heads. In revering the past, they claim to have discovered the absolute in music and art, and misrepresenting the mind of the Church, they make bold to set down even archaic technique as an impregnable fortress of musical stability. Such historicism can be the sire only of a barren and sterile progeny, and the false concept that *old* music is essentially *church* music is a case of wishful thinking.<sup>5</sup>

### *Consonance vs. Dissonance*

One of the chief targets of the conservative school is the so-called lack of beauty in modern music due to the use of dissonance. This school sometimes likes to put down as an indisputable fact that there is a proven acoustical difference between consonance and dissonance, and that this is plain and easy for anyone to see. Actually, the problem is far more complex acoustically and psychologically. The historical concept of perfect and imperfect intervals is not the solution. In reality, despite research and laboratory experiment, to date no satisfactory definition of consonance-dissonance has been discovered. The most noted theories advanced have not been able to provide an infallible guide toward distinguishing between a consonant and a dissonant interval.

The Pythagorean Theory that intervals are the more consonant the smaller the numbers that express their frequency ratios, runs into trouble as soon as we mention that the ear does not distinguish between a well-tempered fifth and the Pythagorean fifth. The fre-

<sup>4</sup> Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, in *Acta Apostolica Sedis* Dec. 2, 1947, p. 590.

<sup>5</sup> Bessler, *Die Musik des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, in *Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft*, vol. II, ed Buecken, (Musurgia, New York, 1931) p. 3.

quency ratio of the well-tempered fifth is definitely not in small numbers <sup>293</sup> as it should be to be designated a consonant in this system. It is rather very dissonant. Yet, historically, it is supposed to be our most perfect interval other than the unison and octave.

Helmholtz's two main theories bog down because of preconceptions. According to his Theory of Beats, a major third (c-e) of 33 beats would be as dissonant as a major second (c'-e') of 32 beats. Even Alexander Wood sees this.<sup>6</sup> The Theory of Relationship of Sound, while better than the first, presumes the definition of what is to be defined: a *petitio principii*, since it excludes the seventh and ninth harmonics from consideration.<sup>7</sup>

Watt's volumetric theory and the psychological explanation given by Stumpf's theory of the Amalgamation of Sounds can give no absolute distinction between consonance and dissonance. Stumpf's theory actually destroys the supposed contradiction between them, making them rather gradations of the same thing. Finally, the Theory of Conceptual Dissonance (*Auffassungsdissonanz*) of Louis and Thuille, though it approaches the historical concept of a feeling for-the-need-of-resolution, seems to be vitiated by the very impact of the historical concept. Besides, not everything that imparts the feeling for a need of resolution can be classed in theory as a dissonant. A simple example of this would be the six-three chord when on the dominant. Here a consonant creates the same need-for-resolution.<sup>8</sup>

Moreover, the pleasure-displeasure factor is too variable to provide a sure scientific guide. The historically imperfect consonant intervals of third and sixth, once even classified as dissonances, often enough please far more than the so-called perfect intervals of the fourth and the fifth. The fourth might even be classified as dissonant.<sup>9</sup>

If the physical and psycho-physiological explanations fall short, the historical explanation likewise fails utterly in shedding light on the supposed difference between consonance and dissonance. The Greeks recognized the frequent use of consonant notes calling them variously: symphonies, antiphonies, homophonies, paraphonies. The paraphonic intervals were usually the fifth and the fourth, though Gaudentios understood paraphony to be an interval neither con-

<sup>6</sup> Wood, Alexander, *The Physics of Sound*, (Dover, New York) p. 157ff.

<sup>7</sup> Apel, Willi, *Consonance-Dissonance in Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Harvard, Cambridge, 1953) p. 180ff.

<sup>8</sup> Haydon, Glen, *Introduction to Musicology*, (New York, Prentice Hall, 1950) p. 91ff. Culver, Charles, *Musical Acoustics*, (New York, Blakiston Co. 1951) p. 82ff. An espousal of the Helmholtz theories.

<sup>9</sup> Apel, Willi, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

sonant nor dissonant, such as the major third!<sup>10</sup> Gaudentios' definition of symphonies as notes melting into one another is analogous to Stumpf's *Tonverschmelzung* theory. Aristoxenus mentions the *diatesseron*, *diapente* and *diapason* as symphonies in the *Harmonic Elements*.<sup>11</sup> Cleonides mentions the same in his *Harmonic Introduction*, calling intervals less than the *diatesseron* diaphonic.<sup>12</sup>

Thus Greek and Medieval theories wrestled consciously or unconsciously with the problem of defining the difference between consonant and dissonant intervals. Cassiodorus outlines the *symphonies* and their ratios in the *Institutiones*,<sup>13</sup> while Isidore of Seville writes that "*symphony* is a fusion of low and high concordant sounds . . . the opposite of this is diaphony, that is, discrepant or dissonant sounds."<sup>14</sup> The *Scholia Enchiriadis* of the ninth century treats of *symphonies* and gives practical illustrations for early contrapuntal improvisation.<sup>15</sup>

Consonances and dissonances were used throughout music history, but the explanation of what they consisted in often underwent a change. It was not till the *Ars Antiqua* that more or less stable "rules" for the treatment of dissonance were developed. The Franconian Law of Consonances (13th century), probably one of the few "laws" to precede actual practice, was one more of rhythm than on consonance-dissonance. Twelfth and thirteenth century motets show the use of the perfect consonances on the accented beats, whereas the imperfect consonances of third and sixth were treated as dissonances and also classified as such!<sup>16</sup>

Tinctoris treated thirds and sixths as imperfect consonances, considering them less pleasant than the perfect fourths and fifths. Yet in his second book he defines dissonance as a combination of notes that sound bad, and later states that the perfect fourth sounds bad to the ears of a trained musician. Guilielmus Monachus and Zarlino speak of syncope dissonance as being far from unpleasant, but rather that it aroused pleasure. Palestrina, of course, in his espousal of *la musica comuna* rather than *la musica reservata*, helped greatly in a practical way toward the formulation of systematized dissonance treatment, considering the rules governing dissonance not

<sup>10</sup> Sachs, Curt, *The Rise of Music in the Ancient World*, (Norton, New York, 1943) p. 258.

<sup>11</sup> Strunk, Oliver, *Source Readings in Music History*, (Norton, New York, 1950) p. 31.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p. 126ff.

<sup>16</sup> Jeppensen, Knud, *Counterpoint*, (New York, Prentice Hall, 1953) trans. Haydon, p. 6ff.

as abstract but as bound up with the time values of polyphony. In Bach's era we have the familiar phenomenon of Fux, harking back to what he thought was Palestrina. The criticisms leveled at him by Kirnberger, avid proponent of Bach's tonal method, did not affect Fux's reactionism. Fux's *Gradus ad Parnassum* affected future treatises on counterpoint in an all-pervading fashion.

Hence, it can be readily seen that the problem of consonance-dissonance is not an easy one, whatever way it be viewed. Now-a-days the concept of dissonance has been refined. Krenek speaks of "sharp" and "mild" dissonances in reference to Schoenberg.<sup>17</sup> It is recognized by composer-theorists like Roger Sessions, that the category of consonance-dissonance has lost its meaning, but only in order that more subtle shades of distinction may be recognized as valid. The sustention of what is styled "dissonantal tension" is analogous to the consonance-dissonance tensions of strict counterpoint. The return of the linear and polyphonic impulse in contemporary writing is evident and the secession from chordal concepts has forced theorists to reassess their realm. The modern principle of alteration has dealt the death blow to root progression, and brought back the linear approach in a way analogous to pre-tonal polyphony, without completely destroying vertical concepts.<sup>18</sup>

Paul Hindemith points out the fact that traditional harmony should be studied for what it is: an historical vignette of only relatively practical value. The purpose behind a systematized study of harmony is simply to impart background for a further study into more far-reaching methods of harmony.<sup>19</sup> Arnold Schoenberg taught harmony at the University of Southern California with substantially the same view in mind. But whereas Hindemith had pursued the course of Neo-classicism, Schoenberg and his followers had reached, at least in their own minds, the apex of tonality-non-tonality in what must be styled not atonality but rather monotonicity or pantonicity.<sup>20</sup> In this system, and system it is, traditional harmony lost its significance.

Schoenberg's dodecaphonic procedure was based on his theory of the emancipation of dissonance—dissonances were merely more remote consonances in the overtone series. Such emancipation is as

<sup>17</sup> Katz, Adele, *The Challenge to Musical Tradition*, (Knopf, New York, 1946) p. 394.

<sup>18</sup> Sessions, Roger, *Harmonic Practice*, (Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York 1951) p. 401ff.

<sup>19</sup> Hindemith, Paul, *Traditional Harmony*, (Associated Music Publishers, New York, 1944) Second ed., p. iii.

<sup>20</sup> Schoenberg, Arnold, *Structural Functions of Harmony*, (Norton, New York, 1954) p. 192ff.

justified in the minds of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern, as the similar emancipation of the minor third in early times.<sup>21</sup>

However, Schoenberg's conception of twelve-tone row needs emancipation also. Such diverse people as the Norwegian Fartein Valen and the American Persichetti have broken down the rigid dogmaticism of dodecaphony, and in the spirit of Dallapiccola and Petrassi, have adapted twelve-tone to their own needs, aesthetic and practical. Wallingford Riegger evolved a twelve-tone technique on his own from the use of an original six-tone chord. And he went beyond constructing thirteen-tone and even a thirty-six tone row, as in the last movement of the *Suite for Flute Alone*. He realized that c, c' and c'' were not the same notes, despite the fact that they are the same letters. In doing this he broke down a fundamental but naive assumption of the dodecaphonist school.<sup>21 1</sup>

The famous commentator on the twelve-tone-row system, René Leibowitz, has traced the history of consonance-dissonance in a remarkable way. He claims that already in Wagnerian chromatism of the last century, this pseudo-scientific dualism had become almost meaningless, though Wagner did not succeed in transcending consonance-dissonance completely. According to Leibowitz this transcendence was accomplished in Schoenberg. In this system counterpoint was restored to its place of importance and melody took on a heightened significance: emancipation from necessity of a theme. Hence we have the phenomenon of free flowing, yet rigidly controlled athenatic music, which sounds distinctly different from the traditional tonal and thematic music.<sup>22</sup> But just because it is different, one cannot summarily ban it without having first given it a concentrated study and sympathetic hearing.

Hence, it can be seen that it is dangerous to presuppose that the so-called "rules of harmony and counterpoint" have always been unshakably the same, and that modern music has broken the narrow confines of historicism to fall only into chaos. The opposite is true. Modern music has found untold new beauty through the further investigation of the musical materials of nature, the further testing of the indefinite resources of the realm of sound, the further sampling of the perhaps strange new beauty whose Author is none other than God.

<sup>21</sup> Schoenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 192ff.

<sup>21</sup> Cowell Henry, A Note to Wallingford Riegger, in *The Julliard Review*, Spring, 1955, p. 53ff.

<sup>22</sup> Leibowitz, René, *Schoenberg and His School*, (Philosophical Library, New York, 1949) trans. Dika Newlin, p. 68ff.

Moreover, Western music, is in some aspects quite crude, compared with non-Western music. Comparative musicology has unearthed for the student profound beauties and subtleties of expression, whether it be the deft rhythmic elements of non-Western music, or the subtlety of its microtonic intervals.

### *Profane Elements*

Papal documents on music have always rightly maintained that secular and profane influence should be banned from the sanctuary. Yet, this must be understood correctly. Music, as music, is neither religious nor profane, but simply music. Though Davison has attempted to show that certain technical features of 16th century music differentiate religious and profane music, this would be only a secondary consideration, once removed from the fact of music as music.<sup>23</sup> The roots of Gregorian Chant, after all, lie deeply imbedded in folksong and melody patterns used for both religious and secular purposes. It was thus also with Jewish psalmody.<sup>24</sup> Hymnology provides excellent examples of the use of secular melodies in the so-called contrafact, hundreds of which were taken into sanctioned, wholesale use by the Church.<sup>25</sup> Some contemporary reactionaries have even tried to tag dissonance as profane. It is, however, no more profane than consonance. As to the invasion of profane form into ecclesiastical music, we have only to look at Palestrina's parody Masses, as for instance the *Je suis déshérité* Mass, printed as a *Missa sine Nomine*. The secular form of chanson was cleverly employed. Cipriano da Rore's four part madrigal, *Qual 'é piu grand', o amor*, serves as a model for another fine Palestrina Mass.<sup>26</sup> We need hardly mention the *L'Homme Armé* Masses of Palestrina<sup>27</sup> and before his time, or the *Se la face est pale* of Ockeghem. Religious music in the historical view is, therefore, such only *secundum quid*, in the sense that it is music which can be used or adapted for use in the Church.<sup>28</sup>

Styling modern music indiscriminately as profane, simply because the impulses toward a new and heightened concept of harmony and counterpoint did not rise from within church circles, would be

<sup>23</sup> Davison, Archibald, *Church Music* (Harvard, Cambridge, 1952) p. 26ff.

<sup>24</sup> Gradenwitz, Peter, *The Music of Israel*, (Norton, New York, 1949) p. 69ff.

<sup>25</sup> Smith, Fidelis, Hymnology and the Encyclical, *Musicae Sacrae Disciplina*, in *The Catholic Choirmaster*, Summer issue, 1956, p. 94.

<sup>26</sup> Reese, Gustve, *Music in the Renaissance*. (Norton, New York, 1954) p. 475ff.

<sup>27</sup> A. Della Corte-G. Pannain, *Storia della Musica*, (Torino, 1944) I, p. 275.

Strunk, *op. cit.*, p. 268 Cf. Cerone's explanation of naming Mass compositions.

Soderlund, *Example of Gregorian Chant and the Works of Lassus, Palestrina and Ingegneri*, (Appleton-Century-Croft 1946) p. 93.

<sup>28</sup> Smith, in *op. cit.*, p. 94.

to fly in the face of the origin of many magnificent musical treasures which the Church now so zealously guards. The Church has always been broadminded enough to recognize truth and beauty wherever it be found, and has assimilated what it could into its philosophy and music.

### *Status Quo Mentality*

Everyone and everything that stands still stagnates and dies. The Church has ever been a living being, ever marching forward, but at the same time circumspect enough to realize that truth remains the same and that a new development does not mean the complete discarding of truth already attained. Accordingly, in music, the Church's official position is that of welcome to whatever is good and beautiful in contemporary art, while keeping its historical inheritance intact.

Aaron Copland points out that Schoenberg and Webern upset the traditional harmonic concept of "the normal flow of music."<sup>29</sup> There are two possible reactions to a new idea: one, to go into a state of shock at the realization that there is more to the normal flow of life than we thought possible; two, to study the new phenomenon with the view to discover whatever of truth and goodness there is in it. The first reaction may beget frightened opposition; the second gives birth to intelligent assimilation of what can be reasonably assimilated. Sympathetic and prolonged study is the only rational solution. Those, however, who have had the chance to study modern music in detail should realize that the cries of chaos in modern music are generally sincere, and can come from real musicians with a command of techniques and a fine taste for traditional musical beauty. It is simply a question of accommodation to the new musical *media*, much in the same way that Easterners must accustom themselves to chaotic Western harmonies, traditional or not, and Westerners have to adjust themselves to the seeming meaninglessness of non-Western music and musical instruments.

It is possible, then, to find immense vitality in Schoenberg's music, that of Webern, Berg, Krenek, Boulez and Dallapiccola. It is possible to find even beauty and goodness, those illusive metaphysical conceptions, in very many of these works. The author does not care to venture into a discussion of potential assimilation of Schoenbergian concepts into ecclesiastical music at this point, but a discriminative and sympathetic vision of new and different horizons cannot be proven contrary to the spirit of Catholicity even in music.

<sup>29</sup> Copland, *op. cit.*, p. 70ff.

Many other new forces have arisen besides Schoenberg's expressionism. *Neue Musik*, like *Ars Nova*, and *Nuove Musiche*, covers a great deal of ground on the modern scene. But there is hardly an informed musician that would deny the attribute of beauty to many of the works of men such as Kodaly, Bartok, Casella, Malipiero, Honneger, Milhaud, Hindemith, Krenek, etc. We certainly recognize with Copland the conservatism of Walton, Tippett and Ralph Vaughn Williams, but because the latter wrote a Mass in G in archaic style, and successfully at that, we would scarcely canonize him as the saviour of ecclesiastical *Gebrauchsmusik*. And what are we to say of the magnificent organ work of Messiaen, Langlais, Haines, Sowerby,<sup>30</sup> etc.?

Nor can we neglect the work of contemporary Germans besides Hindemith. There is Carl Orff, Winfried Zillig, Werner Egk, Boris Blecher, Wolfgang Fortner, etc.<sup>30 1</sup>

Lastly, it would be exceedingly difficult to link communism with dissonance ideologically. The International Congress of Musicians at Prague in 1948 put out a communist sponsored declaration to the effect that subjective tendencies, such as dissonance, must be renounced in favour of a style more understandable to the people. Naturally this posed a problem for men like Shostakovich, as it did for Prokofiev, who tend away from traditional concepts. Shostakovich already had had a run-in with Stalin because of dissonant elements in his *Katerina Ismailova*, better known as *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk*, and his ballet *Limpid Stream*.

Some of the recordings made recently of compositions by such Russian composers as Otar Taktakishvili (Piano Concerto in C Minor) may well show the influence of high level decrees to get back to the sonorities of earlier days. Taktakishvili's concerto harks back to Liszt, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff and does little honor either to these illustrious composers or to the creator of this innocuous piano piece. Amusing is the party line musicology of Ernst H. Meyer of East Berlin, whose book *Musik im Zeitgeschehen* calls for a return to non-capitalistic *Volksmusik*. Meyer states that atonal music is fit for paranoids, schizophrenics, and atomwar-crazed capitalists. Unfortunately Meyer's musico-sociology as he himself terms it (*Professor fuer Musiksoziologie*) is Stalinistic, hence dated, and politically unpopular.<sup>30 2</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Ellinwood, Leonard, *The History of American Church Music*, (Morehouse-Gorham, New York, 1953) p. 164.

<sup>30 1</sup> Ruppel, K. H., *Music in Germany*, (Munich, F. Bruckmann, 1952) pass.

<sup>30 2</sup> Meyer, Ernest H., *Musik im Zeitgeschehen*, (Berlin, Bruno Henschel, 1952) p. 151, p. 154, etc.

### *Chaos in Modern Music*

Despite the fact that Schoenberg's music looks good on paper, the fact remains that much of it actually does sound chaotic, as even Aaron Copland freely admits.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand Leibowitz accuses Stravinsky of producing chaos because he did not choose to become a dodecaphonist.<sup>32</sup> It can readily have been remarks such as these or comments on dissonance by Pfitzner that sparked remarks on the chaos in modern music by noted Church musicians of our day.

Yet, in recording that one leaves the concert hall with "the disturbing memory of music that borders on chaos," Copland follows up with the argument that the music listened to was perhaps subjectively chaotic, because it had abruptly interrupted the previous concept of the normal flow of music. Moreover, anyone analyzing Schoenberg will realize immediately that this is highly systemized music, organized and controlled, and not chaotic—if that means without plan or order. The chaos heard by the traditionalist is perhaps the effect of a sudden confrontation with a phenomenon that is new and different. The same chaotic effect is experienced by those listening to Oriental music for the first time. Yasser spoke of intradiatonic possibilities, which, of course, brings up the whole subject of microtonism and quarter-tone technique, the former case in non-Western and/or classic Greek music, the latter in the work of Alois Hába. Moreover, the fact that moderns are not all in uniform agreement about everything musical in no wise invalidates their aesthetic stand. Jacob of Liege accused the moderns of *Ars Nova* of being unstable because they did not agree fully among themselves.<sup>33</sup> Uniformity may often be a sign of oversimplification, and its lack can often mean that those not in agreement have a deeper grasp of the underlying problems, realizing all too well that a complete solution is extremely difficult.

For René Leibowitz, dodecaphony was a faith that demanded all: complete severing of traditional ties with tonality and traditional harmony, whatever that is. Thus, anyone not professing such a faith and abandon, even Stravinsky, must be styled obsolete. Yet, the twelve-tone music of the age of expressionism did not have a monopoly on new music. The same sympathy and study should be given Stravinsky. According to the composer of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, "Cacophony means bad sound, contraband merchandise, uncoordinated music that will not stand up under serious criticism."

<sup>31</sup> Coplan, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

<sup>32</sup> Leibowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

<sup>33</sup> Strunk, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

Certainly, no enlightened critic would dismiss Stravinsky's music as cacophonous. Stravinsky's reply to Leibowitz, then, is: "One cannot dismiss music that he dislikes by labeling it cacophany."<sup>34</sup> Strangely, Stravinsky was here favouring Schoenberg's music. Leibowitz was enlightened but too wrapped up in Schoenberg. Contemporary church musicians are definitely enlightened, but simply too tied up in traditional concepts, in which they *de facto* often show great talent. They forget that there were masters of every age who defied traditional concepts.<sup>35</sup> But, then, there are modernists who forget that the great Bach was in a certain sense behind his own times, to mention but one master.

### *Chant and Contemporary Composition*

Chant has been held up as the supreme model of ecclesiastical composition. The closer it approaches the Gregorian ideal, the nearer it is to the liturgical goal.<sup>36</sup> From this, some have concluded that compositions should examine the intervals of chant and imitate these in order to approach the ideal non-chant opus. Yet mere chant imitation can hardly be the suggested ideal. Not even the use of chant themes is in itself a sure guarantee of liturgical propriety. True, polyphonic masters and many others employed Gregorian themes successfully. Many composers, ecclesiastical and otherwise have used modality also. It is strange that by 1900 the diatonic modes were again in general use, though in non-contrapuntal conception. Major-minor technique had been imposed on them, specifically regarding the tonic-dominant relation. Howells has a *Mass in the Dorian Mode*; Woods used Phrygian and Mixolydian modes in his *Passion of the Lord*. Whittaker, R. Vaughn Williams (*Norfolk Rhapsody I*), Delius, Respighi (Concerto Gregoriano, a conscious use of archaicism with the Dorian mode), Pizzetti, Malipiero, etc., freely employed modality.<sup>37</sup> One could cite Beethoven, Brahms, Chopin, Tschaikovsky, Debussy and others in the same vein.<sup>38</sup> An interesting use of the modes in a modern fashion is to be seen in the contemporary church composer, Rev. Russell Woolen, in his *Modal Offerings* for organ; the use of chant in the *Missa Melismatica*.

<sup>34</sup> Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music*, (Harvard, Cambridge, 1947) pp. 12 and 13.

<sup>35</sup> Stokowski, Leopold, *Music for All of Us*, (Simon & Schuster, New York, 1943) p. 125 Stokowski states approximately the same thing: "We may like or dislike Schoenberg's music, but we cannot deny its mastery—his contribution not only to music but to conceptions of art in general."

<sup>36</sup> Katz, Adele, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

<sup>37</sup> Pius XII, *Musicae Sacrae Disciplina*, in *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>38</sup> Vincent, John, *Diatonic Modes in Modern Music*, (University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1951) p. 267ff.

<sup>39</sup> Apel, Willi, *Modality*, in *op. cit.*, p. 451.

Perhaps it is more rewarding to emulate the *spirit* of chant. Musically, chant centers on the principle of linear melody, and in its pre-modal days on improvisation, perhaps in non-Western fashion with microtonic intervalization. As Schoenberg and Sessions remarked, the linear principle, whether polyphonic or not, is of the essence of modern music. In certain areas of modern music improvisation and microtonicism have become important. Even though the linear music of the modern age is of a new and different beauty, that does not detract from its value, and perhaps in principle modern music is often closer to medieval and pre-medieval ideals than we realize.

To imitate the liturgical fitness of chant ought not to be an impossible task for modern composers, as it was not for Josquin, DiLasso, and Pierluigi da Palestrina. If we are to keep Palestrina as a model, let the church musician not forget that despite *la musica comuna* which he espoused, Palestrina was more contemporary to his age than scholars had thought in recent times. Imitating the spirit of Palestrina would result in emulation of his linear melodic content in contemporary manner, without recourse to sterile historicism.<sup>39</sup> The pale, lifeless Palestrina, rendered in many places today, ignores the actual performance method of Renaissance polyphony anyway. The notes of polyphony were but a skeletal framework, around which the different trained voices/or instruments of a small choir executed improvisations. This was known as the *ars diminuendi*.<sup>40</sup> Appealing to the austerity of Palestrina's style sometimes may imply ignorance of the actual performance technique, the *Auffuehrungspraxis*, of those days.

<sup>39</sup> Guentner, Francis, S. J., in *Liturgical Arts*, Feb. 1945 "If one watches closely the greater amount of sacred music for Catholic churches that is being published today, he realizes that the bulk of it is nothing more than a rehash of styles that were new and great in their own day, but that are now neither great nor original. Some composers show a distinct imitation of the sixteenth century idiom; others reveal the clear influence of Gounod, or Wagner, or Verdi; a great number have followed in the footsteps of Witt and the strict Cecilians. While it is true that most of these compositions are liturgically tolerable, still the question to be answered is: are we supposed to stand still and make no progress in *creative sacred music*?"

Hume, Paul, *Catholic Church Music*, (Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1956) p. 43 and 44.

Ehman, Benedict, *Church Music of Tomorrow*, in *The Catholic Choirmaster*, Dec. 1948, editorial: "Our limitation in this matter (modern church music) to date has been too little talent or too little inspiration. The Caecilian composers contributed a great deal during the difficult days of restoration. But their work was conspicuously imitative and transitional . . . and besides the Caecilians what others have there been worth mentioning in our time?"

<sup>40</sup> Sachs, Curt, *Our Musical Heritage*, (New York, Prentice Hall, 1955) p. 153 "Most people who think or speak of the so-called Palestrina style are under a disastrous illusion. Alas, the solemn, ethereal chords and the simple, stately voice parts of Roman polyphony were never heard in the sober form the score suggests. The Romans counted on the art of melodic diminution . . . The singers of the Papal Chapel were famous for their skill in dissolving the plain notation on their music sheets in fluent graces and coloraturas."

*. . . de Thesaurο suo Nova et Vetera*

Hence, the problem for the contemporary Church is to guard against the patently bizzare elements in some types of modern music—and in fairness it must be admitted that some modern music is fadism — without, however, condemning contemporary efforts wholesale. The Church has a vast treasure house of old musical masterpieces. If its members sympathize with the good elements of modern music and encourage composers, they can become heir also to an arsenal of modern works, whose new and subtle beauty can also raise the minds and hearts of the faithful to God. Wedding new concepts to tradition is not an easy problem. And do new concepts need to be wedded to anything except the spiritual ideal? These are problems, but they must be faced. Since modern music has a beauty of its own as vertical or linear, it is the task of church musicians not to decry it because it demands study and sympathy. It must be faced intelligently and with good will. For, music is a great gift of God, even when clothed in a new and perhaps unfamiliar beauty.

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**RAMBLINGS OF A CHURCH ORGANIST, 1956**

*Paul Koch*

Organ design—that was the theme that prompted a three-month tour of Europe this past summer, one that resulted in a collection of experiences, both musical and spiritual, that can never be forgotten.

Respite from the driving responsibilities of Cathedral music and a season of some forty recitals was found from the first in the complete calm and quiet of two weeks on a Danish cargo vessel bound for Copenhagen. With but nine passengers aboard, only a few of whom spoke English, there was ample peace and opportunity to survey God's great universe both by day and by night, and to understand a little better what Goethe meant when he wrote "das Meer befreit die Seele" . . . the sea given freedom to the soul.

Lutheranism remains the state religion in Denmark, and one will look in vain for outstanding Catholic church music in a country where a Catholic church is a rarity, and so the moving experiences in this field began only with our entrance into Germany to the south. But in Denmark we had our first taste of the elements of great organ building, and we took immense delight in playing and hearing many fine works of their notable builders Frobenius and Marcussen. Cer-

tainly the sensitivity of their organ building was, for both Mrs. Koch and myself, one more index of the refinement and culture of the Danes, indeed of all the Scandinavian people we met. Further indication of the Dane's abiding love for the graceful and the beautiful is personified, I think, in Copenhagen's "Tivoli"—an amusement center in the very heart of the capital, crowded evening after evening with thousands of the population enjoying (and usually standing silently for hours as they enjoy) the finest in symphony, pantomime theater, ballet, acrobatics, exotically-colored fountains and the like, and all free to the public except for a pittance paid upon entrance to the park!

Perhaps the first thing that strikes the visitor to Germany is the immense destruction on all sides. No city of any size escaped the fate of large-scale bombing, and most of the larger cities were all but completely laid waste. Equally immense, however, is the rebuilding that now goes on, day and night. Everywhere one looks, whether in small town or large city, there is scaffolding, workers, workers, workers . . . hammering, diving, pouring, pounding . . . and craftsmen carving wood, sculptors chiseling stone, artists painting statues and murals, on and on and far into the night! Indeed we found many splendid organs woefully out of tune or even unplayable because of the constant vibration caused by drilling and hammering in the neighborhood.

In the midst of all this turmoil, there are to be found in many parts of Germany great treasures of organ building—organs of incredible beauty of tone. These treasures include not only instruments dating from the seventeenth century (and some earlier) but also many instruments built in our day, and particularly since the war. Following the devastation of the war years, the German people were quick to rebuild their church and their concert halls as soon as circumstances would permit.

Some of the great monuments to the organ-builder's art were dismantled and stored during the war, and have now again been set up, although not always in the original position, awaiting the time when the church should be fully rebuilt. A well-known example is the glorious Schitzer organ now standing in a side aisle in the Jacobikirche in Hamburg. On the other hand, it would seem that many of the great old instruments were completely destroyed during the war.

Certainly the greatest single element in the physical design of organs on the continent that distinguishes them at first sight from our American organs is the *placement* of the instrument. The or-

gans are usually located high and in a completely open position, with the pipes spread out rather than having too many registers one behind the other. Not only the placement of the instrument as a whole but also the placement of the various divisions of the organ—Great, Brustwerk, Ruckpositiv, Pedal, etc.—each in its relation to one another as well as the whole, serves to permit the free egress of tone and to heighten the individual effects of the organ. The great classic builders of the Bach and pre-Bach era (Schnitzer, Silbermann, Stellwagen, etc.) understood this principle only too well and the patterns they set have generally been followed by the great builders in Europe even to our day. For to *sound* is the very purpose of the organ. Why, then, allow an instrument to be placed in any position but one in which its tonal resources will sound *best*? So long as we in America continue to build instruments that are forced to speak around corners or from “rooms” and “chambers” forming not even a part of the main auditorium or nave, or forced to speak with all manner of obstructions (casework, panels, drapes, etc.) before the mouths of the pipes, or forced to scream against the deadening absorption of acoustical plaster and similar materials, we are doomed to produce only inartistic results.

Also voicing principles, the techniques of scaling and low pressures as practiced by the classic masters are, I am reminded, ageless. However totally different were the many great instruments I was privileged to play, there was in all a distinct similarity of principle, an artistic unity that seemed constant over the centuries. This, certainly is great and true art. Of the scores of modern organs I played in Germany, I recollect with tremendous satisfaction the fine instruments of the builders Von Beckerath in Hamburg, Kemper in Leubeck, Klais in Bonn, and the splendid work of Zeilhuber in the rebuilt Cathedral of Munich.

With the rebuilding of the cities one finds examples of contemporary architecture on all sides, much of it very beautiful. In Cologne we visited churches of the renowned architect Domenicus Boehm, beautifully designed and appointed, the interiors also enhanced with lovely organ facades that might at first seem quite startling! A professor of architecture from New York told me in Munich that nowhere in the world had he seen so much lovely modern architecture as in Germany. In Muenster we attended Carl Orff's opera “Antigonae” in “Europe's most modern opera house.” The music, scored “for percussion instruments” only, together with the modern staging, lighting and choreography, produced a most exquisite effect. Of the building, one side was entirely of glass, outside of which one could see the ruins of two huge Gothic arches of the old theatre, already

grown through with shrubbery and a large tree . . . a typical admixture of the very old and the very new. Also in church music one finds an enthusiastic acceptance of fine contemporary music, and Masses by Shroeder, Jaeggi, Andriessen, Hilber, Peeters and other great composers of our day are frequently heard, hand in hand with the polyphonic masters.

Regensburg, the site of one of the greatest Gothic Cathedrals in Germany, is the home of the Church Music School founded by Franz Haberl, the outstanding figure of Palestrina research. The school has been made famous by such names as Witt, Haller, Mitterer, Ett, Proske and others of the great Caecilian School of church music. Perosi studied there and Singenberger (founder of the *Caecilia* magazine) was intimately associated with the school. The small Bavarian town is also the home of *Domspatzen*, the "Cathedral Sparrows" who have sung in concert all over the world, and who as a choir are unmatched for their singing of the polyphonic masters. Pilgrims from all over come to Regensburg (Ratisbon was the ancient name) to hear the choir perform the liturgical services at the Cathedral. It was a great thrill to again attend some of their rehearsals, to play for them, and to have some of the tiny "sparrows" play for me.

The town is also the home of the great publishing house of Pustet, the dedication of whose new building took place in July. It was a glorious celebration, attended by leaders of Church and state. I felt honored to be present in the company of Dr. Ferdinand Haberl, nephew of the renowned musicologist and present head of the Music School. The *Domspatzen*, of course, were present and sang Gluck's "Dedication of the House" and Lassus' "Jubilate Deo."

To play the beautiful organs and to attend services in the magnificent churches; to live for several days as guest of the Rector, Dr. Heribert Abel, at the Cathedral of Fulda—the ground hallowed by St. Boniface and the courageous Bishops of Germany; to meet many of the great names of musical Europe, etc., are all wonderful experiences. And at Bernnbach, a small village of some 700 people, we attended Sunday morning Mass. The usual "Singmesse" (Low Mass with set hymns in the vernacular and sung responses) was sung by the total population of this farm community, and I think that finer congregational singing could not be heard anywhere the world over. I'm sure I played the postlude that morning with a fervor seldom before experienced!

If the experiences of Denmark and Germany, also Austria, Switzerland, France, Belgium and Holland were exciting, certainly

our week in the Eternal City was a real highlight. Rome with its magnificent churches and basilicas, its monuments to Christendom, its shrines and relics, its fountains, its antiquity and all else has been described from time immemorial, and the visitor leaves completely overwhelmed. The audience with the Holy Father at Castel Gandolfo must always remain one of the greatest experiences of our life—and we are grateful for this special blessing.

Aside from the many happy hours spent with my good friend Fernando Germani, organist at St. Peter's, and his family in his beautiful villa in the heart of Rome, and the visit we made to view one or two organs, little thought was given to organ design that week! But certainly our prayers at the tomb of St. Pius X and at the Shrine of St. Caecilia were for the continued development of good church music throughout all the world.

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### MATERIALS FOR THE RESTORED HOLY WEEK CEREMONIES

From January to March of 1956 the printing presses of the world, from the Vatican on down to the mimeograph machine in many a parish office, were busy turning out materials for the restored Holy Week liturgy. Much of this was intended for the church musician and his part in the ceremonies. Unfortunately, one cannot help but think that many of the publishers who rushed to make the deadline of an early Easter were perhaps more anxious to get a thumb into the pie and pull out some of the profits that such a sale of booklets, cards, inserts, simplifications, and direction would net, than actually to add to the beauty or understanding or solemnity of the rites.

Reviews in other periodicals have treated the deluge of booklets edited for congregational use, as well as the various ceremony books. We propose to evaluate here the materials published primarily for the choir. As a general statement, it can be said that many of these publications were unnecessary; some were artistically bad; most of them made hardly any contribution to the knowledge of the ceremonies or the selection of repertoire on the part of the choirmaster.

There was one official music book, published in Rome, entitled *Cantus Gregoriani ad Ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratum* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1956). This booklet of 32 pages contains the changes, additions, and deletions to be made in the *Graduale Romanum* and the *Antiphonale Romanum*. Actually, the musical changes were very few. Aside from a few psalms

that were added, the choir had only a few new antiphons to learn. Thus, a choirmaster who had a *Graduale* could, with the help of this little pamphlet selling for a few cents, carry on the new services with all the necessary Gregorian chants. A choirmaster who had prepared the music for former Holy Week ceremonies, using this little booklet for the few changes, could use nearly all the music of the previous years. In other words, this little official edition from the Vatican press was all that anyone needed, despite the implications of much of the advertising sent out, which conveyed the idea that all previous books would be of no use.

These changes were published also as inserts to the *Liber Cantus* (Mechlin: H. Dessain) and the *Liber Usualis* (Bruges: Desclee), leaflets giving the new music both for the mass and the Office in Gregorian chant.

McLaughlin and Reilly published a booklet containing the music in Gregorian chant with modern notation. I felt that the book was rather unattractively done. It was uninviting to the singer; it lacked sufficient organizational devices to divide the material and delineate the sections of the service. Some mistakes were present, although one can readily excuse much through the haste in which it had to be completed. Further, the price (\$2.00) was high, especially if many copies were necessary for the group.

The Gregorian Institute published five cards containing the texts for the whole week. They were advertised as "simplified, psalm-tone arrangement of music; minimum of rehearsal time required." While they were attractively printed in two colors, the print was so small that a card would be needed for each singer. They sold for the high price of \$.25 per card, with one at \$.16 and another at \$.40. Again, for a large group, this would mean a considerable sum. The great regret with this publication, which was widely circulated, is that the low standard musically and artistically that it proposes ("psalm-tones with a minimum of rehearsal time") is thought by many to be the norm to be aimed at. Usually the way a service is done the first year becomes the pattern that is followed from then on. These cards have done a great disservice to music in this country in saddling many a parish with a "psalm-tone" Holy Week.

A handy and useful book for the choirmaster is Father Frederick R. McManus' *The Rites of Holy Week* (Paterson: St. Anthony Guild Press). A chapter specifically on music indicates what must be sung and just when it should be sung. It is detailed and well organized. Since it looks at the musician's work from the

viewpoint of the master of ceremonies, it emphasizes the correlation of the music and the actions in the sanctuary. Nothing is said, of course, about the selection of repertoire, nor is any music given.

On a much more modest scale, some diocesan organizations published instructions for the musicians of the area. In Saint Paul, the Guild of Catholic Organists and Choirmasters provided a usable set of notes, giving the musical changes and pointing out the use that could be made of former music and existing books, suggesting the varied use of Gregorian chant, polyphony, and a minimum of psalm-tone recitations. These notes are available on request (St. Thomas College, St. Paul, Minnesota). A similar set was issued in Omaha.

A classmate of mine in the Seminary is pastor in a rural parish in central Minnesota. I think his experience is typical of many an American priest preparing for the new liturgy. In an anxious letter, he asked me to make a trip to his parish to help train the choir. He assured me that he had ordered all the materials, and I found that he had spent a considerable sum to equip his choir with all they would need, according to the advertisements he had received. Well, I settled down to a two-hour grind of psalm-tones and more psalm-tones. The sad thing was that the singers, who were becoming as restless as I was with the repetition of those unending formulae, thought that they were singing Gregorian chant, for which they were developing no greater appreciation rapidly. Finally, at the risk of offending the pastor, I suggested that the choir already knew many of these texts in polyphonic settings in their *St. Gregory Hymnals* and that the materials he had so graciously provided could be set aside. By introucing some part-music, together with the Gregorian chants they knew from previous years, some psalm-tone arrangements, and even some recto-tono recitations, which are often far more dignified and impressive than the psalm-tone, we provided enough variety to make the music palatable to the singers and likewise to the congregation. Moreover, we overcame the terrifying feeling that unnerved so many choirmasters that there were four entirely new services for which all the music was new. It isn't; there are many familiar texts and settings, both Gregorian and polyphonic. They had only to be pointed out.

That is the point of this review. What the American choir-master needs is not a book giving him the Holy Week music in Gregorian chant; he already possesses that in his *Graduale*, his *Liber*, or his old Holy Week book. Nor does he need cards with all the texts in psalm tones. All he needs is a booklet, like the one from the Vatican Press, giving the few changes in the music and text. Not one firm in this country published just the changes; all reprinted

all the music. He needs a copy of one of the several pamphlets containing the texts of the services, preferably one containing both the complete Latin and English texts. But above all, he needs some suggestions where he can obtain suitable repertoire so that his service will be varied, using the various kinds of sacred music. To confine oneself to Gregorian chant exclusively and neglect the vast library of polyphonic Holy Week music is to lose many an opportunity to move the congregation to prayer and devotion. To omit the Gregorian settings is to forego some of the finest chants of the church. To use only recitations is to fail in one's obligation to bring the congregation to devotion through music, and above all it is to fail in providing through music an artistic setting for the renewal of the mysteries of the Redemption.

Richard Schuler

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## MUSIC AT GRAILVILLE

by *Eleanor Walker*

The re-appearance of *Caecilia* as the official organ of the American Society of St. Caecilia can only be a source of joy to all who have taken to heart the cause of Catholic church music in the United States. We hope very much that the pages of *Caecilia* will become a meeting and testing ground for ideas and experiments current in the field of church music at the present time. We are happy to make an initial contribution in the form of an introduction to the music program at Grailville, the main American training center of the international Grail movement, and are looking forward to a widening and deepening exchange with others working in the same field.

It is generally fairly well known that a good deal of singing is done at Grailville, and other centers, of folk and choral music as well as liturgical music. Yet what the musical training consists of and what its purpose is in an apostolic training program is perhaps not so apparent. We should like to try to explain some of the principles underlying the large place given to music in the general training, for they emerge from a vision of the place music should occupy in the life of a Christian society. Music has become a cherished part of our tradition because it enters so deeply into the very nature of our relationships with God and with each other, and with the whole community of Christians living in the Mystical Body of Christ.

The primary purpose of Grailville's training program is to form mature, responsible Christian lay-women able to carry their

share of the temporal and spiritual labor required for extending the Redemption to every sphere of human life. For the individual student this means forming a basic relationship with Christ around which to integrate her individual vocation in the Church's life and the various apostolic, family, or professional responsibilities that go with it. In the case of someone drawn to the field of music, the training will not be primarily a matter of acquiring skills and techniques, but of becoming a person conscious of the dignity and responsibility of the musicianly vocation. This personal emphasis does not dispense from the acquisition of technique or from meeting the highest professional standards. It rather requires a deepening of attitude towards whatever technical mastery has already been achieved or may yet be achieved at Grailville or elsewhere. The desire for competence must be not zealous mimicry of secular professional ideals, but must spring from an insight into the depths of self-abnegation and reverence required for the Christian exercise of the musician's art.

A deepening of attitude towards the very discipline of music is undoubtedly necessary to a greater *rapprochement* between the secular musical world and the Church, and we should like to see many more Catholic musicians contribute to an understanding of the problem. We can only suggest here how much this preoccupation is with us in developing our training program, and pass on to an equally basic point: the place that music is meant to play in the lives of Catholic people at large. This concern underlies the fact (disconcerting at first to a fair proportion of each year's beginning students) that *everyone* is brought into the singing at Grailville. Nor is the special musical talent cultivated apart from the main stream of musical life, but rather finds much of its stimulus in working to raise the level of that life. The pressure of responsibility towards a particular group also helps the student come to see for herself the vital relationship between the common musical experience of humanity and her chosen art.

We have perhaps taken too little account in the last few centuries, at least in the West, of the mysterious power of music to enter into, possess, and unify the human personality, with all its latent energies of body, mind and soul. Yet once our eyes have been opened to the experience (and we should like to pay tribute here to Dom Ermin Vitry, O.S.B., for all we owe him in this respect), we find proofs everywhere of its universality—in the philosophers of antiquity, in the Bible, in the Fathers of the Church, in the culture of so-called "primitive" peoples, in modern scientific studies of the psychological and physical effects of music and rhythm. Yet it

seems to be mainly the jazz musicians and a few scattered thinkers who are actually aware of our full capacity to respond. Is it not a pity that we all know what it means for a jazz composition to "send" us, while we so rarely taste the ecstasy described by St. Augustine on hearing the psalms chanted in church? Yet do not the papal declarations on the role of Gregorian chant in prayer, together with all we can read now on the meaning of the word of God proclaimed in the liturgical assembly, and of the response of the faithful to it, invite us to a far more complete participation in liturgical worship than we generally know? Such experience as we have had in teaching the chant at Grailville leads us to believe that the baptized soul willing to open itself to the power of the chant can come to some foretaste at least of the harmony and integration promised by the Redemption.

What is true on the exalted plane of liturgical worship is also true on the more common levels of human existence: those of communication of feeling, of recreation, of normal social exchange, of work with things. In all these relationships music has its part to play, probably a much greater one than we generally conceive. Folk singing and dancing can become for all of us truly creative acts in which we rediscover how to integrate our human feelings and emotions with a physical expression in such a way as to provide joyful expansion and release without unhealthy excitement. The relationship between the sexes is especially susceptible to the sublimating power of music. It is surely not too much to say that ultimately a whole set of attitudes towards life and a whole code of social relationships is implied in the way a group of people sing and dance together. Renewing our sensitivity to the real role that music can play in the shaping of such interior attitudes is one of our greatest responsibilities towards the formation of a mature Christian laity.

Whether the level be that of communal prayer or of communal recreation, music puts us more quickly and more directly in touch with the universal elements of human nature than the most elaborate and subtle communications of language. May we not see in music a privileged instrument for beginning to rebuild here on earth that unity of mankind that was lost by original sin, and that is restored by Christ in the communion of saints? Could it not be an intuition of this sort that underlies the patristic conception of the people of God as a vast multitude whose song embraces the whole earth, led by Christ the new Orpheus? Our ordinary daily experiences of the unifying power of song are perhaps then a real anticipation of some sort of the life of unity for which we are destined.

## SHEPHERD'S HEY AND ALLELUYA

Alleluya, alleluya, alleluya!  
Come, friends and neighbours, let us sing  
On this most joyful day of Spring  
Our Shepherd's triumph and home-coming.  
Alleluya!

At Easter dawn before the light  
Had stolen the meadows from the night,  
Our women saw a valiant sight.  
Alleluya!

They saw two white angelic men  
Who said, "Why seek your Shepherd when  
He has gone home to Lattenden?  
Alleluya!

"The marshes of the world beneath,  
The rivers of the land of death  
Drowned not your Shepherd's living breath.  
Alleluya!

"The marshes of the world above,  
The rivers of the land of love  
Wait for your Shepherd's last high move,  
Alleluya!"

And now he walks the world of men,  
So let us all be merry, then,  
And dance and sing through Lattenden,  
Alleluya!

For when at last he leaves our earth,  
It still shall be with sounds of mirth  
And songs of springtime and new birth,  
Alleluya!

He goes a pasture to prepare  
In heavenly fields, by waters rare,  
And we, his flock, shall find him there,  
Alleluya!

So, friends and neighbors, all be gay,  
And with the angels on this day  
Dance joyfully the Shepherd's Hey,  
Alleluya!

Alleluya, alleluya, alleluya! Amen.

—From the "Shepherd of Lattenden"  
by Sheila Kaye Smith.

## LITTLE LITANY FOR THE MARIAN YEAR

God the Father,  
God the Son,  
Holy Ghost,  
O Triune One  
Have mercy on us.

Sorrowed of the promised sword,  
Trustee of the living Lord,  
Sway of seas, and Hue of skies,  
Object of our Litanies,  
*Ora pro nobis.*

Lady of virginity,  
Patroness of chivalry  
Saint above all saints there are,  
Clearer than the evening star,  
*Ora pro nobis.*

Purifier of our themes,  
Guardian in our graceless  
dreams,  
Guarantee of human good,  
Watcher of the Holy Rood,  
*Ora pro nobis.*

Axis of all good intent,  
Sweetener of punishment,  
Prospect of our fallen fate,  
Hunger of our human state,  
*Ora pro nobis.*

Pledge of Angels, Satan's bane,  
Succour's Agent, healing Rain,  
Heaven's Crown and earth's  
Content,  
Ladder of our sure ascent,  
*Ora pro nobis.*

Of the serpent under-heel,  
Of the greatest Commonweal,  
Of extent, not understood  
Here on earth, of grief and good,  
*Ora pro nobis.*

Absolute and able Maid,  
Promised Comfort, queenly Aid,  
Solace of the frozen soul  
Benevolence's Self and Whole,  
*Ora pro nobis.*

Bearer of the sins that damn,  
Of God the sparing, living Lamb,  
Gracious Heart and Highest Liege,  
Saviour in the final siege,  
Have mercy on us.

C. C. Gould

## REVIEW

*Masses*

### MASS IN ANCIENT STYLE

By *Jean Langlais*

For Four Mixed Voices (organ *ad libitum*)

McLaughlin and Reilly Company, Boston, Mass.

24 Pages; Octavo size; Price—score: 80 cents net in U.S.A.

Jean Langlais, the blind organist of the Great Organ at the Basilica of St. Clothilde in Paris is widely known as a virtuoso organ recitalist, improviser and composer of modern style organ music. In recent years his American transcontinental recital tours have increased the fame of his name among students and devotees of the organ by bringing many people into personal contact with him and his music. What is not so generally known is that Mr. Langlais is also a capable choral conductor and choral composer. Annually, for example, the Blind Choristers of Paris prepare and perform a program of significant works under his direction that receives the highest commendation from the most sophisticated Paris musicians. Among the choral works that he has written in recent years are four settings of the Mass Ordinary. These, taken in the aggregate, show the composer's full grasp of the requirements of the choral medium. There is the *Messe Solennelle* for mixed choir and two organs, the *Missa Salve Regina* for congregation, male choir, two organs and two brass choirs, and the *Mass in Ancient Style* for mixed voices with organ *ad libitum* singled out for special comment here.

The *Mass in Ancient Style* is the only setting of the mass text by Langlais published in the U.S.A. The composition of this Mass was Langlais' acceptance of the publisher's challenge to write a simple mass for the average choir. The result is a thoroughly diatonic polyphonic texture that embodies all of the contrapuntal devices of polyphonic choral writing and withal savors strongly of the 20th Century. The *Kyrie*, for example, is in the form of a chorale prelude, the principal theme of which is a plain chant-like melody in the alto voice announced intermittently surrounded by ambulating soprano, tenor and bass lines. The phrygian cadence at the end stamps the whole piece with a marked modality. The *Gloria* begins with a recitative style of writing that embodies parallelisms as found in many contemporary works. Like the *Kyrie* the motion of the parts in the *Gloria* is almost exclusively on the "white notes" thereby

rendering the music slightly archaic in quality and yet because of the special treatment of the "tritone" that results from the coincidence of chromatically unaltered lines, the effect is one of contemporary style. The *Sanctus* opens with three brief fugal expositions, one for each *Sanctus*. For each of these passages, Langlais varies the order in which the voices enter, e. g., 1—BTAS; 2—SATB; 3—TASB. He tosses the *Hosanna* to each of the parts first singly, then in pairs, finally to all four parts. The effect is joyous. Perhaps closest to the pure Palestrinian style as such is the *Benedictus*. For SAT voices alone (a common 16th century practice) the lines, all based on one strong melodic idea, appear making imitative entrances. The *Hosanna* of the *Sanctus* is repeated. All three settings of *Agnus Dei* text are made of the similar melodic strands but are at different pitch levels. The *dona nobis* comes close to being homophonic style and here one finds several accidentals in each of the parts as carefully placed so as to give the long cadence a rare richness. The organ part throughout may be used as an accompaniment although the best effect would probably be achieved if the choirs that attempt this piece could learn to sing it without accompaniment.

It is difficult in the few lines allotted here to describe in detail the careful craftsmanship that went into the making of this *Mass in Ancient Style* by Jean Langlais. Langlais fans, and of these there are many in this country, will find in this mass a quite unexpected side of this composer who has already shown a bewildering array of musical talents.

Theodore Marier

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## MESSE SOLENNELLE

*Jean Langlais*

Les Editions musicales de la Schola Cantorum et de la Procure  
generale de musique 76bis, Rue des Saints Peres—Paris VII  
Vocal Scores, about 45c

Many things could be said of the fine musical workmanship found in this Mass. Two, however, seem worthy of special consideration: a highly imaginative use of motivic ideas, and a skillful handling of dissonance. To achieve the latter the composer has taken full advantage of the expressive quality of non-harmonic tones and of chords treated in like manner (accented passing chords, appoggiatura chords, etc.). These often rest upon a simple harmonic progression such as tritones or parallel triads.

The Mass is in five movements, without Credo. Each movement is based upon motives which are exploited to their utmost to create a tightly knit tonal fabric. The Kyrie, for example, uses two contrasting ideas: a Kyrie motive which is melismatic and self-contained, and a Christe motive which is short and terse and capable of extensive manipulation. The former first appears as an ostinato in the tenor while the other voices enter gradually. The latter begins with four notes which grow into many more as the motive is constantly repeated and finally reaches a climax. This device is evidently a favorite one with the composer. It surely is one way of building a large, coherent phrase from a small melodic germ. It seems also, thru the quick changes of time signature: 2/4, 5/8, 7/8, 4/4, etc., to promote the kind of melodic freedom found in Gregorian Chant.

The Gloria is a four-part fugue. It is almost all in strict tempo with no traditional relaxation in places like "Qui tollis peccata mundi". Except for a brief respite before the "Quoniam", the fugal momentum carries the movement along with relentless musical logic. The motivic treatment is quite different than before. Here a melodic fragment from one section will become the motive for a following section which, in turn, will provide the seed for further growth. Thus the cadence on "bonae voluntatis" becomes the motive for "Laudamus Te", and so on. The "bonae voluntatis" motive is also used as a recurrent episode in the organ to bridge and connect each vocal section. Perhaps it is not without significance that this particular motive is so used, as if to underline a crucial phrase in the sacred text. At any rate the many sections of the long text are interwoven by the continuous enchainment of musical ideas.

The Sanctus is conceived as a hymn of vast, overpowering grandeur. The fortissimo vocal entrance is prepared by a long crescendo in the organ. The organ uses a short motive in six-eight, which rises and creates a rolling, billowing motion, so that the voices ride in, as it were, on the crest of the wave. The remainder of the text uses both the melody and the underlying harmony of the organ motive which thus unifies the entire movement.

The Benedictus is one of the finest parts of the Mass. Its mood is tranquil as the treble voices sing a sustained line, in octaves, against a shimmering organ accompaniment. The organ motive, of moving strings against sustained flutes, uses a descending figure which might well symbolize the Lord's descent upon the altar. The harmony is expressed by long open fifths in the pedals while the flutes gently oscillate between chordal and neighboring tones. These

in turn are decorated from above by the strings in fourths, fifths, or thirds. In effect the strings not only entwine the principal harmony, but they also embellish its embellishments.

The Agnus Dei frames the Mass by recalling the somber and humble mood of the Kyrie. It is also akin to the Gloria in using a single organ motive to introduce and cement the various joints of the text. The "Dona nobis pacem" is an anguished, struggling plea for peace, and is expressed by the device of motivic expansion already employed in the "Christe". Meanwhile the organ motive, originally calm and stately, is compressed and intensified, bringing the movement to a powerful conclusion.

This is not a Mass for the average choir. Rather it demands a high degree of skill and experience. It surely will provide a rich and rewarding experience for those who can meet its requirements. Altogether it is a splendid piece of musical craftsmanship.

Louis Pisciotta

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### MISSA GRATIA

in hon. "Bruder Klaus" for people, mixed choir and organ.

Meinrad Ochsner & Co., Einsiedeln.

U.S.A. World Library, 1846 Westwood, Cincinnati

This useful little mass is published in full score, (\$1.85) necessary for the organist and/or choirmaster, parts for the choir and handy small booklets for the people. There is nobody like Bruder Klaus in all Switzerland, and this mass is of the simplicity and strength of the people's faith in him. Do not look then for anything surprising in its tonality. Yet it is not hackneyed as the old time people's masses were, and it is very vocal. The choir parts can certainly be handled by the average choir, and the people's parts are so simply arranged that a good monotone might join in, if he only knew what tone he monoed on. Thus the Kyrie and Christe ask for only fa-sol-fa-sol-fa-mi-fa-do, with a little variant of the choral part, do-re-mi and re-fa-la, in the first Kyrie. In the Sanctus, the people often lead in single tones, while the choir supplies harmonic changes, or enters at strong melodic points, which then culminate in resounding unisons. The Benedictus is for two treble voices as far as the Hosanna, which is a repeat from the Sanctus. The Agnus Dei receives similar treatment, though the choir usually leads to unison people's parts which would be difficult for anyone to miss. The organ accompaniment is easy, economical, and throws only a chromatic sprinkling to brighten several unison, held passages. The three

tools involved allow for sufficient variety in the short parts of the mass and it does not grow stale if it is not done too often or badly. The writer would omit the Gloria and Credo in favor of plainsong of your choice; he has executed (?) the mass a half dozen times, several of them with as many as four hundred people. This represented almost 50% of the congregation, and about the limit, in his circumstances at least, of people who can sing, who want to sing, and who can worship this way without great pain, either to themselves, the rest of the congregation, or the good Lord. He also found it a satisfactory and easy way to open the door to vocal participation of a decent nature.

Francis Schmitt

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### MASS NO. 3

*Russell Woollen*

McLaughlin & Reilly, Copyright, 1956

The Mass No. 3 of Father Russell Woollen of Catholic University is modestly titled. On a wealth of harmonic, polyphonic and homophonic devices is built a modern archidictonic display at once striking and convincing (perhaps "shocking" to some).

This is not an "easy" Mass. It was not meant to be so. Altogether too many composers, with the encouragement of their publishers, are turning out Masses for the "masses", quasi-proletarian stuff for the choir that doesn't know how to sing—material guaranteed to sell, however.

This is not one of those Masses. Much of the harmony reminds one of Machault, occasionally of Schoenberg, here and there of Stravinsky. The Mass is solidly built for the major part on Renaissance Polyphonic devices. But the sound is that of a contemporary—and modern—young priest speaking to his own age and perhaps a couple of ages to come. Its tone is biting at times—much as Machault's.<sup>1</sup> Its harmonies will take some listening. For those who are interested in a musical challenge, here is Mass No. 3.

And if this is a significant Mass by American standards, it also surpasses many written by composers of the current French school. Here unaccompanied, the voice is predominant, whereas the French are inclined to give to the organ all the complex, rhythmical, polyphonic and interesting bits, leaving for the voice the straight homophonic material. In Mass No. 3 the voice is exploited to the fullest.

<sup>1</sup> Machault *La Messe de Notre Dame* sung by Pro Musica Antique of Belgium, Safford Cope, director. Archive Series of records.

So many Masses are unvocal, too, that one welcomes a Mass with a good vocal line.<sup>2</sup> I believe that Father Woollen errs in demanding too low a tessitura of altos and tenors. Shifts of a tenor-alto and a baritone to the tenor line provide an easy solution for this difficulty.

The Mass is deserving of study by those who direct, even those who cannot perform it at this time. This might be "Exhibit A" of the demands that modern composers are likely to make upon choirs. Choirmasters have a duty to see that their choirs are ready to perform the works of our own modern composers.

For those who can perform the Mass No. 3 there is in store a wonderful musical discipline and a new religious musical experience.

A bright shining gem medallion to McLaughlin and Reilly for publishing this Mass No. 3 of Rev. Russell Woollen.

James Welch

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## MASS FOR TWO EQUAL OR MIXED VOICES

*Cordans, Bartolommeo*

Publisher: Schwann

The possibilities in performing this mass are manifold:

- (a) 2 treble voices
- (b) 2 men's voices
- (c) 1 treble and 1 man's voice
- (d) 1 man's voice as first and 1 treble voice as second voice

Much of the structure of this mass (though it belongs to the Baroque period) is polyphonic in both the melodic line and in the rhythmic movement. Many lovely canons are used throughout the mass to add color and interest to the music. The Gloria, to this reviewer, is the most impressive part of this mass because of the comparative freedom of movement and independence of voices. It is not difficult, but there is enough substance to create a bit of a challenge to young singers. I have found the short parts rather easy for boys to solfege, and it provides a good segue from chant to part music for purposes of reading.

Frank Szynskie

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<sup>2</sup> The vocal line in the "Gloria" from the *Mass in G Minor* of Poulenc I consider to be somewhat unsingable.

## FIVE POLYPHONIC MASSES

By *Heinrich Isaac*

University of Michigan Press. \$6.00

Five Polyphonic Masses by Heinrich Isaac have recently been published in one volume by the University of Michigan Press. Louise Cuyler, eminent musicologist of the University, has done an excellent piece of editing with an authoritative historical and analytical commentary.

The Masses, written in alternate verse form, are a model of the best in liturgical music.

Dr. Cuyler has again given proof of her indefatigable labor in restoring the compositions of this great Flemish master to the musical world of today.

Winifred T. Flanagan

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### *Motets*

#### HAIL MARY—OUR FATHER

*C. Alexander Peloquin*

McLaughlin & Reilly

C. Alexander Peloquin, organist and choirmaster of the Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul is a bright and shining star in the firmament of young modern Catholic composers. His *Hail Mary* and *Our Father* are modest, delightful settings of these sacred texts.

When I write "modest" I mean that they will not obtrude upon any service in which they are sung. They are happily lacking in sentimentality. Every consideration has been given to make the setting subserve the text. More, please!

James Welch

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#### "FOUR MARIAN LITANIES"

*Seth Bingham*

St. Mary's Press, New York City, \$0.50

Our review covers only the first of these works. The composer has prefaced his work with a statement of his musical purposes: the melody and rhythm try to follow the natural inflections of the voice in scanning the words, while the harmony is chiefly modal in keeping with the devotional character of the text.

The text, "Little Litany for the Marian Year" by C. C. Gould, comprizes nine stanzas. Each stanza is composed of four invocations followed by a closing line of "Have mercy on us" or "Ora pro nobis". The musical setting is achieved by welding the four invocations into one phrase, using the closing line as a cadence. The invocations are woven among the separate voices by overlapping and imitation, while the cadence is formed vertically. Thus both the contrapuntal and the harmonic aspects of the music are neatly contrasted and balanced. With few exceptions, this is the basic plan of the musical structure.

One of the most striking features of the score is the treatment of the cadences. They are almost all based upon one brief melodic idea which, each time it occurs, is harmonized in a different fashion. Each repetition introduces a subtle new shade of tonal color. The amount of variety obtained from such simple, economic means betokens a high degree of artistry.

The final stanza of the poem is treated somewhat differently than the others. All the previously separate musical ingredients are now fused into a plastic unity which seems to sum up the piece as a whole.

Altogether, this reviewer considers these litanies the finest poetic and musical tribute to have come out of the Marian Year.

Louis Pisciotta

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### "AVE MARIA"

*Frank Campbell-Watson*

Associated Music Publishers. Copyright 1956. \$0.20

Here is a beautiful treatment of the text of the offertory verse for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. It is a four-part, *a cappella*, setting for mixed voices in a contemporary idiom. Mr. Campbell-Watson has caught the spirit of the Annunciation, the delicate humility of Mary about to give her consent to the mystery of the Incarnation. The music is reserved and quiet, befitting a prayer to Mary just before the birth of her Son. Not one *forte* passage is called for. In spite of a fair amount of chromaticism, the voice lines sing easily, and while the alternating between 3/4 and 4/4 time may at first cause some wonder in a choir unfamiliar with contemporary compositions, it is no problem whatsoever in execution.

I introduced this *Ave Maria* at meetings of the Minneapolis chapter of the Guild of Catholic Organists and Choirmasters and at

the Saint Paul chapter also. There were about fifty at each meeting, and the response was the same each time. All immediately liked it and were struck by its delicate beauty, the modern harmonic progressions, and the interesting melody line.

The text is that of the offertory verse and therefore ends with the words "ventris tui." It is very usable, not only on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, but any day of the year. It would be a fine selection for introducing a choir to contemporary writing in a modern idiom.

Richard Schuler

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### *Chant*

## A FEW CHANT EDITIONS

These editions are brought in brief review, because so many people think that nothing but the Desclee editions exist, and because they have been put in that state of mind by a rather deliberate attempt to keep them out of sight in the U.S.A. First of all, let it be said that all legitimate copies of the Typical Vatican editions are on an equal footing. It should also be known that the rescript which permitted the use of rhythmic signs applied to all authorized printers to the Holy See, not just Desclee. Indeed the specification that these signs not be part of the notation referred to the first Mocquereau editions. Everyone knows of the *Liber Usualis*, and many of the Desclee *Graduale*, both of which have been stock items for many years. The former is exactly what its title says—a useful book, intended for use in seminaries and such other institutions as do not use monastic antiphonaries, or those proper to any number of religious orders. It is a little regrettable that several generations of seminarians, and advertisers too, have brought this elsewhere useful and economic book into the parish choir lofts, where it is uneconomical, bulky, hard to read, and generally confusing. Too often the young padre thinks he will make seminarians out of the choir, and eventually the people. This is an altogether noble ambition, but one surely misplaced, and soon Father Smith will run into the world, the flesh and the devil. Meanwhile there is much talk about the church getting out an official book, like the Episcopalians, Methodists, and Lutherans. Whatever one makes of all of this, we submit that we have always had an official parish book, and this is the *Graduale*. Even some of the Lutheran books, for example, look very much like the *graduale*. Anyway, you know about the Desclee *Graduale*. It is far better copy of the Vatican Edition than the

*Liber Usualis*, better type, easier to read, and has a more easily understandable sequence. The reviewer used it during the war, and it is quite satisfactory; one may use the signs or duck them, though ducking so many is no mean trick. *Desclee Graduale*, J. Fischer & Bro., New York, N. Y. \$7.00.

*Graduale Romanum*

H. Dessain, Mechlin, Belgium, 1951 (\$3.45)

This is an exact unspotted copy of the Vatican Edition. Clearly printed. Somewhat smaller type—eight staves to a page, but the unusually durable paper makes the book somewhat thicker than the *Desclee Graduale*. Very well bound; makes for excellent wear.

*Graduale Romanum*

L. Schwann, Dusseldorf, Germany, 1953 (\$5.00)

From most points of view, the finest existing *Graduale*. Easily the best printed, its subdivisions are also well worked out. It contains two simple, unobtrusive signs, which mark only the *morae vocis* and point out where there are no *morae*. The print is so clear that these would not have been needed. They are used sparsely and need not be followed dogmatically. The publishers print them as an aid, and a corrective.

*Kyriale Romanum*

Frederick Pustet, Ratisbon, Germany, 1953 (\$1.10)

One should be reminded first of all, that the *Graduales* contain the *Kyriale*. This *Kyriale*, handsomely bound and printed in the best Pustet tradition, is really the best of all. A *Graduale* from this press would be at the head of the list. It is completely “*juxta editionem vaticanam a Pio Papa X evulgatam.*”

*Vesperale Romanum*

H. Dessain, Mechlin, Belgium, 1942 (\$1.40)

This is a counterpart of the Mechlin *Graduale*, and deserves some thought in these days when Pius XII has made a specific plea for the return of parochial Vespers (*Mediator Dei*), and almost everyone is singing *Compline* in English instead. The book is, of course, a true copy of the Vatican *Antiphonary*. Unlike the vespers in the *Liber Usualis*, the *Vesperale* offers nothing spoon-fed. The singers are clearly expected to know their psalmody and cadence variants and no non-sense about it. Its use, therefore, will probably be limited. The writer knows of one parish where half English and

half Latin vespers were used, with the thought that this arrangement simply took the service out of the liturgical area. Since *Sacrae Musicae Disciplina*, the Mechlin *Vesperale* has been adopted.

*Liber Cantus*

H. Dessain, Mechlin, 1950 (\$4.80)

This "Liber Cantus Gregoriani" contains the masses, vespers and compline for every day of the year and the little hours for feast days "from the latest Vatican Editions." So that this becomes a counterpart of the neo-Solesmes *Liber Usualis*. There is one notable omission—there are no *Tenebrae*—and this may be an omission of some foresight. The *cantus varii*, the *Kyriale*, the epistles, gospels and the rest, are there. Well bound, quite small, but strong black print, a thinner but somewhat longer (in measurement) book than the *Liber Usualis*. Available from A. Hamers, 18 Murray St., N. Y., sole representative U. S. A.

*Liber Brevior*

Gregorian Institute, Toledo, Ohio, 195 (\$4.50)

This is a Desclee Edition, with the Gregorian Institute Seal stamped on it. It is perhaps the end of a kind of vicious circle. After many editions of single chant masses, after compilation upon compilation, we finally come to a *Liber Brevior*. There was hardly any need to come out with still another chant book title, since the intent of this book was really to reduce the *Liber Usualis* to something approaching the *Graduale*. But publishers need to dream up something that seems new. That is part of the American Way & Life. The book has the merit of giving Sunday Vespers.

It is something of a shame that through the years, so much of the chant has been lifted from existing books, and sold again and again under different forms. There is a name for this sort of thing in the publishing business. But in this country Desclee & Co. have been the equivalent of a cartel for much too long. The chants belong to the church and her people, and there is not need of paying through the nose everytime a page of the *Editio Typica* is torn out, republished, rearranged, more dots and dashes added.

Francis Schmitt

## Books

### PLAINSONG FOR MUSICIANS

By Dom J. H. Desrocquettes, O.S.B.  
(Rushworth & Dreaper. 5s.)

This little book belies its title. It contains nothing to suggest that it is addressed to musicians as such, nor is it primarily concerned with an objective examination or explanation of plainsong as such. It is simply another dogmatic exposition of Dom Mocquereau's peculiar theory with which the Solesmes monks continue to conceal their failure to discover the authentic, historical rhythm of the Gregorian Chant. Having rejected as nonsense the evidence of the ancient text-books on the Chant—writings from the very period of the Chant manuscripts!—Dom Mocquereau had to invent a novel theory of his own, which finds no parallel in any musical treatise, whether ancient or modern. It is about this theory and its application to the Solesmes editions of the Chant that Dom Desrocquettes writes.

As a student whom Dom Desrocquettes once described as "one of the most brilliant disciples of Dom Mocquereau", I can claim to understand as well as most the rhythmic theories of Solesmes. I have now rejected those theories as utterly lacking in historical foundation and as providing one of the chief barriers to further investigation of the historical evidence. The genuine musician's approach to the music of the past necessarily involves a desire to recover not merely the notes but also their original method of performance. To discourage investigation in this direction as valueless is to shut one's eyes to the facts; to stifle discussion on the matter is tantamount to a confession that the facts had better not be revealed; to claim that Solesmes have restored the ancient interpretation of the Chant is a manifest absurdity to all who have examined the facts for themselves.

Any musician who peruses a book entitled *Plainsong for Musicians* will naturally expect to find literary quotations from sources of equal date with the music itself—especially when he knows that such sources are available. He will look in vain in this book for any reference to such famous musical authorities as St. Augustine, Boethius, Cassiodorus, Odo, Hucbald, Guido d'Arezzo, Berno of Reichenau, and so on. For Dom Desrocquettes there appears to be only one authority—Dom Mocquereau. In brief, this is emphatically not a book about plainsong for musicians, but a book about Dom Mocquereau for beginners. As such it will no doubt give great satisfaction to all who desire nothing more than the *ipsi diximus* of Solesmes.

A. GREGORY MURRAY

# COURS ÉLÉMENTAIRE ET PRATIQUE DE PLAIN CHANT GREGORIEN

by Rev. Baldwin van Poppel, O.C.R.  
Inrimere Cistercienne, Westmalle, 1949; 64 pages; Price \$1.00  
(Available through McLaughlin and Reilly Company, Boston)

The chant choir that sings on pitch, that sings with rhythmic flow and with convincing expression is one whose members have learned to read chant, i. e., they have learned to gauge the space of intervals swiftly and accurately and to interpret the printed music symbols in terms of rhythm and expression. How they reach this level of sight-reading proficiency is usually the secret of the choir-master who has imposed on them a rigorous program of reading disciplines. It is unfortunate that over the years so few such successful programs have ever been made available to other choir-masters, that with the demise of men who painstakingly pieced excellent teaching methods together, their methods too, pass away.

At long last, however, to fill this pedagogical void, there comes a small manual written by a Cisterian monk who faced up to the situation a half-century ago and produced a book to help his choir monks in their groping efforts toward sight-singing proficiency. Because Father Van Poppel's method ferreted out root problems and solved them as no text had done before (nor since, for that matter) he gave the Church one of the most valuable set of chant sight-singing drills yet to appear in print. When his *Cours Élémentaire et Pratique de Plain Chant Grégorien* first appeared in 1906 it elicited the highest praise from Dom Joseph Pothier, O.S.B., whose name is synonymous with leadership in chant research, teaching and performance. From that day to this Father Van Poppel's practical manual has been a boon to chant choir-masters everywhere within and outside monastic enclosures who have found and treasured its intrinsic value. (The present Third Edition contains English translations of all the written text matter.)

The value of the book lies primarily in its ingeniously-fashioned exercises and numerous drills. The material is presented logically and the exercises are skillfully composed. Diligent practice and daily repetitions of these exercises can guarantee to lead to sight-singing mastery—a goal, incidentally, which the author places at 100 notes in half a minute!

There are three main divisions to the book:

*Part 1:* Reading of intervals based on the major scale starting with conjunct intervals and progressing gradually through thirds, fourths,

fifths, and sixths. In the course of the exercises the author introduces the various positions of the *doh* and *fah* cleffs and the *ti* and *teh*. All rhythms of two and three notes are bracketed.

*Part 2*: Modal scales and neums. The drills begin with the simplest neums and progress to the more complex. Each neum is presented singly at first and then each is set in the form of drills in combination with other neums.

*Part 3*: Cleff transpositions within a chant line using all types of neumatic formations. N. B. The singer who arrives at this last section and masters the drills presented here is ready to face any reading problems that he will ever be called upon to solve!

Except for the Forward and a few lines of preliminary instruction there is no written text as such for the book. The overall plan and musical texts speak eloquently for themselves and there is no need for further comment.

Let choirmasters and singers alike knuckle down and develop better-than-three-notes-a-second reading skill in chant and then listen to the artistic transformation of their singing!

Theodore Marier

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## Records

### Chant

Little by little, the Solesmes monks are making available on London Records the better known parts of the Gregorian repertoire. Their latest offerings are a set of four 10" LP's containing several masses (I, XII, XVIII, XI, IX, XII, *Credo* I, III, and IV and the *Requiem*), and a single 12" LP including parts of the Christmas masses and office. (The former is number Album LSA-17, the latter, LL-1384.) Another series has likewise made its appearance during the past year, the Decca Archive Project. The Benedictines of the Beuron Abbey of St. Martin, under the direction of Dom Maurus Pfaff, perform the chant for this series. Their most recent offering is the complete Mass of the Dead, containing all the solo as well as the choral sections (Decca ARC 3031).

It is interesting and profitable to compare the singing of the chant as done by these two European monasteries of St. Benedict. In general, the monks of Solesmes (under Dom Gajard) employ a higher pitch. Along with this, they use a lighter, "headier" vocal tone, and they generally sing the chant at a faster pace. These elements lend a feeling of exaltation to the music. The renditions

are thus very cultivated—at times, even to a certain artificiality. By contrast, the Beuron monks take a slower pace and insert pauses generously. The effect is rather more solemn, but at times rather heavy too. The tonal quality of the chorus is less cultivated, but the monks reveal a laudable precision and unity in their diction. The soloist on this Archive record sings accurately, but his voice is not notably distinguished.

### *Polyphonic and Other Music*

Palestrina's two best-loved masses, the *Missa Papae Marcelli* and the *Missa Assumpta est Maria*, have very conveniently been put back to back on a new Vox release (PL 10,020). Ferdinand Grossman conducts the Vienna Pro Musica Chorus in renditions which are outstanding for their clarity of polyphonic line, balance of choral parts, and general overall attention to reverent expression and interpretation. The most debatable point in these interpretations is Mr. Grossman's tempi.

One of the constantly recurring problems in the execution of sixteenth-century music is the choice of proper tempi. Even musicologists have apparently not discovered all the answers here. The difficulty is complicated by the fact that many modern editions of of this music have been published by men who have inserted tempo specifications according to their whims and personal likes, without any musicological justification. The notes on the envelope of the record under review do not state which edition of the masses has been used. But some of the changes of tempo—e. g. in the *Christe eleison* of the Marcellus mass—as well as the speeds adopted in other places—e. g. the *Hosanna* of the Marcellus mass is sung presto—seem rather arbitrary. They are convincing in their way, that is, they are not artistically displeasing; but one feels that the composer did not expect the score to be treated thus. An excellent detail of an El Greco painting of the Blessed Virgin is printed on the record envelope (by courtesy of Skira, Inc.).

Amateur singing at its best will be heard on a record made by the students of Grailville College in Loveland, Ohio. The songs all center around the theme of Advent and Christmas—and the choice of pieces ranges all the way from chant to Brahms. Those interested in treble voices will find the music most congenial. The record can perhaps be easiest obtained from the Grailville Community Center in Loveland. The album is listed as Audio-Fidelity AFLP 1820.

Francis J. Guentner, S. J.

## *For Lent and Easter*

Chant: 1) "*Cantus Gregoriani*" to be inserted in the Roman Gradual for the restored Ordo of Holy Week. This is the official edition (Editio Typica) from the Vatican Polyglott Press. It does not include the restored Vigil, since a previous insert had been published for this. It is far and away the best chant print of any holy week book and sells for about 45c. It is durably bound in a green paper cover. Available directly from the Vatican Library, Vatican City. We know of no American publisher who has made this insert available, but air-mail service is good, and the Society of St. Cecelia has a limited quantity on hand.\*

2) Insert to the *Dessain Graduale*, published at Mechlin, Belgium by Dessain Co., printers to the Holy See. This is an exact replica of the Typical Edition of the Vatican chant. It is complete with the Vigil and the new text of the Benedictus. It is the same size as the Dessain editions, and sells for 22c. Again we know of no distribution center here, but it can be obtained directly from Mechlin, and we have a limited quantity—also of the Dessain Graduale.

3) The New Office of Holy Week, with the rhythmic signs of Solesmes. Not an insert, but a complete Holy Week Book with both modern and chant notation, both versions of the Benedictus, and the introit chant for the Vigil of Pentecost. A Desclee publication. Available from McLaughlin & Reilly Co., 252 Huntington Ave., Boston, at 90c. Desclee inserts to their Liber Usualis have been part of the Liber since last October.

*O Vos Omnes*—Casals. Barcelona, available from World Library, Cincinnati, Ohio. Often for 8 mixed voices, but tremendously beautiful if you can handle it. Dramatic in spots, but so is the text. It is treated with all the warmth of another Spaniard's conception—Vittoria's.

*Popule Meus, Vittoria*. A McLaughlin Reilly Edition. Easy introduction to the master. Can be done with great effect with two separately placed choirs.

*In Monte Oliveti, M. Haydn*. Mostly homophonic, if not great, fitting. St. Gregory Hymnal.

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\* The society is not in the publishing business, and will never offer its services for things already available from American publishers.

- Regina Coeli.* Lotti, standard, good, no more than medium difficulty—Aichinger, somewhat more spirited and a little more demanding. St. Gregory Hymnal, World Library and others.
- Victimae Paschali, Yon.* Sure to be accepted, not difficult, nor as hackneyed as some other Yon works. J. Fischer & Br., New York.
- O Crux Ave, Palestrina.* Another not too difficult introduction to the masters. SATB, Name your publisher.
- Pulvis et Umbri sumus, Lassus.* Published by J. Fischer.  
A real piece for polyphonic choirs which haven't done it.
- Adoration of the Flowers.* A sprightly, well wearing Easter piece by Joseph Clokey. Can be used as English processional. C. C. Birchard Co., Boston.
- Christ the Victor, Fr. Rossini* SATB, solid conventional processional. J. Fischer.
- O Filii et Filiae, Doyen.* World Library, 3 treble voices.
- O Sing Ye Allehulia on This Day.* Easter Motet for unison chorus of equal voices, by Andre Sala; Boston Music Co.; 1951. 16c.  
An English Easter song of many uses. Recommended for boy sopranos and maybe nuns.
- Ascendit Deus.* Still time for a polyphonic choir to prepare this five part tour-de-force for Ascension Thursday. Gallus could have been writing the "in voce tubae" for our own youngsters. Associated Publishers, Inc., N. Y.
- Jesus Christ Our Lord Has Risen. S.A.T.B.* A really solid and not difficult Choral by Max Bruch. Eighteen measures, German and English text, two divisions of two measures for Soprano and Alto. Edition "Le Grand Orgue," 476 Marion St., Brooklyn, N. Y.
- Ave Verum.* S. A. Lines of quiet beauty by Gabriel Faure. Six octavo pages of three staves each; organ accompaniment. E. C. Schirmer, Boston. 16c.
- Ave Verum.* Josquin de Pres; SA and SAB. Perhaps the most performed of Josquin's works, but everlasting, hence the reminder. Easy voice combinations, but not without difficulty if you have not ventured beyond Palestrina. Good introduction to that period. Many editions. G. Schirmer, N. Y. 15c.
- Adoramust Te Christe.* SATB. Mozart's prayerful yet eloquent piece ought not fall into disuetude. Ditson Edition, now part of Presser at Bryn Mawr, we suppose. A cappella, please.

## NEWS-LITTER

The Welch Chorale drew plaudits of high order from the *Herald Tribune*, *Musical America* and the *Musical Courier* for its annual Town Hall Concert on December 16th last. Program items: a trilogy on "Hodie Christus Natus Est"—Gregorian, Sweelinck and Palestrina; "Angelus ad Pastores," Gabrieli; Missa "Assumpta est Maria," Palestrina; the Gloria of the "Missa Festiva" of Flor Peeters, Stravinsky's "Pater Noster," and two first performances, "Deus Tu Conversus" by Frank Campbell Watson, and "Donna la Tua Benignita" by Father Russell Woollen. Mr. Welch's choir sings the high mass each Sunday at St. Philip Neri Church, the Bronx, N. Y.

C. Alexander Peloquin, who now commutes between the cathedral at Providence and Boston College conducted the first American performance (Nov. 4) of Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven" in a new musical setting by the British composer, Maurice Jacobson. The work was first heard at the Birmingham Festival in 1954. The occasion was the presentation of the original manuscript to the Thompson collection at Boston College. The composer heard a recording and sent word that it was "magnificent." Of a Dec. 3rd Concert at Jordon Hall, under the auspices of the A.G.O., Boston Chapter, The Christian Science Monitor reported: "The conductor's own Missa Sancti Bernardi compels respect for a creative talent of much potential . . . with such technical assurance as his a cappella writing now commands, we may expect some significant music from him. His Chorale sang the difficult work splendidly."

Roger Wagner has recently done the Bruder-Meinrad-Messe of Jaeggi and the Monteverdi Missa a Quattro Voci at St. Joseph's church in Los Angeles, where he has done the choir for many years. His famous Chorale is currently on a transcontinental tour. Watch for it.

Abbe Maillet and his Little Singers from Parish are here, and will be in many neighborhoods, too. They will be guests at Boys Town in late March. We guess the Vienna boys must be nearly finished and will return to Vienna with their usual and justly earned accolade. Chances are they still hold the world's speed record for Gallus' "Ascendit Deus."

A long range program for improving Church Music in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has been announced by Father Edwin Sahn. The interesting thing about the plan is that it moves squarely into the deanery level of the archdiocese, offers a) deanery meetings with organists and choir masters; b) annual songfests in each deanery, to build a repertory of hymns and proper notions for the rendition of sacred music; c) workshops in each deanery on the Gregorian Chant. Father Sahn explained that his predecessor, Mr. Elmer Steffen, K.S.G., had laid an excellent foundation for the present plan. This is really fundamental and thorough thinking. Strong clerical backing and a prodigious amount of work must go into its development. A toast to its success and emulation! It is good for the soul to move from brass to brass tacks.

Father William Saelman OSA writes from Cochabama, Bolivia: ". . . here in the mission fields of Bolivia there are hardly any organized parishes, and nowhere do there exist church choirs. Most horrible sounds are produced during the many high masses by musicians, both vocal and instrumental, who make a living by going from one church to the other, and are organized in some sort of union. Anyone who would try to restrain these people would create big trouble with the people and even with labor organizations. The situation seems rather hopeless and we have a long way to go before we even reach a stage which in the States would be called *intolerable!*"

By special mandate of His Holiness, Saint Dominic Savio, Confessor, has been named as the heavenly Patron of the Pueri Cantores.

Dr. Peter Johnson, professor of History at St. Francis Seminary and proctor of the Salzman Library, Milwaukee, has published a book "Halcyon Days" in commemoration of the centennial of that institution, the second oldest diocesan seminary in the U. S. There are interesting pieces about the development of liturgical music in that area. Father Elmer Pfeil has put out a centennial record representative of the seminary's long tradition of music of quality.

The star of NBC-TV's Christmas presentation of Menotti's opera "Amahl and the Night Visitors" was Kirk Jordan, a ten-year-old choirboy of Victoria, Texas, who was discovered during tryouts for St. Joseph's Boy's Choir by Leonard Weigand, director and organist for the president of the Music Commission for the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

Tapes of Kirk's soprano voice were sent to Menotti and he was invited to New York for auditions.

Kirk had already appeared in the "Amahl" role in Worcester, Mass., Macon, Ga., and Cincinnati, Ohio. Critics have acclaimed his "beautiful voice—not the strident, reedy sound that often invades the boy soprano—but a rich, warm, natural sound. It was beauty itself."

In addition, Kirk appeared on December 10th on NBC-TV's "Producer's Showcase" with Victoria de Los Angeles, Boris Christoff, Marian Anderson, Arthur Rubenstein, Alfred Wallenstein, and a 75-piece symphony orchestra.

Lots of juicy rumors around about a contract for a national hymnal being in someone's pocket. We hope that now, at long last, the *contract* for this much talked of, foolishly begotten of-a-kind-of-hymn-popularity-contest and much political engineering, will not wind up as the most important thing of the entire project.

Note from the Barclay St. Pustet's: "Inasmuch as we have absolutely no demand for chant books, we do not carry same in stock, but should be pleased to import any of the compositions listed in the catalogue. Time for information is about two months!"

The third annual workshop for the organists and choir people of the Diocese of Des Moines had its first session at Dowling High School in Des Moines, and its second at St. Peter's School in Council Bluffs, some 150 miles away. No mean trick for Father Fred Reece, director, who is an aviator of many—but not yet too many—parts.

*Beati Mortui:*

Mr. Torborg, who died October 14 as a result of injuries suffered in a fall. A *Caecilia* subscriber, he served as organist and choir director at SS Peter and Paul Church, Huntington, Ind. for 61 years.

Father A. G. McDonald, The Priest's House, Lymington, Hants, England. Valiant defender of the Roman Chant, whose importunacy brought about the re-establishment of the Vatican preface in chant editions which had dropped it.

Paul Neumann (1890-1956). Born in Silesia. Prof. Neumann took refuge from the Nazis in Switzerland. He was subsequently called to Innsbruck by Bishop Paul Rusch, where he established the journal "Alpländischen Kirchenchor." He worked indefatigably at furthering the liturgical music apostolate in the Tyrol, conducting more than 80 schools in as many cities. In Innsbruck he built an important library and wrote many treatises and books.

R. I. P.

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