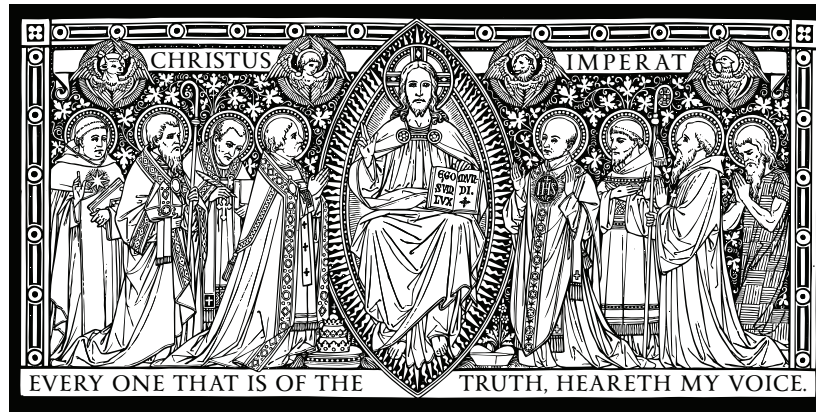

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Editoral

The Beauty of the Liturgy

Beauty is a constitutive element of the liturgy, not an auxiliary one.

by William Mahrt

In the past, I have sometimes asked a liturgist, "but surely you would concede that the liturgy should be beautiful," only to be met with a stunned silence. There was a time when this aspect of the liturgy had nearly been forgotten. Things are improving, but there is a long way to go.

The situation in Spain is described by Fr. Dominic Allai, who accompanied the Schola Cantorum of the Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School of London on a tour. His observations on the deficit of beauty of the liturgy are stunning:

> It is impossible not to contrast the magnificent architecture of the cathedrals of northern Spain, beautifully restored and preserved, with the liturgy which inhabits them, which seems to be minimalist and utterly horizontal in its focus. The absence of silence and the paring to a minimum of ritual gestures reveal the painful truth that, for all its talk of simplification, the reformed liturgy is actually an exercise in prolixity. . . .
>
> If architecture can be described as frozen music, then the architecture of cathedrals may be said to be frozen prayer. Their builders wanted people literally to raise their eyes, to recognise that our worship joins us to the worship of the Church Triumphant and that the supernatural plane is the true horizon where beauty and comfort are to be found. . . .
>
> The music of the Schola shines another kind of light on these buildings and the liturgy as presently constituted. The elderly congregation are absolutely transported by the beauties of their musical heritage, beautifully sung. But tragically, their reaction is to take out their phones to record it, and when the boys finish singing at the end of Mass the congregation applauds.[1]

From Fr. Allai's comments, I suggest that there are three levels of the effects of music: entertainment, edification, and

[1]http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2018/10/27/what-do-young-people-want-my-recent-choir-tour-might-provide-an-answer/.

William Mahrt is the president of the CMAA and the editor of Sacred Music.

contemplation.[2] There is worthy music for entertainment, songs, music for dancing, some kinds of active instrumental music. The object of such music is to please the listener; it usually relies upon the easy recognition of well-known themes and patterns, and in live performances, it elicits spontaneous applause. Another kind of music is for edification. Here, also, the listener is the direct object of the communication of the music, but its effect is more complex: its purpose is to move the listener to greater knowledge and action as a response to the noble themes it presents. The highest kind of music is for contemplation; here the listener does not experience the music as directed to himself, but rather for the purpose of lifting his attention to transcendent matters. It is the most important effect of the music of the liturgy. If we understand that the object of the active participation (*participatio actuosa*) in the liturgy is not entertainment or even solely edification, but rather the incorporation of each worshiper in the solemn act of Christ offering a sacrifice to the Father. True participation can please and edify the worshiper, but it also takes him out of himself, lifts him up to join most intimately in the liturgical action, and the realization of the significance of such participation can be called contemplative. The music the Vaughan-School choir sang had such a contemplative purpose, but the congregation was so accustomed to a "minimalist and utterly horizontal" liturgy that they responded to it as if it were entertainment.

There are two kinds of beauty in the liturgy: the beauty of the action of Christ and the beauty of the liturgical actions which support the action of Christ.

The desired contemplative effect is furthered by beauty. There are two kinds of beauty in the liturgy: the beauty of the action of Christ and the beauty of the liturgical actions which support the action of Christ. The entire Mass is Christ's action, offering a sacrifice to the Father—this can easily be confirmed by reading the text of the Roman Canon. Christ is the *Logos*, the Word, the Manifestation of the Trinity. "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). He is the beauty of the Trinity and his fundamental act in the Mass is the most beautiful thing we can witness.

This fundamental beauty of the Mass is supported by a variety of liturgical actions—processions, lessons, prayers, meditations, etc.—and each of these has its own style of music, which then differentiates the actions

[2]Cf. William F. Pohl, "Liturgical Music and the Liturgical Movement (1966)," *Sacred Music,* 138, no. 3 (Fall, 2011), 37–46.

and by contrast makes them beautiful, makes the whole Mass beautiful.[3]

This is not music whose beauty is purely aesthetic; it is music that makes manifest the nature of each of the actions it sets and the nature of the whole liturgical action. Romano Guardini, in *The Spirit of the Liturgy,* is very clear about this distinction: he is quite opposed to the notion of "art for art's sake," holding that to value a work of art solely for its artistic character overlooks its fundamental purpose. Rather he sees beauty as a manifestation of truth, and its value is that it makes that truth shine forth.[4] The music of the liturgy thus expresses its truth.

This is certainly true of the Gregorian melodies that set the various parts of the liturgy. Take for a simple example, the readings. In a spoken Mass, the Old Testament, epistle, and gospel are read in much the same way. But in a sung Mass, each has its distinctive tone, the Old Testament receives a slightly harsh and trumpet-like tone of proclamation, the epistle has a notably rhetorical tone, and the gospel's melody is simple and elevated. Such differences are also true for the processional chants, the meditation chants, the tones for prayers, and the melodies for the Ordinary of the Mass.

Not only do these melodies distinguish the various actions, they also underline a purposeful succession of actions. Take, for example the whole Liturgy of the Word. In addition to the differences between the tones for the readings, the chants that complement them also help to create a significant ordering of the entire Liturgy of the Word: After the Old Testament, the gradual forms a meditation, enabling the worshiper to reflect upon the lesson just heard. After the epistle the alleluia forms a meditation, but through its highly melismatic jubilus, creates a sense of anticipation that prepares for the gospel; when the gospel is then sung, supported by the use of incense and candles, it forms the climax of the Liturgy of the Word. Each of these musical parts adds a distinct element of beauty that makes the liturgy persuasive.

Fr. Allai claims that the horizontal celebration of the liturgy makes it prolix. With the lack of distinction of parts, it all seems the same and thus longer than necessary. How many times have we heard an element of the Mass omitted arbitrarily, the Gloria or the Credo, for instance; I would estimate a significant cause of such omissions to be the perceived "prolixity" of the liturgy when its beauty is not projected by its musical setting.

It is for this reason that I advocate that the entire Mass be sung.[5] When all the parts

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[3]William Mahrt, "Gregorian Chant As a Paradigm of Sacred Music," *Sacred Music,* 132, no. 1 (Spring 2006), 5–14, reprinted in idem, *The Musical Shape of the Liturgy* (Richmond, Va.: Church Music Association of America, 2012), 115–129 <https://musicasacra.com/?s=Paradigm>.

[4]Romano Guardini, *The Church and the Catholic* and *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (1918), tr. Ada Lane (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1935) in the chapter "The Seriousness of the Liturgy," pp. 185–198; Guardini quotes Plato, "Beauty is the splendor of truth." This work has recently been republished in a commemorative edition: Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI), *The Spirit of the Liturgy,* with Romano Guardini, *The Spirit of the Liturgy,* forward by Robert Cardinal Sarah (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018).

[5]This should be mainly for Sundays and Solemnities. However, in the past the sung Mass could be commonplace on weekdays. When a graduate student at the University of Washington, one summer I sang the Gregorian chants for a daily high Mass at St. James Cathedral.

are sung by the various elements—priest, people, and choir—their distinctions are projected by the distinctions in their musical setting. But when some things are sung and others said, the most obvious distinction between the elements is whether they are said or sung.

Two things follow from this speculation. It may be appropriate, if only some things are to be sung, to make significant choices between what is to be sung and what is not. Most often the choice will be not to sing the lessons, on the grounds that they will be more persuasive when read, that their information may be more effectively communicated. While I freely grant that in the lessons there are important messages, I propose that the highest purpose of the lessons, especially the gospels, is not just to convey information, but to commemorate, to celebrate the events of the history of salvation. After the annual repetition of the same story, its presentation becomes familiar, and thus brings the very story into the present, makes present each of the events of salvation in its proper pace in the liturgical year, and even incorporates the listeners into this history; this commemorative function is better served by singing the lessons.

Some might complain that it is easier to understand the lesson when read than when sung. Well, that might be true if the lesson is sung incompetently, either in a quasi-operatic style, or in a manner of singing that does not carry. The proper way of singing the text must deliver it clearly and articulately, and there is no substitute for a deep understanding of its meaning. The very singing conveys an elevated delivery suitable to the scripture. But let us concede that the spoken lessons can also be read incompetently, either with overly exaggerated and idiosyncratic delivery, with incorrect pronunciations (especially of Biblical names), or in a manner of reading that does not carry.

It is sometimes said that a great many people should be included in the reading of the lessons, on the grounds of cultivating their "participation." But the proper participation of the congregation in the lessons is to hear them and take them to heart. Hearing them is enhanced by singing, and taking them to heart is enhanced by the meditation chants which complement them. Moreover, the delivery of the lessons, whether sung or spoken, must be done with a deep understanding of the text, a ministry requiring some education and expertise.

There is another aspect of the Liturgy of the Word. The function of the alleluia as a meditation and as well an ecstatic anticipation of the gospel is expressed by its use of a melisma, particularly the long melisma, the jubilus, which comes on the last syllable of the word "alleluia." The use of a three-fold syllabic alleluia does not nearly fulfill this function, since it is an almost entirely syllabic antiphon, whose proper place in the liturgy is as a psalm antiphon in the Divine Office. There are many ways to fulfill the requirement that the congregation participate in the singing of the alleluia. My recommendation in singing a Gregorian alleluia is that the choir intone the word "alleluia," and the congregation then sing its repeat; these intonations are short enough that a congregation can repeat them immediately, and they are beautiful. The choir can then sing the melisma and the verse, after which the congregation can again sing the intonation, and then the choir the melisma.

I am fully aware that what I advocate is not the common practice presently. Rather, it

I suggest that the ideal music which maintains a balance between emotion and the richness of the Catholic rite should be Gregorian chant. It provides a paradigm of the celebration which attains the highest degree of the beauty of the liturgy.

is the ideal. The beauty of the completely sung liturgy was envisioned by the Second Vatican Council: "Liturgical worship is given a more noble form when the divine offices are celebrated solemnly in song, with the assistance of sacred ministers and the active participation of the people."[6] If the statements of the council are to be read in continuity with the tradition, then it is clear that what the fathers of the council had in mind was the high Mass, the completely sung Mass; it was what they knew. Likewise, the subsequent instruction on sacred music restates the ideal: "The distinction between solemn, sung, and read Mass, sanctioned by the Instruction of 1958 (n. 3), is retained, according to the traditional liturgical laws at present in force."[7] The same document gives some leeway in the development of the sung Mass: "However, for the sung Mass (*Missa cantata*), different degrees of participation are put forward here for reasons of pastoral usefulness, so that it may become easier to make the celebration of Mass more beautiful by singing, according to the capabilities of each congregation."[8] This provides the means of gradually developing the completely sung Mass, allowing the introduction of the sung parts progressively.

All of this holds a high regard for the purposeful beauty of the liturgy. There was a recent announcement of a forthcoming conference of the French bishops, in order "to take 'emotion' into account in the liturgy, without losing site of the demands and richness of the Catholic rite." While not disparaging other forms of music, I suggest that the ideal music which maintains a balance between emotion and the richness of the Catholic rite should be Gregorian chant. It provides a paradigm of the celebration which attains the highest degree of the beauty of the liturgy. ❖

[6]Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963), ¶113.

[7]Second Vatican Council, Instruction on Music in the Liturgy, *Musicam Sacram* (1967), ¶28.

[8]Ibid. These degrees are 1) the chants of the priest and their responses by the people, together with the Lord's Prayer, 2) the Ordinary of the Mass, and 3) the proper of the Mass.

Articles

Rudolf Otto's Concept of the Holy vis-à-vis the Functionality of Sacred Music

Only when music is in conformity with the elements of the numinous, as outlined by Otto, can it have functionality within the sacred worship of Christianity.

by Jude Toochukwu Orakwe

Kay Kaufman Shelemay, an ethnomusicologist, notes that "throughout history, the public celebration of belief provided an important setting for music."[1] Further, she comments that "it is scarcely possible to imagine religious rituals without music, which has long shaped ritual form and marked off ritual time." By these crucial remarks, Shelemay underscores the importance of some form of sacred music in the worship of many world religions. Such music is set apart from the everydayness of normal music performance with which people are acquainted in their ordinary day-to-day living. In other words, it is a music marked by some holiness of form.[2]

Given that music for rituals is set apart for the purpose of cultic worship, it is tenable to assume that such music would have a sacred inspiration, that is to say, it arises from man's encounter with the holy. This is especially true when one is dealing with music in Christian worship. Benedict XVI argues that Christian music is inspired by non-other than the Holy Spirit. He writes: "The Holy Spirit leads us to the Logos, and he leads us to a music that serves the Logos as a sign of the *sursum corda*, the lifting up of the human heart."[3] Therefore, it is only by an encounter with the divine that one

[1]Kay Kaufman Shelemay, *Soundscapes* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006), p. 246.

[2]Cf. Motu Proprio, *Tra le Sollecitudini* (1903), ¶2 <http://www.adoremus.org/TraLeSollecitudini.html>.

[3]Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI), *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, tr. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), p. 151.

Fr. Jude Orakwe, an alumnus of Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music Rome and Indiana University Bloomington, is presently a lecturer with Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra State as well as the Chairman, Onitsha Archdiocesan Liturgical Music Commission.

can produce a music that is worthy of use in Christian worship.

Now, encounter with the divine is a theme on which Rudolf Otto dwelt in his book *The Idea of Holy*. The book stands as an original contribution to the study of philosophy and theology. The ingenuity of this celebrated classic is seen in the fact that the author proposes a non-rational approach to the understanding of God as the numinous Other, in contrast to the rational approach which has been the hallmark of perennial Christian theology, especially as exemplified by medieval scholasticism. The specific non-rational way is feeling. Otto therefore seeks to investigate the role of feeling in religion. His central argument is "that the Divine can be experienced and that this experience is as valid as that which natural science would claim for its method."[4]

Rudolf Otto's theory of non-rational approach to God is of great relevance in musicologically dealing with the question of Christian sacred music, in as much as such music is tinged by (and promotes man's awareness and feeling of) the important aspects of the tremendous and numinous mystery that is God, namely, awefulness, overpoweringness, energy, transcendence, and fascination.[5] I therefore judge that only when any music is in conformity with the elements of the numinous can it have functionality within the sacred worship of Christianity.

His central argument is "that the Divine can be experienced and that this experience is as valid as that which natural science would claim for its method."

The *Mysterium Tremendum*

The reality of the *mysterium tremendum* is at the very center of Otto's religious thinking. Otto, Chestnut observes, was able to discover from his comparative study of world religions that the

> numinous reality was regarded as being (at its deepest level) a *mysterium*, the ultimate Mystery of reality—something hidden, something inexpressible, something intensely private and non-public, something which could not be conceptualized and intellectualized (*nicht Begriffene und Verstandene*), something not a normal component of the everyday world, something which was not part of the familiar and well-known.[6]

[4]Andrew R. McGinn, *Rudolf Otto and the Idea of the Holy* (unpublished paper, 2002), p. 4.

[5]Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, tr. John W. Harvey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1923), pp. 13ff., 24ff., 31ff.

[6]Glenn Chestnut, "Learning to See the Sacred Dimension of Reality, Rudolf Otto and the Idea

Therefore, the numinous, in its reality as that which overwhelms and overpowers us, is aptly described by Otto as the *mysterium tremendum*.[7] Now, in the face of the overwhelming mystericity of the tremendous *mysterium*, a chain of events can be triggered. This fact becomes more apparent if we examine Otto's analysis of the possible outcomes of mystery's overpowering manifestation:

> The feeling of it may at times come sweeping like a gentle tide, pervading the mind with a tranquil mood of deepest worship. It may pass over into a more set and lasting attitude of the soul, continuing, as it were, thrillingly vibrant and resonant, until at last it dies away and the soul resumes its "profane," non-religious mood of everyday experience. It may . . . lead . . . to transport, and to ecstasy. . . . it may be developed into something beautiful and pure and glorious.[8]

Consequently, one can say that in the face of the tremendous mystery, all logic, all rationality, all intellectual ratiocination is totally suspended.

Music as a Mode of Expression of the Numinous

Otto recognizes that the numinous can be expressed indirectly through musical art. Otto notes that this is more to be observed when music is either restrained, sung pianissimo but most especially when the music fades into silence:

> even the most consummate Mass-music can only give utterance to the holiest, most numinous moment in the Mass . . . by sinking into stillness: no mere momentary pause, but an absolute cessation of sound long enough for us to "hear the silence" itself.[9]

The dimension of silence is of utmost importance in the experience of the numinous, because it generates a negation, "but a negation that does away with every 'this' and 'here,' in order that the 'wholly other' may become actual."[10] In regard to this, Otto makes a reference to what he calls the "negative hymns."

Otto cites a practical example with the Bach's *Mass in B Minor* and argues that the portion which says "Et incarnatus est," leads to a profound experience of the awesome presence of the numinous mystery because of its employment of fade-outs and other wonder striking compositional and melo-rhythmic techniques. He avers that the mystical character of this passage is enhanced by:

> the faint, whispering, lingering sequence in the fugue structure, dying away pianissimo. The held breath and hushed sound of the passage, its weird cadences, sinking away in lessened thirds, its pauses and syncopations, and its rise and fall in semitones, which render so well the sense of awe-struck wonder—all this

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of the Holy, Part 1," in *God and Spirituality: Philosophical Essays* (2008) <http://hindsfoot.org/g04sacr.pdf>, p. 10. See also Otto, *Holy,*13.

[7]Otto, *Holy,* 12.

[8]Ibid., 12–13.

[9]Ibid., 70.

[10]Ibid.

> serves to express the mysterium by way of intimation.[11]

Otto also sees the numinous feeling pouring forth from the Berlin Cathedral performance of the *Populе Meus* of Thomas Luiz. The piece exudes an air of reverence marked by restraint while its tendency of employing softness communicates a feeling of the experience of the holy that parallels that of the sixth chapter of Isaiah. Commenting on the Trisagion, Otto writes:

> the first chorus sings the first words of the *Trisagion*: "Hagios, ho Theos, hagios ischyros, hagios athanatos," and the second chorus sings in response the Latin rendition of the words: "Sanctus Deus, sanctus fortis, sanctus immortalis," … the *Trisagion* itself, sung pianissimo by singers kept out of sight far at the back, is like a whisper floating down through the space, and is assuredly a consummate reproduction of the scene in the vision of Isaiah.[12]

The implication of the foregoing is that some forms of (especially religious) music arouse the feeling of the presence of the numinous.

Could there be possibly some form of music not meeting this requirement? Otto answers in the affirmative. In particular, he singles out program-music and Wagnerian music drama as typically lacking in numinous quality. Otto believes strongly that music in itself as music "releases a blissful rejoicing in us, and we are conscious of glimmering, billowy agitation occupying our minds, without being able to express or explain in concepts what it really is that moves us so deeply."[13] Otto however excludes program music and Wagnerian music drama from his canon of the numinous because the former engages in an attempt of demystification of the musicality of music by subjecting it to the linguistic demands of the expression of familiar human experience while the latter confuses the autonomy of both music and drama by introducing rationalization into the ambience of music that by its nature is non-rational.[14] The *Nutcracker Suite* of Tchaikovsky, being a program music is not primarily concerned about upholding the numinous quality that accompanies conventional sacred music composed according to the rules of harmony and counterpoint but preoccupied with painting a musical picture of the "nutcracker." Similarly, Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* was never intended to produce any pleasant experience of the "numinous" but serves as a dramatic enactment of psyche-shattering experience of the dark night of the erotic passion.

Given that Otto sees the subjection of music to linguistic exigencies as detracting from its normative numinosity, one may question the functionality of hymns as used in the Christian churches in the experience of the numinous. Otto solves this problem by defining song or hymn as the product of "blending of verbal and musical expression. But the very fact that we attribute to it a spell, an enchantment, points in itself to that 'woof' in the fabric of the music . . . the woof of the unconceived and non-rational."[15] Further, he states that

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid., 71.

[13]Ibid., 48.

[14]Ibid., 48–49.

[15]Ibid., 49.

The more the words of the song lean on rational discourse, the less are they likely to lead to the feeling of the numinous. This means that all songs do not have the same capacity for communicating numinous feelings.

hymns used in Christian worship can more or less express the numinous depending on the amount of rationality infused into the lyrics of the song. The more the words of the song lean on rational discourse, the less are they likely to lead to the feeling of the numinous. This means that all songs do not have the same capacity for communicating numinous feelings. Otto avers that there are some songs in which one really experiences a feeling like unto the mood one finds in the vision of the Seraphim by the prophet Isaiah and this is because the poetry of these songs is simply numinous. He cites an example with the Jewish Yom Kippur liturgy:

> A liturgy unusually rich in numinous hymns and prayers is that of Yom Kippur, the great "Day of Atonement" of the Jews. It is overshadowed by the "Holy, Holy, Holy" of the Seraphim (Isa. 6:3), which recurs more than once…[16]

From the Christian enclave, Otto singles out the hymn, *Eternal Power, whose high abode*, composed by Isaac Watts in 1705, as filled with the capacity of provoking the feeling of the numinous presence.[17]

Implication for Christian Worship Music

The theory of non-rational approach to the Divinity as proposed by Otto has an enormous consequence as far as music admitted into the cult of Christian worship is concerned. While accepting the position of Otto as unimpeachable, Robert Skeris maintains that

> it is not difficult to understand why "musica sacra" may be regarded as a kind of "secondary cause" through which the believer, singing his prayer "ante faciem Domini," can reach the transcendent God in worship while opening himself to receive the supernatural riches which God in turn wishes to bestow upon him.[18]

Skeris then goes further to pose a question: "what sort of music furnishes the

[16]Ibid., 190.

[17]Ibid., 221–222.

> Eternal Power, whose high abode
> Becomes the grandeur of a God,
> Infinite lengths beyond the bounds
> Where stars resolve their little rounds!

[18]Robert Skeris, "Liturgical Music and the Restoration of the Sacred," *Sacred Music,* 118, no. 2 (Summer 1991), 7–14.

appropriate form for such supremely meaningful content?" He answers: "Plainly, a music which will permit man to feel that transcendent attraction or 'pull' which elevates him to a higher level, or at least to higher moments."[19] Skeris is precisely advocating for musical forms that have numinous quality embedded in them, in as much as they are definitely oriented to the encounter with the divine, whether in their words or in their music. Such music must nourish the sense of reverence of worshippers. It must be reflective of divine majesty, having at the same time the capacity to spur them to Christian action. Such music must be imbued with an air of transcendence while having captivating and attractive quality. Let us examine some of these qualities in detail.

The theory of non-rational approach to the Divinity as proposed by Otto has an enormous consequence as far as music admitted into the cult of Christian worship is concerned.

Reverence

A music employed in Christian ritual—in line with Otto's theory—would need to be filled with the capacity of rousing the sense of reverence in the worshippers. One hearing a song used in the context of Christian worship should be able to exclaim: "Terribilis est locus iste"—"How terrible is this place."[20] This is precisely implied in Otto's mention of the element of awefulness or holy dread.[21] Let us not forget that Otto insists that the placement of both the music and words may affect the presence or absence of this element. This element is found preeminently in Gregorian chant, especially when it is sung a cappella. In saying this, I ground my argument on the fact that this genre has to its credit a natural tendency to fostering reverent air and awe. In line with this, Arlene Oost-Zinner and Jeffrey Tucker aver that "[Gregorian] chant encourages reverence, prayer, and an awareness of the transcendent purpose of liturgical action."[22] In addition, there is much of collateral silence that goes with Gregorian plain song, as one progresses from one musical phrase to another and this is a musical feature on which Rudolf Otto laid huge emphasis. Janssen Jacques bluntly asserts that with regard to Gregorian chant "we are . . . talking

[19]Skeris, "Restoration," 9.

[20]Gen. 28:17.

[21]Otto, *Holy,* 13–19.

[22]Arlene Oost-Zinner and Jeffrey Tucker, "Why is Gregorian Chant Making a Comeback?" *The Catholic Answer*, November/December, 2007, cf. Cantica Nova Publications, 2007 <http://www.canticanova.com/articles/misc/art7av1.htm>.

about music that produces silence."[23] His position reechoes the thought of Auguste Rodin who asserted that "the Gregorian antiphons and responsories also have this character of unique and diverse grandeur; they modulate the silence like the Gothic art models the shadow."[24]

Majestas

Whoever has listened to the (liturgically over-lengthy) Kyrie of the *Missa Solemnis* of Ludwig van Beethoven would perhaps find it very easy to understand Otto's use of the word, *majestas*. As already mentioned above, he uses the term *majestas* in reference to the "absolute overpoweringness" of the numinous. He writes that "it is especially in relation to this element of majesty or absolute overpoweringness that the creature-consciousness . . . comes upon the scene."[25] Creature-consciousness is an important element in the build-up of the adoring attitude. It is the feeling of this adoring air that one experiences as he listens to the Beethoven's Mass mentioned above. But this over-powering feeling is not limited to the Mass of Beethoven. As already seen above, Otto sees such an overpoweringness in such music as the Bach's *B Minor Mass* and the Thomas Luiz's *Populе Meus*. Even the Requiem of Giuseppe Verdi, despite its liturgical unsuitability, betrays the powerlessness arising from the feeling of creature-consciousness. This is exemplified very dramatically in its *Dies Irae* sections. Benedict XVI argues that the Requiem expresses "the gamut of human sentiments in face of the end of life, man's anguish before his natural frailty, the feeling of rebellion in face of death, disconcert on the threshold of eternity."[26] These human sentiments are grounded in man's inner awareness of an eternal numinous reality that is a wholly other. This numen stands as the *terminus ad quem* of all human aspiration, in which human frailty can finally find its definitive resolution.

Energy

The God of the Christian religion is not "the 'philosophic' God of mere rational speculation, who can be put into a definition."[27] He is a living God of vitality. Otto avers that even in mystical experience, the numinous element of "energy" is a very existential and powerful force.[28] In consequence, a music adapted to Christian worship would be one charged with some kind of effervescence leading one to experience something of the "'consuming fire' of love whose burning strength the mystic can hardly bear."[29] Such music has the character of inciting to active religious participation and action. Bach himself underscored the importance of the energetic quality of music when he revealed that one of his aims as the cantor of the Thomaskirche in

[23]Janssen Jacques, "Modulating the Silence: The Magic of Gregorian Chant," *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture,* 4, no. 4 (Fall 2001), 67.

[24]Auguste Rodin, *Les cathedrals de France* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1931), p. 120, cited in Jacques, "Silence," 67.

[25]Otto, *Holy,* 20.

[26]Benedict XVI, "Verdi's Requiem Seen as 'Cry to the Father,'" *Zenit* (Oct. 18, 2010). <https://zenit.org/articles/verdi-s-requiem-seen-as-cry-to-the-father/>.

[27]Otto, *Holy,* 23.

[28]Cf. Otto, *Holy,* 24.

[29]Ibid.

Leipzig was to "arrange the music so that it shall not last too long, and shall . . . not make an operatic impression, but rather *incite* the listeners to devotion."[30]

Although Otto did not discuss explicitly the form of music that can lead to the specific experience of the numinous energy, one could surmise from the words of Bach, quoted above, that this would depend on the capacity of the composer to choose appropriate words, rhythm, and harmony to achieve this purpose. In the early period of the Church, St. Ambrose was able to achieve this through the depth of the words he chose for hymns of which he was the founding exponent in the western Christendom. This prompted St. Augustine to comment about the compositions of Ambrose: "How I wept, deeply moved by your hymns, songs, and the voices that echoed through your church!. . . A feeling of devotion surged within me, and tears streamed down my face—tears that did me good."[31] It is no wonder that this unique experience could have probably much positively contributed to the conversion experience of St. Augustine.

Transcendence

In his phenomenological analysis of the term *mysterium*, Otto's emphasis, as we have already seen, is on the idea of the numinous being a wholly other. The expression of this "wholly-otherness" thus becomes utterly important in any music that would have relevance in the context of the Christian worship. In other words, a good Christian sacred music should communicate a sense of mystery and lead one to the experience of God as a transcendent being. Such music would therefore possess a transcendent or mysterious quality.

The God of the Christian religion is not "the 'philosophic' God of mere rational speculation, who can be put into a definition." He is a living God of vitality.

Albert Blackwell argues that most sacred forms of music tend to possess this mysterious quality, this being understood in the sense of sacramental[32] potency for the manifestation of the numinous:

> the phenomenon of music, in all its great variety, is potentially sacramental

[30]James A. Winn, "Bach at 300: Words, Notes, and Numbers," *The New York Times*, March 24, 1985. <https://ww.nytimes.com/1985/03/25/books/bach-at-300-words-notes-and-numbers.html>, emphasis mine.

[31]St. Augustine, *Conf.* 9, 6, 14: *Patrologia Latina,* 32, 769–770, in *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1157. <http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM>.

[32]The Greek word for "mystery" is translated in Latin as "sacramentum." Therefore, the words "mysterious" and "sacramental" are etymologically synonymous.

> . . . Dwelling at music's heart is a sacramental potency, awaiting only appropriate times and places for actualization, for manifesting the holy and for expressing our experiences of the holy."[33]

In saying this, Blackwell reiterates an original insight of Otto who declared that "music stands too high for any understanding to reach, and an all-mastering efficacy goes forth from it, of which, however, no man is able to give an account," for which reason, argues Otto, "religious worship cannot therefore do without music."[34] Sacred music, in its mysterious manifestation in Christian worship, can therefore become a means of mediating the mysteries of Christian faith, that is, those aspects of the Christian credo that are beyond mere intellectual explication.

Going by the criteria of Otto himself, if any musical piece "misinterprets and perverts the idea of music by its implication that the inner content of music is not—as in fact it is—something unique and mysterious, but just the incidental experiences . . . familiar to the human heart,"[35] then such music would be excluded from the list of music that possess the capacity for manifesting the transcendent. This implies that every form of music that seeks to create the sense of the banal while simultaneously eliminating the sense of the mystery falls outside the canon of sacred music as envisaged by Otto.

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Fascination

As already indicated above, Otto conjoins the tremendousness of the mysterium to its charming capacity. The numinous mystery is that which attracts, and attracts even Erotically.[36] The challenge therefore is for the musician to produce such a work that lifts the human mind away from the things of the present time and draws it intoxicatingly to the desire of spiritual realities. Concerning the charming power of sacred

[33]Albert L. Blackwell, *The Sacred in Music* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), p. 28.

[34]Otto, *Holy*, 150–1.

[35]Ibid., 48.

[36]Notice that I use capital letter to begin the word 'Erotically." This is to distinguish it from the modern association it has gotten with sex, licitly or illicitly conceived. But the truth is that the supernal force of attraction and charm of the numinous presence is like unto but surpasses infinitely all natural erotic appeal of the opposite sex because of its purity, its holiness, and its eternal character.

music, Blackwell asserts that "music's most effective contribution to worship may be its power to attract."[37] He confessed his own experience in the college thus:

> Amidst my struggles with religious faith during college years, only music of a wonderful chapel choir kept me from sleeping in on Sundays. . . . my first real attraction to Christian doctrines, like my first real attraction to the Latin and German languages, came by way of the anthems we sang.[38]

Blackwell's experience, however, is well known in Christianity. St. Augustine felt the same, as he acknowledged in his *Confessions* referring to the hymns of the church: "What emotion I experienced in them! Those sounds flowed into my ears, distilling the truth in my heart."[39]

Sacred music ought to have the capacity to attract, charm, and fascinate. The reason for this is that music in itself has something we can call a mystic quality which makes it a medium of experience of the other-world. Writing about the medieval mystic Margery Kempe, Bruce Holsinger acknowledges that music was the channel:

> through which Kempe receives her first direct impression of heaven, and she depicts her experience in a way that might seem typical of medieval devotional writing: the music of heaven surpasses all worldly melody "without any comparison," inspires a burning desire for union with God, and cannot adequately be described in the fallen language of mortals.[40]

It is because of the intrinsic capacity of genuine sacred music to attract away from mundane things to spiritual realities that one of the documents of Vatican II Council gave primacy of utility to the pipe organ, over and above other instruments that can be allowed for church use, arguing that it "adds a wonderful splendor to the Church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts up man's mind to God and to higher things."[41] Echoing the same sentiment, the document *Musicam Sacram* argues that through music "prayer is expressed in a more attractive way . . . minds are more easily raised to heavenly things by the beauty of the sacred rites, and the whole celebration more clearly prefigures that heavenly liturgy which is enacted in the holy city of Jerusalem."[42] The challenge for the church musician then, is to produce and employ music "that allures with potent charm"[43] to spiritual things.

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[37]Blackwell, *Sacred*, 225.

[38]Ibid.

[39]St. Augustine, *Conf.* 9, 6, 14, in *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ¶1157.

[40]Bruce Wood Holsinger, "The Flesh of the Voice: Embodiment and the Homoerotics of Devotion in the Music of Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179)," *Signs*, 19, no. 1 (Autumn 1993), 93 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3174746>.

[41]Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, (December 4, 1963), ¶120 <http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/ documents/vat-ii_const_ 19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html>.

[42]Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction on Music in the Liturgy, *Musicam Sacram* (March 5, 1967), ¶5 <http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_instr_19670305_musicam-sacram_en.html>.

[43]Otto, *Holy,* 31.

Conclusion

It is to the credit of Rudolf Otto that he made the ground-breaking postulation of the non-rational way of approach to the numinous reality. The numinous reality, for Otto, refers to the deity as it is conceived by the various religions. In saying this, Otto did not lose sight of the unique preeminence of the Christian experience. His theory of non-rational approach to the deity becomes an original contribution to phenomenology in as much as it takes phenomenology to the realm of religious experience.

The challenge for the church musician then, is to produce and employ music "that allures with potent charm" to spiritual things.

Given that there have been many discussions and debates about what serves as appropriate Christian ritual music and what does not, I personally find Otto's doctrine to be a useful tool in evaluating the functionality, or otherwise, of any music in the context of Christian worship. This is because his approach goes directly to the very essence of all Christian worship, namely, the experience of the numinous presence of God. And Christian religious music must have the capacity to lead to this experience.

The importance of Otto's contribution is to be located in the fact that perennial rational theology often seems to have the inescapable tendency to limit the Christian experience to the mere basics of right reason, simultaneously placing the experience of the numinous on the margin. Otto comes in to say that the experience of the numinous is not simply marginal. It can easily be arrived at by creating an atmosphere that is conducive for the spiritual encounter with the deity. One important way of achieving this is through the use of appropriate sacred music, and Otto insists that religious worship cannot proceed effectively without such music. ❖

Compline: Time, the Mystical Body, and Breath

The prayer of Compline draws together the entirety of the human experience into an offering of the very self to God, in union with the whole Church.

by Wilfrid Jones

When Jesus Christ entered human history, he did something strange to time. In the hypostatic union, Christ is fully God and fully man, immanent and transcendent, before the Alpha and after the Omega of time. But with birth and death the timeless Word was made flesh and dwelled among us for a time. Among the many mysteries of the Incarnation, is the confrontation between our time and God's time. As David Tenant's "incarnation" of Doctor Who puts it: "people assume that time is a strict progression of cause to effect, but actually, from a non-linear, non-subjective viewpoint, it's more like a big ball of wibbly-wobbly, timey-wimey . . . stuff."

This is most viscerally present in the Sacred Liturgy: the Holy "λειτ"-"ουργός," the work done on behalf of the people by Christ himself. To draw again on science fiction as it tries to tackle this same time-bound/time-free quandary: Ray Cummings put it in *The Girl in the Golden Atom* that "time is what keeps everything from happening all at once." When we step out of this human experience of time, and step into participation in the liturgy, everything *is* happening all at once. We leave time behind as we participate in Christ's continual prayer as Head of the Body, the Church.

These prayers are not something that only happens outside of time: "now," "then," and "forever," but also something that happened in concrete moments in history during the Incarnation. Our Lord prayed the psalms we will pray tonight, and prays them still as our high priest. On the cross, in the anguished cry of the hypostatic union of God and Man in one divine person, Jesus called "into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit," as we will tonight. We sing through him, with him, and in him: in union with the Church Triumphant, and

This talk was delivered as part of the lecture series "Singing the Word" at the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, on February 1, 2018.

Wilfrid Jones studied music at New College, Oxford, and Theology at the University of Birmingham. Having completed further studies in education at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, he is beginning a PhD in Theology at the Albert-Ludwigs University, Freiburg. He teaches at a secondary school in Cambridge.

Church Militant in time and out of it. We become the lungs of Christ's mystical body. If you want an answer to "why Compline?" for the soul, it is in part the same answer as for any part of the Divine Office or of the sacred liturgy more generally: to become one with Christ, being caught up in the divine essence and the song of the angels.

Within this brief explanation, we already have the seed of something specific to Compline. The liturgy unites us with those in heaven, it is indeed a foretaste of heaven, a preparation for it. And in Compline we prepare for the journey there too. We prepare for our death. Indeed, being timey-wimey, we are at our deathbed. My methodology for studying liturgy is to take as a starting point the experience of participation. In preparing this talk this evening I've had the pleasure of interviewing five Christians from different denominations at different stages in life, with different roles in the church. I asked one religious to describe to me what he did to prepare for Compline and this is what he said:

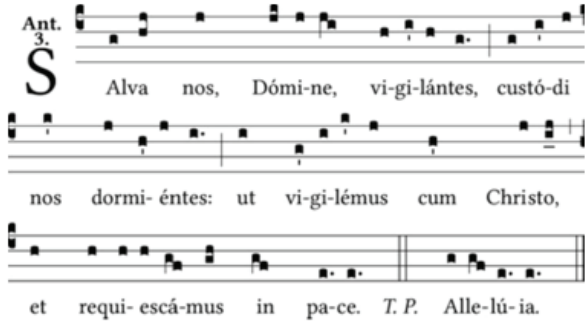
> I'd get there five minutes beforehand and make my examination of conscience. Going through your day and working out what you've done wrong which you will make a good mental confession during the office itself so that if I die during the night you're hopefully going to be okay. It's all about praying for death you see. A lot of the psalms you pray are essentially from the office of the dead. So it's preparing you for the day when you say your prayers and don't wake up again.

This religious is in his twenties. He is perfectly well, and with his new exercise regime is positively healthy; yet each night, before he goes to sleep, he confronts the reality of his death. In education we call this "scale switching" and we use it to get students to think about big issues by considering small ones. Some might think this daily exercise of scale switching between sleep and death is macabre, but the chant we're going to look at in a minute tells a different story.

If you want an answer to "why Compline?" for the soul, it is in part the same answer as for any part of the Divine Office or of the sacred liturgy more generally: to become one with Christ, being caught up in the divine essence and the song of the angels.

The Catholic Church dramatically changed its liturgy in the 1960s and 1970, but until then, there was very little variation in the rite, texts, and chants of Compline. Compline "completes" the work of prayer each day, rounding off the daily cycle

of monastic worship. The ending of each day was more or less the point of stability in the office. At the Reformation, Archbishop Cranmer combined it with Vespers to create the service of Evensong we love, and borrowed from it the second canticle, the Nunc Dimittis: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." Already in that text there is a scale switching taking place: as we prepare for sleep we sing about departing this earth. In Compline, the Nunc is bookended by the same antiphon each night. Here is the antiphon to the Nunc Dimittis which is still sung each day:



Occasionally in chant you get a meaning for the text from the melody. It's rare, but they crop up here and there when there are actions involved like rolling away a stone in the Alleluia on Easter Monday or something like that.

The opening prayer, "save us," rises. Vigilantes (the participle of "watching," being awake) instead gently falls, as if dropping off. For me, it always calls to mind the garden of Gethsemane where in the Vulgate Christ uses the same words to his dozy disciples: "sustinete hic et vigilate mecum," "stay here and keep watch with me." There's not often we see things happening at night in the Gospels, but here is Jesus, having eaten the Last Supper, doing as we are about to: praying at night. Again the prayer "custodi nos" ("guard us") rises, and our sleeping falls away. That these two clauses follow the same musical shape draws a link and a contrast between the two: awake or asleep we are in God's care, the passage of time (marked by waking and sleeping) dissolves.

In these first two half bars the action of God is reflected by the wide range of the phrases that relate to it, each spanning a fifth. Our docility, our inaction, is signalled by the small range of a third. But then it changes, and the roles are reversed. By being *with* Christ, by becoming part of his mystical body, our action matches the range of God, now "vigilemus" too spans a fifth, we are caught up in Christ's prayer and his action appears to diminish, but that he is the important part is highlighted in its episema making it longer, putting the emphasis on the last word. Then the last phrase, "and may rest in peace," rest does just that, resting on one note, and then dropping away into sleep—into a gentle death.

Within this antiphon is all that I've been saying. Our action and Christ's action intermingle, the difference between sleeping now and dying in the future is unidentifiable. Christ is the union between God and humanity, we humans are the union between matter and spirit. We need cues that allow us to embody our spiritual selves. In his 2006 book on Eucharistic liturgy, Cardinal Francis Arinze puts it thus:

> Although interior dispositions are obviously more important, they do not negate the importance of exterior manifestations, because these latter make visible, intensify and feed the interior requirements. It would be bad psychology and

false angelism to ignore the importance of exterior manifestations.[1]

To make our worship purely intellectual is to forget that, unlike the angels who are purely spirit with no body, God has made us body *and* soul and both should worship God. But of course, the mind has its role to play. One Protestant lay person I interviewed while preparing this talk explained her experience:

To make our worship purely intellectual is to forget that, unlike the angels who are purely spirit with no body, God has made us body and soul and both should worship God. But of course, the mind has its role to play.

> I had all these words from the Bible, all these prayers from the saints, and all I had to do was think about them. Ideally I'd have that whenever I read the Bible but there's always another job to distract you. Compline provides the space, time, and context to hear the words sung.

This is one reason that the Divine Office is most complete when sung in common. Common and private recitation aspire towards this. Singing is more bodily and our senses are more attuned to its meaning. Aquinas sums it up thus: "if the singer chants for the sake of devotion, he pays more attention to what he says, both because he lingers more thereon."[2]

Coming out of the Roman Rite, as it does, its proper music is Gregorian chant, which the Second Vatican Council affirms as specially suited to the liturgy. The aim (if not the practice) is that we are rhythmic and not at the same time, again expressing that peculiarity of stepping out of linear time. We move as one body. We sing the same note on the same vowel at the same time in unison with those from the past and the future who have sung the same lines. In doing so we express the unity of the church across history with its head, Christ. Some of those souls from past generations are in heaven and are present in the sacred liturgy, some have yet to be born, yet, when they are dead will be outside of time themselves and present as we sing. This is our song, this is their song, and we are united in Christ's song. A cloistered religious explained it like this:

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[1]Francis Cardinal Arinze, *Celebrating the Holy Eucharist* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), p. 57.

[2]St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ,* Second and Revised Edition, tr. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London: Burns, Oates & Washburne, 1920), II.ii, q. 91, reply 5 <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/3091.htm>.

> The music isn't the thing we're practicing, the music enables you to pray. It's not about the music being beautiful and isn't it lovely, because sometimes it's bloody awful and we're usually flat. We're all doing the same thing, we don't have to worry about it. The point is that your prayer isn't really about you, well I suppose you're offering of yourself, but it isn't *all* about you. It becomes something bigger. That's part of what we're here for, not only to pray for ourselves but also for the salvation of the world. A constant sacrifice of praise.

The senses are important in fostering these experiences. A recent Cambridge graduate and evangelical looked back with me on his experience of Compline in his college and it was the atmosphere that were prominent in what he said.

> We as a choir had candles and the congregations had candles too. The music was all plainchant. Some calls and responses, psalms, sometimes an anthem and a Nunc in there too. Generally unaccompanied but when they tried to add accompaniment the choir didn't like it because they wanted it quiet and unaccompanied . . . [The chapel] had a very high ceiling, too high to see in that light. It's not a very long room, and it was totally dark except for the altar. It was a special atmosphere.

Another student from a different college explained to me that

> It was quite relaxing to sit there in the candlelight and sing along, being able to focus on the words. As soon as you've done it a few times it becomes routine. Once you know what you're doing I found it relaxing, almost meditative. That's not quite the right word. I don't know if there is one really. It's close enough. [Compline is] all low key.

Music is a temporal medium: if it had matter, it would be time itself. It shares that matter with memory. It draws together events over our lives. If you want an answer to the question "why Compline?" for the body and mind, that's it.

Music is a temporal medium: if it had matter, it would be time itself. It shares that matter with memory. It draws together events over our lives. If you want an answer to the question "why Compline?" for the body and mind, that's it.

I want to conclude by adding soul, body, and mind together, back into their human person.

We are going to finish this evening by singing Compline. When we do so, take note of our breath. We are breathing for the saints. We are going to become the Old Testament רוּחַ, the breath and Spirit of God from Genesis that has given life, and which contrasted with the chaotic וָבֹהוּ תֹהוּ upon which it rested. Listen to that onomatapeia.

וָבֹהוּ תֹהוּ.

רוּחַ

Breath brings order, calm and reason to chaos.

Our breath comes from scripture and becomes liturgical, the tool Christ uses for his work on behalf of his people. Our very breath has become a sacramental, the means of God's grace. As we breathe, we are embodying the belief that "God is Spirit," in Greek "πνεῦμα ὁ Θεός." "Πνεῦμα," literally breath but again "Spirit" in the New Testament. By using our breath, the embodiment of the Third Person of the Most Holy Trinity, we participate in the what St. Paul calls the λογικὴν λατρείαν, the worship characterized by the divine λόγος, that is, reason, intellect, and also the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity.

The union of God's immanence in the person of Christ and transcendence in the person of the Holy Spirit offers worship to the Father by the immanence of our bodily selves which yearns for the transcendence of our spiritual reality. That breath is important in our act of singing. That column of air that passes in and out of us as our song passes between, trans-acts, mediates, the heavenly and earthly. Breath gives bodily expression to our spiritual praise.

"God is breath; and they that adore him, must adore him in breath and in truth" (John 4:24). ❖

Pneuma	ho	Theos	kai	tous	proskynountas	auton	en	pneumati	kai
Πνεῦμα	ὁ	Θεός	καὶ	τοὺς	προσκυνοῦντας	αὐτὸν	ἐν	πνεύματι	καὶ
Spirit		God[is]	and	those	worshipping	him	in	spirit	and

aletheia	dei	Proskynein.
ἀληθείᾳ	δεῖ	προσκυνεῖν
truth	It behooves	to worship.

Can You Hear Me? Can I Hear You? Coping with Hearing Loss in the Choir

What are some techniques for running a choral rehearsal that engage those experiencing hearing loss and helps them to sing their best?

by Mary Jane Ballou

Think about your choir for a moment. Most of America's church choirs are "greying." Younger church-goers often have responsibilities that make consistent rehearsal attendance difficult. Many never learned much about singing in school. And of course, there are those who just do not want to join your choir, no matter how enticing you make membership sound at the parish "ministry fair." It is your older singers who are often your reliable members. Take a moment to calculate the average age in your choir.

Just the Facts, Ma'am!

Let's start with a few statistics from the Hearing Loss Association of America:[1]

- At the age of 65, one in three people will have some degree of hearing loss, primarily in the higher frequencies.
- There are 48 million Americans who have a significant hearing loss.
- Less than 30 per cent of adults aged 70 or older who could benefit from hearing aids use them. That drops to only 16 per cent of adults aged 20 to 69.
- An estimated 50 million Americans have tinnitus (ringing in the ears).

Hearing loss is largely an invisible disability. For many people, the loss is gradual and therefore unrecognized and thus untreated. To complicate matters further, recent research at the University of Buffalo has shown that standard audiology testing

[1]Hearing Loss Association of America, "Hearing Loss: Facts & Statistics" <http://www.hearingloss.org/sites/default/files/docs/HearingLoss_Facts_Statistics.pdf>.

Mary Jane Ballou, D.S.M., is a musician based in St. Augustine, Florida.

can miss subtle forms of hearing loss.[2] Audiology testing is done in an isolation booth and tests responses to single sounds and words. Most early hearing loss affects the ability to hear against background noise—in a crowded restaurant, a classroom full of noisy children, or the chatter in a meeting or a choir rehearsal. This is not captured in standard testing.

Now What?

Does the foregoing mean that you should require hearing tests for your singers? Ban singers over 55? Is hearing loss always accompanied by a decline in pitch matching? I would answer "no" to these questions. At the same time, remember that undiagnosed hearing loss, particularly from loud music, is a growing problem with younger people. So, what should a choir director do?

Here are a few suggestions that will benefit all members of your choir, not just those with hearing loss. They are drawn with permission from a guest article by Bettina Gellinek Turner, published on the blog *From the Front of the Choir*. This blog is the work of Chris Rowbury, an English choir and singing workshop conductor. Turner's article, "Singers with Hearing Loss: How Choir Leaders Can Help"[3] and its companion by Rowbury, "Are You a Singer with Hearing Loss? Steps You Can Take to Make Life Easier in Your Choir"[4] reward careful reading.

As an aside, I highly recommend a visit to Chris Rowbury's blog at <blog.chrisrowbury.com>. He directs "open-access" (non-auditioned) choruses and has dealt with just about every type of voice and choir problem that amateur singers can present. While he does not work in a church environment, choral singers are the same the world around.

Can They Hear You?

If your choir is large, you might consider using a microphone. If you rehearse in the church, use the sound system. It's not just for Sundays. In the choir room, consider a smaller wireless system. If this isn't possible, use a strong voice—and I mean strong! Many of us start out strong and then drop back to a conversational tone as the rehearsal progresses. Support your speaking voice in the same way you tell your singers to support their singing voices. Never assume that the third row can hear you—ask them, and adjust accordingly.

Speak slowly and deliberately. Not so slowly that people lose track of the meaning, but not a quick mumble either. Don't address your remarks to the organ console, piano keyboard, or music stand. Speak up and speak out to the choir. Look at them while you are speaking. This is not the time to muse while rummaging through the music cabinet or talk from the next room with the photocopier running.

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[2]Bert Gambini, "How Tests Fail to Detect 'Hidden Hearing Loss'" <www.futurity.org/test-miss-hearing-loss-1411992>.

[3]Bettina Gillinek Turner, "Singers with Hearing Loss: How Choir Leaders Can Help" <blog.chrisrowbury.com/2017/05/singer-swith-hearing-loss-how.html>.

[4]Chris Rowbury, "Are You a Singer with Hearing Loss? Steps You Can Take to Make Life Easier in Your Choir" <blog.chrisrowbury.com/2017/05/are-you-singer-with-hearing-loss-steps.html>.

Control the Background Noise

Do not talk and play at the same time. It's tempting to "noodle a bit" or reinforce your comments with a line from the piece. You're creating background noise that must be sorted out from your comments and it is distracting to all your singers.

About talking: train your singers to hold down the chatter when there are pauses in the rehearsal. This is will benefit everyone and you won't have to repeat yourself for the folks who were not listening. The easiest way to do this, if somewhat draconian, is to refuse to repeat yourself in terms of where to start. In theory, they will learn to listen because their neighbors will tire of cluing them in.

What about your own extraneous talking in the midst of a rehearsal? Do you intersperse comments on weather, fashion, personalities, upcoming events, etc. into your instructions to the choir? To what extent are your own off-topic remarks a distraction from the business at hand and more noise for hearing-challenged folks to sort out? This is particularly a problem with smaller groups where singers and the director are friends. There is nothing wrong with friendly talk before or after; just make it before or after, not during.

Clarity Counts

Instead of barking (or mumbling) a starting measure or rehearsal letter, use a complete sentence, for example: "We will start at measure 56." This sets up your singers to listen for the number. This will get things moving much faster. Trust me, it will.

Use arpeggios for starting pitches if you use a keyboard. Because hearing loss affects higher frequencies, it can be difficult to find a note from a block chord. Unless you can sing a block chord, this is not a problem for all-a cappella ensembles.

The result of all these suggestions is improved communication with your singers, whether they have a hearing loss or not.

When a singer asks a question that applies to the choir or a section, repeat the question and answer it for everyone. This is the standard practice of good lecturers and presenters to hold the audience's attention. It will also keep your group's attention on you.

The result of all these suggestions is improved communication with your singers, whether they have a hearing loss or not. Clear and deliberate speech directed "out" instead of "down" in an environment that minimizes background noise will get everyone on the right measure in no time at all.

If you think someone is having a problem because of hearing loss, speak to the person *privately*. Be sensitive and remember that a loss in hearing ability is not a loss of intelligence.

Pitch, Anyone?

I have often heard it said that singers with hearing loss cannot match pitch success-

fully. That is a stereotyping generalization. Many experienced singers with diminished hearing will be able to participate in choral singing for years. Others may not. Both the loss of auditory capability and its correction are very individual. Besides, we all know singers with perfect hearing who can't match pitch. Right?

Can You Hear Me?

What about your own ears? Instrumentalists, band directors, rock musicians, and those who spend much of their lives surrounded by music and musicians are at risk of hearing loss. Have you ever had your own hearing tested? Websites such as *Healthy Hearing* and that of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association[5] can help you locate a professional audiologist. There are decibel-lowering solutions for people who face exposure to loud noise (and yes, that bagpipe band does constitute "loud noise"). Hearing loss is being identified in large numbers of younger adults, not necessarily from sitting by the amps at a rock extravaganza, but from cranking up their headphones.

In live music situations, musicians' earplugs can save you from hearing loss and tinnitus. These are not the same as the earplugs you use to sleep on the plane. Musicians' earplugs filter rather block sound. Shree at "ghostnotes," a drum website, offers recommendations and advice on selection.[6] A study from the Baylor College of Medicine showed that you don't have to be a rocker to lose your hearing from your musical work.[7] If you are interested in learning more about noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL), why not start with the thorough article on Wikipedia[8] and take it from there?

Conclusion

We all know hearing—and hearing well—has a great deal to do with the production of beautiful singing. Communication with your choir during rehearsals is a critical part of our work. We want them to listen and respond. Let us do all that we can to help our ensembles use their ears and brains well. We will find ourselves repaid with fine singing and happy choirs. And don't forget your own ears! Did you hear me?

Additional Resources on Hearing Loss and Music

Hearing Loss Association of America <www.hearingloss.org>

Grand Piano Passion <www.grandpianopassion.com>

Hear-It <www.hear-it.org>

Hearing Health & Technology Matters <hearinghealthmatters.org> ❖

[5]*Healthy Hearing* <https://www.healthyhearing.com/> and American Speech-Language-Hearing Association <https://www.asha.org/profind/>.

[6]Shree, "Best Earplugs for Musicians: 5 AWESOME Picks for 2017" <https://ghostnotesblog.com/best-earplugs-musicians/>.

[7]Jeannette Jimenez, "Hearing Loss in Musicians, Not Just Rock and Rollers" <https://www.bcm.edu/news/ear-nose-and-throat/hearing-loss-musicians-not-rock-and-rollers>.

[8]Wikipedia, "Noise-Induced Hearing Loss" <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noise-induced_hearing_loss>.

Repertorie

Variety within Unity: The Sanctus Trope *Sanctorum Exultatio*

The study of variations in the texts and melodies of tropes offers insight into the transmission of chant over great distances.

by Peter Moeller

When the Frankish King Pepin III declared, in the wake of the visit by Pope Stephen II and his retinue (752–57), that henceforth the churches in Francia would follow the Roman Rite in the celebration of the liturgy, he began a process that would have far-reaching consequences for both the liturgy and its music.[1] The chants of the Roman rite quickly came to be represented as divinely inspired—their melodies having been sung directly into the ear of Gregory the Great by the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove—and their textual and melodic ductus unalterable.[2] Frankish singers, however, responded creatively to the imposition of the Roman liturgy and its music. While they could not alter the texts and melodies of the standard items of the Mass and Office, they could add newly composed texts and melodies to them.[3] The result was the

[1]Cyrille Vogel, "Les Échanges liturgiques entre Rome et les pays francs jusqu'à l'époque de Charlemagne," *Le Chiese nei regni dell'Europa occidentale e i loro rapporti con Roma fino all' 800*, *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto mediœvo,* 7 (1960), I, 185–295.

[2]Leo Treitler, "Homer and Gregory: The Transmission of Epic Poetry and Plainchant," *The Musical Quarterly,* 60 (1974), 333–372.

[3]That troping was occurring already in the ninth century, and that the process was not necessarily looked upon favorably, is documented by the canon of the Council of Meaux in 845/6. That document forbade clergy to "add, interpolate, recite, murmur, or sing out" new texts when performing services. "The relevant passage reads as follows: Propter inprobitatem quorundam omnino dampnabilem, qui novitatibus delectati puritatem antiquitatis suis adinventionibus interpolare non metuunt, statuimus, ut nullus clericorum nullusque monachorum in Ymno Angelico, id est, "Gloria in excelsis deo," et in sequentiis, que in Alleluia sollemniter decantari solent, quaslibet compositiones, quas prosas vocant, vel ullas fictiones addere, interponere, recitare, submurmurare aut decantare presummat. Quod si fecerit, deponatur." See Gabriel Silagi, "Vorwort," *Liturgische Tropen: Referate zweier Colloquien des Corpus Troporum in München (1983) und Canterbury (1984)* Münchener Beiträge zur Mediävistik und Renaissance-Forschung, 36 (Munich: Arbeo-Gesellschaft, 1985), vii–x.

[Transcriptions for the chant from the Ms. St. Gall 546 and for the polyphony, a transcription modeled upon the edition of Max Lütolf referenced below, have been added. Ed.]

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phenomenon often referred to as "troping," a term that covers a diverse array of practices ranging from adding melismas to the phrases of an introit, adding texts to preexistent melismas, or composing completely new texts with music that could introduce and embellish almost any chant of the Mass or Office—the last-named being the "classic trope," as Bruno Stäblein called it.[4]

Tropes have presented a fertile area of research for modern scholars, since they belong to the earliest layer of new musical composition in the medieval West. Inasmuch as tropes were newly composed, they exhibit a considerable amount of variation in the ways they are copied and transmitted in manuscript sources. *Sanctorum exultatio* presents a particularly fruitful case study in the transmission of chant because it was transmitted over great distance and time with remarkable consistency, while also exhibiting, in a minority of sources, a high degree of variation. Much of this similarity results from the provenance of many of these sources from Northern France and England, or their having been copied from Northern French or English sources. Examining such a stable example of chant transmission serves to clarify possible sources of variation, as the rarity of alteration causes it to stand out far more plainly.

Methodology

I have compiled the sources containing *Sanctorum exultatio* using Peter Josef Thannabauer's *Das Einstimmige Sanctus*,[5] Guido Maria Dreves's *Analecta Hymnica Medii Ævi*,[6] and Gunilla Iversen's *Corpus Troporum VII*,[7] which refer to different but overlapping sets of manuscript sources containing the trope. While *Corpus Troporum* and *Analecta Hymnica* compare different sources based on text, *Das Einstimmige Sanctus* tracks different Sanctus melodies. In this article, I compare versions of the trope (not the base Sanctus chant it appears with) in two main ways: treatment of text and treatment of melody. In comparing different texts, I have taken into consideration how alterations to text affect grammar and meaning. In the case of melodic variation, three general types of alteration exist: use or avoidance of accidentals, ornamentation, and clear scribal error.

Much of the work in cataloguing and comparing the iterations of tropes to the Sanctus has been done by Gunilla Iversen of Stockholm University. In her *Corpus Troporum VII: Tropes du Sanctus*, Iversen presents a critical edition of 174 Sanctus tropes, including texted Osanna melismas, or prosulae. The volume presents an overview of the typology of Sanctus tropes before editing the texts of tropes found in 137 manuscripts dating from the tenth through the thirteenth centuries. *Sanctorum exultatio* is trope 141 in this edition, and Iversen gives a textual concordance for eleven of the nineteen

[4]Bruno Stäblein, "Zum Verständnis des 'klassischen' Tropus," *Acta Musicologica,* 35 (1963), 84–95; Richard L. Crocker, "The Troping Hypothesis," *The Musical Quarterly,* 52 (1966), 183–203.

[5]Peter Josef Thannabaur, *Das Einstimmige Sanctus der römischen Messe in der handschriftlichen Überlieferung des 11. Bis 16. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Walter Ricke, 1962), pp. 122–4.

[6]Guido Maria Dreves, *Analecta Hymnica Medii Ævi*, vol. 47 (Whitefish: Kessinger, 2007), p. 317.

[7]Gunilla Iversen, *Corpus Troporum VII: Tropes du Sanctus* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1990), p. 181.

extant manuscript sources.[8] *Corpus Troporum* handles only the texts of the tropes, leaving variations in musical content unexamined.

An edition of chants of the Ordinary of the Mass is currently underway, being produced by Charles Atkinson as part of the series *Corpus Monodicum*, a project of Würzburg University's Institut für Musikforschung. This ambitious project will comprise an edition not only of the ordinary chants themselves, in all their diverse forms, but also of tropes to these chants. Such a project will no doubt be extremely useful in tracking variant readings of ordinary tropes, including the trope that is the subject of this document.

The Sanctus Chant

The Sanctus text itself comprises two sections, the threefold acclamation of Sanctus, which is taken from Isaiah 6:3, and the Benedictus, which is a modified version of Matthew 21:9. The liturgical use of the Sanctus is attested in the Eastern Church at Antioch in the third quarter of the fourth century, and in Jerusalem in the first third of the fifth century.[9] Its use in the Roman liturgy can be traced at least back to the eighth century, where it is written that the choir sings it after the celebrant says the preface.[10] The text is a hymn of praise to God, said to be sung by the angels along with Christian congregations. The repertoire of Sanctus melodies is one of the larger repertoires among the ordinary chants; Thannabaur catalogues 230,[11] whereas Charles Atkinson notes approximately 270 individual Sanctus melodies composed in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.[12] At least until the beginning of the ninth century, the Sanctus was chanted by celebrant, choir, and congregation, emulating and joining in with the heavenly host's eternal hymn of praise to God.[13] Jungmann notes performance by the congregation in the Eastern Church after the fourth century,[14] but also references its singing by subdeacons in the Latin Mass of the seventh century.[15] In France in the ninth century, the people joined in singing the Agnus Dei and Sanctus.[16] Jungmann writes that more elaborate Sanctus melodies arose in or after the tenth and eleventh centuries,[17] while Crocker states that by the tenth century, the Sanctus melodies appearing in graduals and other chant books were composed for the choir.[18]

Stylistic similarities can often be identified between Sanctus tropes and the Sanctus melodies themselves. As Richard Crocker notes, "the melody of a Sanctus may resemble the melody of its tropes not because the tropes imitate a pre-existing melody, but because both trope and Sanctus melody are products of the very same musical style,

[8]Ibid., 181.

[9]Ibid., 17.

[10]*Ordo Romanus Primus,* ed. by Vernon Staley, The Library of Liturgiology and Ecclesiology for English Readers, vol. 6 (London: De la More Press, 1905), pp. 138–139 <https://archive.org/stream/ordoromanusprimu00atchuoft/ordoromanusprimu00atchuoft_djvu.txt>.

[11]Thannabaur, *Sanctus.*

[12]Charles Atkinson and Gunilla Iversen, "Sanctus," *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. *8* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1998), 907.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development,* tr. Francis A. Brunner, 2 vols. (New York: Benziger, 1951, 1955), p. 43.

[15]Ibid., 72.

[16]Ibid., 85.

[17]Ibid., 125.

[18]Crocker, "Troping Hypothesis," 194.

composed at more or less the same time."[19] The chant is generally grouped into five phrases: "Sanctus . . . ," "Pleni sunt . . . ," "Osanna . . . ," "Benedictus . . . ," and "Osanna . . ."[20] The threefold acclamation of Sanctus made the chant especially apt for interpolative tropes, which represent the largest part of the repertoire present before 1100.[21]

Tropes to the Sanctus

Troping, the practice of inserting newly composed texts, melodies, or combinations of both into existing chants, has existed since the ninth century at the very latest. A canon from the Council of Meaux decried the practice in 848,[22] and tropes appear in manuscripts dating from at least as early ninth century.[23]

Sanctus tropes are a particularly large trope repertoire, in part because they continued to be composed longer than many other types of chant trope—well into the twelfth century.[24] Tropes to the Sanctus comprise new texts added to existing melismas (prosulae), as well as new melismas and new compositions consisting of both music and text (true tropes). Sanctus tropes typically take one of three forms: interpolation, introduction, or prosulae added to Osanna melismas. Small sections of verse that Gunilla Iversen calls "wandering verses" can also be found in several tropes, including *Sanctorum exultatio*.[25] Until about 1100, interpolations were by far the most common type of Sanctus trope across both Eastern and Western Europe. After 1100, however, Osanna prosulae became the dominant trope type in the West.[26]

The literary content of Sanctus tropes is diverse, but can be grouped into a few main subjects. A large portion of Sanctus tropes use the Sanctus's three-fold acclamation as the inspiration for Trinitarian commentary, with an element after each statement of "Sanctus" emphasizing a different person of the Holy Trinity.[27] Others focus on the immaculate nature and holy status of the Virgin Mary, while still others expand upon the Sanctus as an angelic and terrestrial hymn of praise to God. *Sanctorum exultatio* fits into the last category, its text making no mention of the persons of the Godhead or of the Virgin Mother. Its interpolated lines augment the various praises already contained in the base chant.

Textual Variation

The text of *Sanctorum exultatio* comprises a series of interpolations between lines of the text of the Sanctus. These insertions supplement the base text with additional phrases of general praise to God. In all settings of this trope, the structure as it appears in Figure 1 below is preserved. The wandering verse *Cui dulci iubilo* appears in all but one setting of *Sanctorum exultatio* (in which only the incipit is recorded). It also appears in one setting of the Sanctus trope *Perpetuo numine*. Its addition is noteworthy as this verse is in dactylic hexam-

[19]Ibid.

[20]Thannabaur, *Sanctus*, 54.

[21]Iversen, *Corpus Troporum VII*, 15.

[22]Alejandro Planchart, s.v. "Trope," *Grove Music Online* (Oxford Music Online, 2001) <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000028456?rskey=ulI0mD&result=1>.

[23]Bruno Stäblein, s.v. "Tropus," *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1998).

[24]Iversen, *Corpus Troporum VII,* 15.

[25]Ibid., 28.

[26]Ibid., 26–28.

[27]Ibid., 46.

eter, unlike the rest of the trope, which is iambic. Below is the standard text of the trope as it appears in Iversen's *Corpus Troporum VII* (see Figure 1).

Textual differences in Sanctus Sanctorum exultatio are relatively infrequent and do not have a great effect on the meaning of the text. The greatest point of variation occurs with the word "salus" in the fourth verse, which appears in ten of the sixteen sources under consideration. In Paris 10508, however, the word used is "omnis," which changes the meaning slightly, to "to whom is befitting all praise and honor." This slight grammatical change does not alter the greater meaning and tone of the text. Cambrai 60 and 78 also have a different word in this place. They read, "Quem decet laus **virtus** et honor," merely substituting "strength" for "salvation." Again, this produces only a slight change in the meaning of a single line. The Cambrai sources also differ in that they replace the word "dulci" in the fifth verse with the word "soli," changing the meaning from sweet jubilation to the word for "alone," referring to him who is owed that jubilation. Finally, the Saint Gall sources offer another difference in their replacement of the pronoun "cui" with "quem," which changes the translation to "Osanna, which the order of saints . . ." Saint Gall 383, however, does interpolate the word "nobis" before the phrase "Sanctorum benedictio" in the second verse—the dative first person plural emphasizing that it is we, the fallible, who need the blessing of the saints. In general, however, the trope as a whole is rather stable, and the broader meaning of the text is preserved throughout all of the sources.

Sanctus	*Holy*
Sanctorum exultatio,	Exultation of the saints
Sanctus	*Holy*
Sanctorum benedictio,	Blessing of the saints,
Sanctus	*Holy*
Sanctorum consolatio.	Consolation of the saints.
Dominus deus sabaoth,	Lord, god of hosts,
Quem decet laus, salus*, et honor,	To whom is befitting praise, salvation, and honor,
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.	*Heaven and Earth are full of your glory.*
Osanna in excelsis.	*Osanna in the highest.*
Cui* dulci* iubilo sanctorum concinit ordo:	To whom the order of saints sings in sweet jubilation.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini.	*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the lord.*
Osanna in excelsis.	*Osanna in the highest.*

*denotes word that is altered in one or more sources

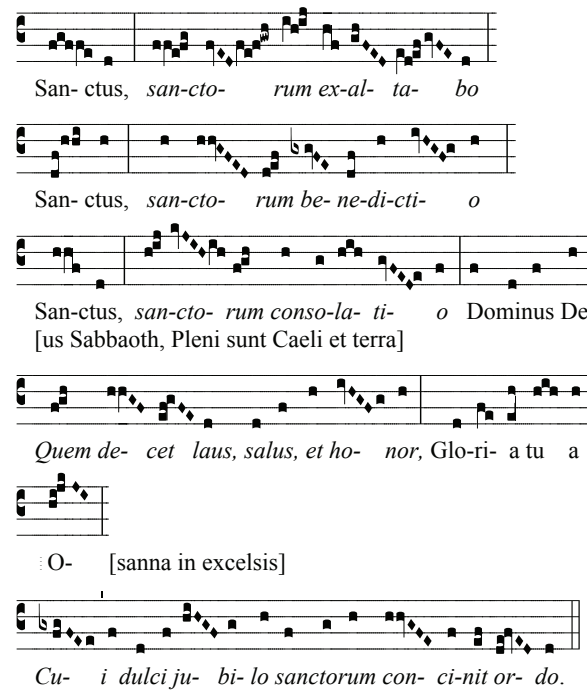
Figure 1: The standard text for trope Sanctus *Sanctorum exultatio*.[28]

[28]Ibid., 181. Translation with help from Dr. Leslie Lockett and Dr. Charles Atkinson.

Melodic Variation

All iterations of this trope appear with Thannabaur's Sanctus melody 32, or some variation thereof.[29] Several sources seem to share a lineage due to similar provenance, perhaps suggesting copying from the same exemplar, or even from one another. The Cambrai sources, both *in campo aperto*, are almost identical except for the presence of fewer liquescences in Cambrai 60. Similarly, Paris 16823 and Paris 17318 differ in a only few spots, usually where one has a rearticulated pitch, although Paris 16823 does contain a *porrectus* (three-note high-low-high gesture) from C to B-flat back to C on the third syllable of "iubilo," whereas Paris 17318 has only a single punctum on C. Although the trope is generally stable in terms of melody, there are several noteworthy variant readings from what is otherwise a rather clear consensus in matters of pitch. On the second syllable of the word "decet," Worcester 160 has an a descending neume from A to G where all other sources with a two-note neume have it ascending from G to A. Tortosa 135 has a uniquely-placed *epiphonus* (ascending liquescence) in the word "salus," while Paris 16823 also has a uniquely-placed *epiphonus* in the third syllable of "sanctorum benedictio." These additions, absent from any other sources, are likely the product of the current taste in each source's time and place of production. In Paris 10508, the melody is transposed down by perfect fourth relatively consistently, although at times, the transposition is switched to a fifth. Paris 10508 is also a bit less syllabic than other sources in its declamation of the text. While most of the other sources averaged 1.56 to 1.77 notes per syllable, Paris 10508 averages 1.98 notes per syllable. Descending motions especially seem to

Sanctus *sanctorum exaltabo* (St. Gall 546)



receive more attention in this source.

Paris 10508's additions seem paltry, however, when compared with those of the Saint Gall sources. Saint Gall 383 and 546 exhibit an average of 2.74 and 2.78 notes per syllable, respectively. This makes them approximately 40% more melismatic than Paris 10508, the source with the next highest number of notes per syllable. Much of the difference results from the expansion of gestures existing in other sources and the ornamentation of repeated pitches. This relative wealth of notes leads to less consistent text underlay in the Saint Gall sources, as seen below in Figure 2.

It is often difficult to tell, when looking at the Saint Gall sources, what neumes belong to which syllables. The non-diastematic source Wien 1821 may prove useful both in clarifying the Saint Gall sources text underlay, and in serving as an intermediate source between the Saint Gall sources and those from other loca-

[29]Thannabaur, *Sanctus*, 119–125.

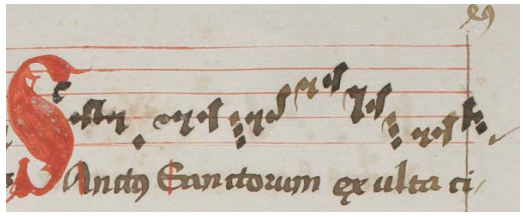


Figure 2. Text underlay in Saint Gall 546.

tions. Wien 1821's music is notated in Saint Gall's distinctive notation, suggesting that it is from the same area as the Saint Gall manuscripts, but its lack of staff-lines and its use of Saint Gall neumes rather than square ones show that it is certainly earlier than either Saint Gall 383 or Saint Gall 546. The Wien manuscript contains some melismas that are found elsewhere only in the Saint Gall manuscripts, but Wien 1821 is not as elaborate as either of these sources. Only Wien 1821 and the Saint Gall sources contain three-note ascending gestures on the word "quem" of "quem decet laus . . . ," as well as a three-note descending neume on the first syllable of "decet" in the same phrase. Although these differences are small, and the Saint Gall sources are still far more melismatic than Wien 1821, these shared gestures may indicate a relationship, albeit likely a distant one.

The multiple forms of the note B and its notation form an interesting issue in the transmission of Sanctus *Sanctorum exultatio*. Unsurprisingly, none of the sources *in campo aperto* (Wien 1821, Cambrai 60, and Cambrai 78) have any signed accidentals. Madrid 19421, and a Spanish source, Tortosa 135, have no signed accidentals at all, despite being written on a staff. Either the chant was performed with only B-naturals, or the singers simply had to know when B-flat was appropriate within the context of this trope. Laon 263, Worcester 160, Paris 16823 and both of the Saint Gall sources have B-flats notated when they occur, but is unclear how long the accidentals remain in effect. Four other sources, Arsenal 135, Paris 17318, Assisi 695, and London Royal 2 B IV all use a key signature of one flat either from the start of the trope or after the first acclamation of *Sanctus*. Finally, Paris 10508 is intriguing in that it only once has to deal with the B/B-flat issue. Its transposition down by a fourth during the trope and alteration during the parts of melody 32 containing B allow it to avoid the need to make use of accidentals.[30] The only use of a signed accidental occurs on a B-natural over the word "*sanctorum*" of "*sanctorum consolatio*," a place in the music where several other sources contain a liquescence down to E natural. This transposition, along with the sources that use signatures, can perhaps inform us on when B or B-flat is appropriate in performance of this trope.

Scribal Errors in the Transmission of Sanctus *Sanctorum exultatio*

Some troublesome, if somewhat amusing, scribal errors are apparent in several of the sources. The least bothersome occurs in Madrid 19421, fol 93v. After the first line of the chant, Sanctus *Sanctorum exultatio*, both the text and musical notation are repeated verbatim. As the Sanctus is with little to no exception a tripartite chant, as would be known to any scribe, it would make no sense to add a fourth acclamation, hence the addition is clearly mistaken. With such a widespread melody, it probably would not have been problematic to a trained singer.

Less innocuous is an error made in

[30]Guido d'Arezzo, *Micrologus*, tr. Warren Babb, ed. Claude Palisca (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1978), p. 64. Guido advises transposition to avoid any "sad confusion" that might be caused by the use of B-flat.

London Royal 2 B IV, fol. 186v. In the second acclamation, Sanctus *sanctorum benedictio,* a misplaced accidental results in the entire line's being transposed up by a perfect fifth.

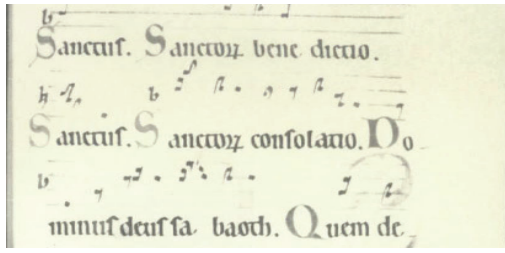


Figure 3. Partial transposition in top line of London 2 B IV, fol. 186v.

As Figure 3 makes clear, the flat sign is shifted down one space, which on its own would only transpose the melody by a third. However, the scribe seems either to be familiar with the melody, conscious of his mistake, or both. The neumes are also shifted up by a line or space, which results in a fifth transposition. This at least preserves the contour of the melody given by all other sources without the need for any notes that lie outside of the Guidonian hand. If the singer is aware of the mistake or is familiar with the chant melody, then reading from the mistaken notation is much less problematic than if the melody had been transposed by third.

The final, and most egregious, mistake on the part of a scribe is set down in Saint Gall 383, from the bottom of page 253 to the top line of page 254. All other sources alternate between lines of the base Sanctus text and the trope text, but after the base text line, "Dominus deus sabaoth," the scribe of Saint Gall 383 continues the base text with "Pleni sunt celi . . ." This is continued, with correct musical notation until the word "gloria." After the first syllable, it seems that the scribe noticed his error, because rather than finish the word, he cut it off and took up the trope text (see Figure 4).

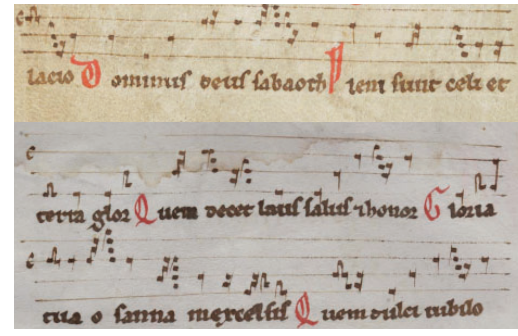


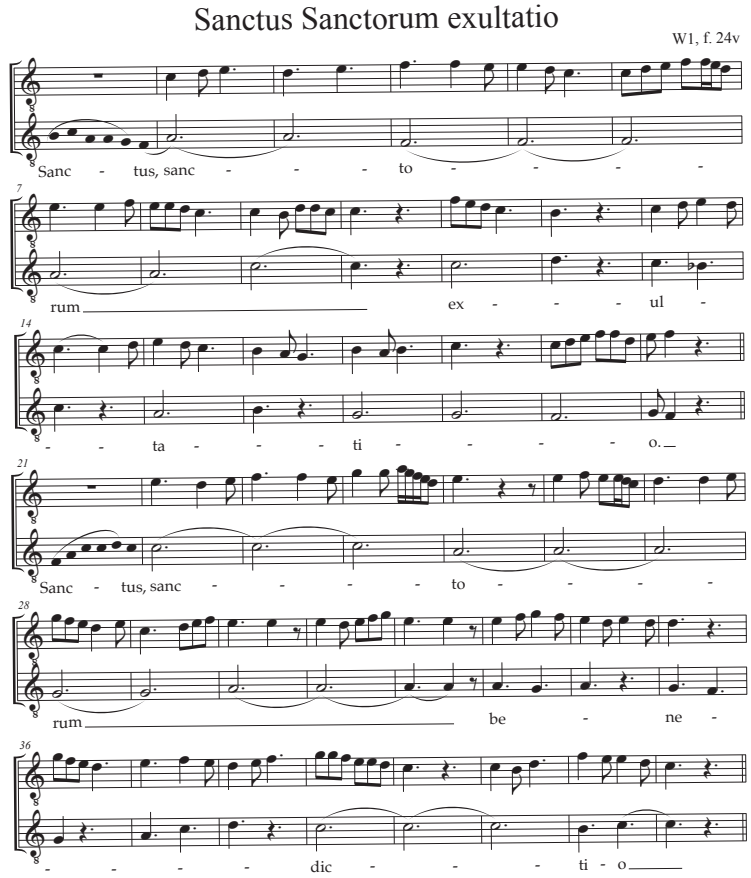
Figure 4. Scribal Error in Saint Gall 383.

After the trope line "Quem decet laus salus and honor" is finished (with music matching the other Saint Gall source and lining up at major points with the other sources), the "Pleni sunt coeli" line is finished, taken up once more from the beginning of the word "Gloria." One has to wonder what the scribe of Saint Gall 383 used as his model. While the scribe of Saint Gall 383 may have simply copied improperly, it is also possible that he merely copied correctly from an incorrect source. The mistake is notably absent from the later Saint Gall source, which is otherwise very close to 383 in its own setting of the trope.

Polyphonic Setting in W1

A setting of this trope that has not yet been treated in this essay but which is worth noting, is the polyphonic setting located in the manuscript Wolfenbüttel 677, hereafter referred to as W1. The manuscript originated at St. Andrews Cathedral in Scotland, probably having been copied in the 1230s.[31] Most

[31]Mark Everist, "From Paris to St. Andrews: The Origin of W1," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 43 (1990), 8.



of the book contains the Notre Dame-style polyphony of the *Magnus liber organi*, while some pieces—especially those from the ordinary—seem to have been composed in England, as they do not appear in the continental sources containing the same repertoire.[32] The tenor line agrees generally with all of the northern sources, and it is most similar to the trope as presented in Assisi 695, whose provenance is given as Reims/Paris in *Corpus Troporum VII*.[33] Ignoring the breve-long gesture at the end of most phrases in the polyphonic setting, W1 and Assisi 695 are almost identical until measure 93 of the W1 setting. Here the polyphonic version departs from the chant, and begins an extended cauda on the penultimate syllable of the word "ordo." Lütolf places the tenor in third mode for the duration of the cauda, and, other than a brief statement of the F-A-C-D-C motive found in both the trope and Thannabaur's Sanctus melody 32, the tenor's melody does not seem to be closely based on the chant. The discantus is generally in first mode for the cauda, and bears no discernable resemblance to the chant melody. Unlike the monophonic sources, between the trope lines, "Quem decet . . . et honor" and "Cui dulci . . . concinit ordo," W1 cues the Benedictus, leaving out "Pleni sunt celi . . ." and cues the final Osanna at the end. As this

[32]Jacques Handschin, "A Monument of English Medieval Polyphony: The Manuscript Wolfenbüttel 677," *The Musical Times,* 73 (1932), 512.

[33]Iversen, *Corpus Troporum VII,* 53; transcript here is Max Lütolf's, from his 1970 *Die mehrstimmigen Ordinarium Missae-Sätze vom ausgehenden 11. bis zur Wende des 13. zum 14. Jahrhundert*, pp. 99–101.

represents the only change in textual structure of the trope, it deserves some consideration. It seems likely that, because of the final cauda added to the word "ordo," the Benedictus may have been cued here, rather than after the trope text, so that the cauda would be nearer to the end, which better fits its compositional style.

Conclusions

Sanctus *Sanctorum exultatio* is, if the Saint Gall sources are set aside, an extremely stable trope. Textual differences among different sources are minimal. Only one of those actually makes a grammatical change, and the few others that vary substitute one or two words which, while changing the meaning of a modifier, do not make any radical changes in the meaning of the text as a whole. Melodic variation is slightly more common, usually occurring as the difference between a one- and a two-note, or a two- and a three-note gesture. Ornamentation and accidental differences occur infrequently. This remarkable consistency would seem to suggest that *Sanctorum exultatio* was relatively cosmopolitan, fitting the tastes of widely disparate locations without much need for alteration. Interestingly, the earliest sources that contain the trope in a monophonic setting are not substantially older than the polyphonic version that made its way into W1, and even there, both its text and melody are preserved rather faithfully. Certain sources show remarkable consistency with one another; Madrid 19421 and Tortosa 135 share many particular quirks, such as an aversion to most decoration and frequent use of B-natural. That said, the two later sources with origins outside of northern France or England, Saint Gall 383 and Saint Gall 546, contain melodies that are significantly more florid than those of their French and English counterparts. Their similarities suggest a possible shared ancestor, or as seems more likely, that 546 was copied, directly or by proxy, from 383. Saint Gall 383 originated in western Switzerland, hence it is very possible that it was not copied from an existing source from the Abbey of Saint Gall. Saint Gall 546 is known to have been part of Father Joachim Cuontz's attempt to archive the trope and sequence repertory of the abbey at Saint Gall in the early sixteenth century,[34] and Saint Gall 383 had been at the abbey since around 1250.[35] Wien 1821, which shares some specific melismas with the Saint Gall sources, could possibly be an intermediary between the twelfth century northern French and English sources and the later, much more melismatic sources from Saint Gall, but even it seems to be stylistically distant from them. Since tropes were newly composed, and thus more malleable than established chant melodies, this difference could, however, simply be a product of the adaptation of the trope to local tastes. In that case, it would seem that the singers and copyists of Saint Gall had a penchant for ornateness that lived not only in their neumatic notation, but also in their singing style. Further study might illuminate the ancestry of the Saint Gall versions of Sanctus *Sanctorum exultatio*, track their divergence from their Northern cousins, and determine the nature of their relationship. ❖

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[34]"Cod. Sang. 383," *E-Codices* <http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/list/one/csg/0383>.

[35]"Cod. Sang. 546," *E-Codices* <http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/list/one/csg/0546>.

Review

Fr. Roman Bannwart's Interpretation of Chant

by Patrick Williams

One of the late twentieth century's greatest interpreters of Gregorian chant remains largely unknown in the English-speaking world. Fr. Roman Bannwart, O.S.B.,[1] served as chantmaster (*Choralmagister*) of Einsiedeln Abbey in Switzerland from 1947 until 2007. Bannwart, affectionately known in his monastic community as "Bani,"[2] directed some of the finest chant recordings ever produced. Playlists are available on Spotify (user 12156631475) and YouTube (user organistAL).[3] This article will attempt to describe some of the characteristics of his style of musical interpretation, with particular attention to rhythm. It will also serve as an introduction to Gregorian semiology for many readers.

Tone

Under Bannwart's direction, the Einsiedeln *schola cantorum* produced a rich, beautiful sound. The singing style is "straight tone," with practically no vibrato; robust and virile, with no hint of breathiness or whininess. According to one of his singers, Bannwart advocated the use of "mixed voice" timbre,[4] which blends full voice and falsetto (or the "chest" and "head" vocal registers). The chanting has a remarkable suppleness and cohesiveness.

Rhythm

Bannwart was a student of Dom Eugène Cardine, O.S.B., monk of Solesmes Abbey in France, who taught at the Pontifical In-

[1]In German, religious priests are addressed by the Latin word *Pater*, abbreviated as *P.* Secular priests are addressed by their appropriate title such as *Pfarrer* (Parson/Parish Priest), *Vikar*, *Prälat* (Monsignor), *Doktor*, *Herr* (Mr./Sir), etc.

[2]Fr. Lukas Helg, O.S.B, sermon for Bannwart's funeral <http://www.gwick.ch/M63/nekrolog/PRB.pdf>.

[3]The Spotify playlist includes everything on YouTube plus recordings with the Chorus Instituti St. Gregorius, Tokyo. Note that the standard German Latin pronunciation is used on all the recordings from Einsiedeln rather than the Italian pronunciation familiar to English speakers.

[4]Stephan Klarer, presentation for dissertation project <https://www.kug.ac.at/fileadmin/media/dschule_w/Dokumente/doktoratsprojekte_w/Klarer_Forum-Pres01.pdf>.

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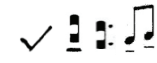
stitute of Sacred Music in Rome from 1952 until 1984. Cardine's book *Gregorian Semiology* serves as the basis for many present-day interpretations of chant.[5] His approach to rhythm differs in a number of respects from the old method described in the Rules for Interpretation found in both the *Liber Usualis* and its abridged version, the *Liber Brevior*. That method, commonly referred to as the "old Solesmes" style, normally requires reading the chant from an edition with rhythmic markings (dots and episemata), some of which are derived from the medieval manuscripts, others of which are editorial additions.[6]

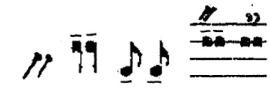
The rhythmic editions are products of the period of chant scholarship that began in the mid-nineteenth century and reached its completion by the end of the 1940s. They represent an important step toward a more authentic interpretation of the chant. Cardine's semiology, which inaugurated the "new Solesmes" style, was a subsequent step in this same movement concerned with restoring the performance practices—at least as far as rhythm is concerned—associated with the manuscripts of the tenth century, one of the most famous of which comes from Einsiedeln. Codex 121 is the oldest complete collection of chants for the proper of the Mass throughout the liturgical year. When listening to Bannwart's recordings, one can follow along with either the *Graduel neumé*[7] or *Graduale Triplex*[8] and notice the following:

both notes of the pes quadratus (squared podatus) are lengthened:



both notes of the episematic clivis are lengthened:

both notes of the bivirga are lengthened[9] and articulated, regardless of whether they are transcribed as puncta or virgae in the Vatican edition:



notes preceding expressive neumatic breaks are lengthened:

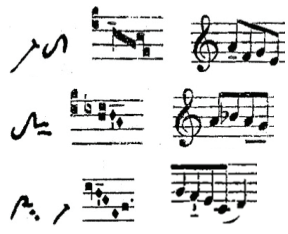
[5]For an overview, see Charles Cole, "The Solesmes Chant Tradition: The Original Neumatic Signs and Practical Performance Today," *Sacred Music*, 139, no. 3 (Fall 2012), 8–24.

[6]The asterisks and various bar lines of the Vatican edition are also editorial additions not found in the manuscripts.

[7]The *Graduel neumé* is available for free download at <http://www.ccwatershed.org/pdfs/km0_graduel-tome_1908_graduale_neume_by_cardine/download/>.

[8]Although the restored melodies differ slightly from those of the 1908 Vatican edition heard on the recordings, the 2011 *Graduale Novum* and the online *Graduale Restitutum* (http://www.gregor-und-taube.de/Materialien/Graduale/graduale.html) are useful for studying the neumes.

[9]Even in the case of a non-episematic bivirga, e.g. at the end of the Epiphany alleluia verse.

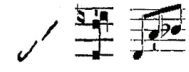


In the last two examples, the tractulus (–) signifies a longer note than the punctum (·). The value of the tractulus is augmented in the context of a multi-note neume, but not when it stands alone.

All of the above practices are fully in keeping with Cardine's findings. The lengthening of *both* notes of the pes quadratus and episematic clivis can easily be applied by a choir accustomed to singing from the rhythmic edition without writing in additional marks or watching for a special gesture from the conductor. The semiological interpretation of bivirgae is also simple to incorporate into performance practice—except when they have been transcribed as puncta in the Vatican edition, in which case they must be marked in order to avoid confounding them with the distropha. The neumatic break or cut (Lat. *caesura*; Fr. *coupure neumatique*; Ger. *Neumentrennung*), on the other hand, cannot always easily be inferred from either the Vatican or Solesmes editions, yet these breaks are quite obvious when reading the St. Gall neumes. Neumatic breaks occur less often than episemata. Choirs using the older editions can simply pencil in an episema before each expressive neumatic break.[10]

In Bannwart's interpretation, the top note of the salicus is always lengthened, even when not marked with an episema:

The semiological interpretation of the salicus is much different—nearly opposite!—from what is given in the old rules for interpretation. In the context of a three-note figure, the old method prescribes lengthening the middle note (the oriscus), whereas semiology often but not invariably suggests lengthening the top note. Cardine notes that the salicus and scandicus were used interchangeably by different scribes.[11] The "salicus" at the beginning of the *Gaudeamus* introits is actually a scandicus with a neumatic break, equivalent to a podatus with its upper note lengthened followed by a virga:



And the "salicus" at the beginning of the offertory *In te speravi* is also actually a scandicus with a neumatic break, in this instance equivalent to a virga followed by a podatus:

[10]Vertical episemata at unexpected places not infrequently coincide with neumatic breaks. Even so, according to the rules for interpretation, such an episema is merely an indication of the placement of ictus and receives no special stress or prolongation except in two cases: the salicus, and a podatus at the interval of a fifth. Therefore, marking the note before the break with a *horizontal* episema is recommended.

[11]Eugène Cardine, Godehard Joppich, and Rupert Fischer, *Gregorian Semiology*, tr. Robert M. Fowells (Sablé-sur-Sarthe: Solesmes, 1982), pp. 170–2.

Here, the rhythm ought to be long-short-short rather than short-long-short (or short-short-long). How should the choir reading from the old rhythmic edition approach these neumes? Except in the *Gaudeamus* type of scandicus, the vertical episema must be ignored because it fails to identify the long note. Instead, the long note should be marked in each singer's book.

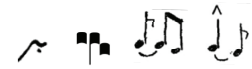
Cardine's students differ in their approach to the word accent, also called the tonic accent. Recordings of the St. Meinrad Schola under the direction of Fr. Columba Kelly, O.S.B., for instance, reveal a heavy musical accent on the stressed syllables of the Latin text. Bannwart's approach is much subtler. In syllabic passages of otherwise melismatic chants, the accented syllable is usually lengthened, but not when stressed and unstressed syllables alike are recited on the same pitch.

Repercussion

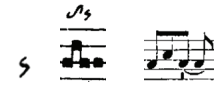
In Bannwart's interpretation, an obvious repercussion or re-articulation of a unison note sung to the same syllable is made on a short repeated note when the preceding note is long, on a virga or long note (e.g., pes quadratus, episematic clivis), or at a neumatic break. Elsewhere, any repercussion is so subtle as to get lost in the reverberant acoustic of the abbey church. The effect is the same as the old Solesmes style, in which repeated notes are joined together into a single sound of double or triple value as follows:

only the first note of each distropha or tristropha is articulated:

the first two notes of the pressus (virga and oriscus) are sung as a single long note:



the unison oriscus of apposition and the note preceding it are also sung as a single long note:



Cardine and most semiologists recommend articulating each repeated note in the above examples.

Tempo

Bannwart's tempi are relatively fast. Establishing a metronome marking for chant is an approximate endeavor at best. Nonetheless, a comparison of recordings has been attempted. The figures below indicate the pulse of normal (i.e., non-episematic) notes at the beginning or middle of phrases sung by the whole schola. The following letters are used to indicate directors or monasteries: **A**gustoni (Schola Nova Gregoriana), **B**annwart, **C**laire (Solesmes), **D**opf (Wiener Hofburgkapelle), **G**ajard (Solesmes), **H**eiligenkreuz, **J**oppich (Münsterschwarzach), **K**ohlhäufl (Regensburg), **P**ugsley (Gloria Dei Cantores), Santo Domingo de **S**ilos, **T**urco (Schola Nova Gregoriana). **LU** indicates the tempo recommended in the modern notation edition of the *Liber Usualis*.

Introit *Ad te levavi* K 166, B 154
Communion *Dominus dabit* B 188, K 162, LU 160

Introit *Rorate* B 172, LU 152, H 142
Alleluia *Veni Domine* B 164, LU 160, H 134
Offertory *Ave Maria* B 172, K 156, LU 144, H 140
Communion *Ecce Virgo* LU 160, B 148, H 140

Introit *Dominus dixit* P 180, B 172, K 162, LU 152, J 152, S 140
Gradual *Tecum principium* B 174, P 174, J 158, LU 152
Alleluia *Dominus dixit* J 176, P 174, B 172, LU 160
Offertory *Laetentur* B 178, P 172, J 166, LU 144
Communion *In splendoribus* B 178, J 172, P 168, LU 160

Introit *Ecce advenit* B 166, D 164, J 164, LU 152
Gradual *Omnes de Saba* J 170, B 166, D 162, LU 152, S 136
Offertory *Reges Tharsis* J 174, B 168, LU 144
Communion *Vidimus stellam* B (Einsiedeln) 188, J 176, B (Tokyo) 168, LU 160

Introit *Resurrexi* P 204, T 192, B 190, C 174, J 166, LU 152
Gradual *Haec dies* P 208, T 188, B 178, C 178, J 172, LU 152
Alleluia *Pascha nostrum* P 206, T 186, B 178, C 178, A 176, J 168, LU 160
Offertory *Terra tremuit* P 182, B 178, C 178, T 178, J 170, LU 144, G 140
Communion *Pascha nostrum* P 200, B 182, A 178, C 178, J 178, T 178, LU 160

Offertory *Ascendit* B 166, J 164, LU 144
Communion *Psallite* J 178, B 166, LU 160

Bannwart's tempo is at least thirty beats per minute faster than that of the slowest recording for six of the chants, yet there are only two chants for which his tempo is more than twelve beats slower.[12]

Expression, Breathing, and Pauses

In the Vatican edition, the only rhythmic indications are the bar lines, which are recent additions, and the spacing after notes.[13] The latter inconsistently follows the neumatic breaks of the adiastematic manuscripts.[14] This note spacing also forms the basis for many of the dots in the rhythmic editions of Solesmes. The augmentation dot, a symbol which itself does not appear in the manuscripts, is supposed to signify the *mora vocis*. The preface to the 1908 Vatican edition describes the *mora vocis* as "a slight *ritenuto* of the voice at the final syllable."[15] Theodore Marier, a widely recognized authority of the old Solesmes method, taught the following:

> When a dot follows a Punctum, the note is doubled in time and the second pulse is sung softly. This softening of the voice

[12]Only the actual recordings are taken into account, not the suggestions from the *Liber Usualis*.

[13]See Jeffrey Ostrowski, "How to Read the Vatican Gradual," *Sacred Music*, 135, no. 4 (Winter 2008), 21–28.

[14]See Luigi Agustoni and Johannes Berchmans Göschl, *Einführung in die Interpretation des Gregorianischen Chorals, Band 2: Ästhetik*, Teilband 2 (Regensburg: Gustav Bosse Verlag, 1992), pp. 558–559.

[15]*Liber Usualis*, p. xiij (*Liber Brevior*, p. xj), no. 2, middle of page.

> on the dot is known as the *mora vocis*, or the dying away of the voice. When interpreting the Podatus the singer must be careful to sing the upper note lightly; likewise, the second note of the Clivis should be sung as a *mora vocis*. This technique can be developed by practicing the interpretation of the dot that follows a Punctum. As the second pulse of a Binary Rhythm, the dot should be sung softly.[16]

The Solesmes rules for interpretation state that when both the vertical and the horizontal episema are attached to the same note, a "slight lengthening" is indicated, "during which the voice dies away in order to mark the conclusion of a small melodic phrase."[17] Later, the same rules state that, "The endings of short unimportant phrases . . . are marked by the two episema attached to a punctum (square or diamond), or more rarely by a dotted note, sometimes followed by a quarter or half bar."[18] The present writer knows of one schola that renders each dotted note as a sort of accent—undoubtedly in order to put into practice this "dying away" of the voice. The result is a jarring effect that is anything but conducive to prayer. Other than at the end of phrases, there is no trace of the *mora vocis* in Bannwart's recordings.

In the old Solesmes style, breath taken at a quarter or half bar line is subtracted from the value of the preceding note with no additional time added at the bar line. Although it is not explicitly stated in the rules for interpretation, the foremost authorities of the old Solesmes school taught (and continue to teach) that the pause at each full or double bar line should be strictly measured: one count before a non-ictic entrance, or two counts before an ictic entrance, so that there is always a silent ictus at the bar line.[19] Bannwart's approach to bar lines is much more flexible. Breath is often taken at quarter bars, time is added at half bars, and the pause at a full bar is sometimes longer than two counts. It is noteworthy that Bannwart's choirs often breathe together at bar lines in the middle of melismata, including the jubilus. Every full bar line is approached with a *ritardando*. Half bars at which breath is taken are also approached with a *ritardando*, usually less pronounced than that observed before a full bar.

The old method of interpreting bar lines helps choirs stay together even under a mediocre conductor, but it is apparent from his recordings that Bannwart had little difficulty getting his singers to follow him. As in every other aspect of the performance, his musicianship and sensitivity to the text cannot be faulted. In conclusion, it is fitting to quote the longtime choirmaster of Solesmes, Dom Joseph Gajard, O.S.B.: "Flexibility is only possible where all is exact, when every element is in its right place."[20] This principle summarizes every successful performance of any kind of music and is applicable in the highest degree to Roman Bannwart's interpretation

[16]Theodore Marier et al., *Gregorian Chant Practicum* (Washington: CUA Press, 1990), p. 59.

[17]*Liber Usualis*, p. xx (*Liber Brevior*, p. xviij), III., A., explanation of column 3.

[18]*Liber Usualis*, p. xxv (*Liber Brevior*, p. xxiij), V., 1.

[19]See, for example, Joseph Robert Carroll, *The Technique of Gregorian Chironomy* (Toledo: Gregorian Institute of American, 1955), pp. 16–18.

[20]Joseph Gajard, *The Solesmes Method: Its Fundamental Principles and Practical Rules of Interpretation*, tr. R. Cecile Gabain (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1960), p. 43.

of chant. May his recorded legacy serve as an inspiration and model to choirmasters, singers, and scholars for many generations to come.

Discography of Chant Recordings under the Direction of Fr Roman Bannwart

Codex 121 Einsiedeln: Gradualien und Sequenzen aus dem 10. Jahrhundert [Graduals and Sequences from the Tenth Century]. Einsiedeln: Eremitana Verlag, 1992.
Sung by the Einsiedeln schola.

Graduale St. Katharinental. Cologne: Harmonia Mundi, 1981.

Proper of the Mass for the feasts of St. John the Baptist (Vigil, Nativity, and Beheading), St. John the Evangelist, and several chants from a Mass of Our Lady from the St. Katharinental Gradual of 1312 sung by the Einsiedeln schola.

Gregorianik-Perlen: Choral aus dem Kloster Einsiedeln [Gregorian Pearls: Chants from Einsiedeln Abbey]. Einsiedeln: (no label), 2009.

Re-release of recordings from the 1960s and 70s for Radio DRS with chants for Holy Week, Easter, Trinity, All Souls, Christ the King, and feasts of Our Lady. Includes men and boys.

Der Gregorianische Choral: zwischen Kirche und Disco [Gregorian Chant: Between Church and Disco]. Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1995.

Includes chants sung by the Einsiedeln schola.

Gregorianische Choralmeditation: Misericordia, Spes et Pax. Zurich: Radio der Deutschen und Rätoromanischen Schweiz, 1996.

Gregorianus Cantus Adventus/In Epiphania Domini. Tokyo: Fontec, 2006.

Proper of the Mass for the four Sundays of Advent and the feast of the Epiphany sung by the Chorus Instituti St. Gregorius.

Kontraste: Gregorianik und Jazz im Dialog [Contrasts: Gregorian Chant and Jazz in Dialogue]. Zurich: Musiques Suisses, 2004.

Innovative album chant, organum, and jazz, featuring the Schola Romana Lucernensis, named after Fr. Roman Bannwart and the city of Lucerne, singing *Gaudeamus omnes in Domino*, *Kyrie "Magnae Deus potentiae"* (Mass V), *Laetatus sum*, *Alleluia Vir Dei Benedictus*, *Ovans chorus scholarium* (Codex Engelberg 314), *Jubilate Deo universa terra*, *Gaude et laetare*, *Ego autem in Domino speravi*, *Kyrie "Cunctipotens Genitor Deus"* (Mass IV), *In te speravi Domine*, *Sanctus phos Patris caritas* (Engelberg 314), *Amen dico vobis*, *Hodie progreditur* (Engelberg 314), and a *Benedicamus Domino* from Engelberg 314.

Missa in festo Pentecostes. Zurich: Jecklin, 1987.

Includes Mass III and Credo I sung by the combined scholae of Einsiedeln and Lucerne.

Musica Unterwaldensis [Music of Unterwalden]. Zurich: Pelikan, 1978.

Includes *Eremitam Christi Nicolaum* and a setting of the *Salve Regina* sung by the Einsiedeln schola plus organum from Codex Engelberg 314.

Musik aus dem Kloster St. Gallen; Cantilenae Helveticae [Music from St. Gall Abbey; Swiss Songs]. Basel: Öffentliche Bibliothek der Universität Basel, 2007.

Includes *Kyrie "Fons bonitatis"* (Mass II), *Sancti Spiritus assit nobis gratia* (Bl. Notker Balbulus), *Descendit de caelis*, *Hodie cantandus est nobis puer* (St. Tuotilo), *Natus ante saecula* (Bl. Notker Balbulus).

Musik in der Klosterkirche Einsiedeln. Lucerne: Fono Gesellschaft, 1961.

Includes only two chants, the solemn-tone *Alma Redemptoris Mater* and *Ego sum servus tuus*, which is listed as an offertory, both sung by the Einsiedeln schola. (The latter chant does not appear in any of the books in common usage.) The album seems to have been digitally re-released under the following title:

Salve Regina: Vesper zum Fest Mariä Himmelfahrt [Vespers for the Feast of the Assumption]. Einsiedeln: Eremitana Verlag, 1993.

Despite its paucity of chant selections, the same album or selections from it are distributed under various labels with the title *Gregorian Chants/Gregorianische Choräle/Cantus Gregorianus*, as well as the following, either alone or as part of a two-disc set:

Gregorian Christmas. Merenberg: ZYX Music, 2013.

Gregorian Mystic. Merenberg: ZYX Music, 2004.

The World of Gregorian Chant. Merenberg: ZYX Music, 1996.

Salve Regina: gregorianischer Choral aus dem Kloster Einsiedeln [Gregorian Chant from Einsiedeln Abbey]. Einsiedeln: (no label), 2006.

Re-release of analog recording for Radio DRS with the office of Compline and commentary by Fr. Bannwart.

Die sieben letzten Worte unseres Erlösers am Kreuze (Haydn); Sieben gregorianische Responsorien [The Seven Last Words of Our Redeemer upon the Cross; Seven Gregorian Responsories]. Thun: Claves, 2000.

Includes *In monte Oliveti*, *Velum templi scissum est*, *Tristis est anima mea*, *Tenebrae factae sunt*, *Omnes amici mei*, *Caligaverunt oculi mei*, and *Aestimatus sum*, sung by the Schola Romana Lucernensis.

The Swiss Choral Tradition. Bern: Musica Helvetica, 1984.

Includes an excerpt from the sequence *Sancti Spiritus assit nobis gratia* (Bl. Notker Balbulus) sung by the Einsiedeln schola.

Die Tradition des gregorianischen Chorals [The Tradition of Gregorian Chant]. Hamburg: Archiv Produktion, 1991.

Four-disc set; compilation and digital remastering of recordings made between 1968 and 1977 at Montserrat, Einsiedeln, Münsterschwarzach, Fontgombault, Santo Domingo de Silos, and Milan Cathedral. The recordings of the Proper of the Mass for Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, and Ascension were made in 1972 and issued as volume one of the LP series:

Maria Einsiedeln: Gesänge des Proprium missae [Maria Einsiedeln: Chants of the Proper of the Mass]. Hamburg: Archiv Produktion, 1973.

The recording quality is exceptionally good. The same recording of the Easter Mass is included on the following compilation album:

Mad about the Monks: The Greatest Monks, the Greatest Chant. New York: PolyGram, 1994.

And the Epiphany introit and alleluia:

Best of Gregorianik. Sydney: Eloquence, 2007.

Wie Meister üben [How Masters Practice]: *P. Roman Bannwart, Gregorianischer Choral, Pfingst-Proprium* [Gregorian Chant, Pentecost Proper]. Zurich: Panton Verlag, 1968.

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Last Word

Kitsch, Church, and Culture

What are the root philosophical and cultural phenomena which produce kitsch?

by Kurt Poterack

I suppose like many people these days, I get much of the news by following the twitter feeds of people whom I trust. I also get their opinions on a variety of subjects. One such person whom I follow is a professional musician—not a liturgical musician—but a Catholic with good taste. Once he commented on the music at a Mass he attended while on vacation. According to him, the music was dreadful. It was often in 6/8 time, full of quarter note-eighth note pattern—you know, long-short, long-short, etc.—very "skippy." In fact, he said the music was reminiscent of girls' jump-rope chants.

Recently, I had to be in another part of the country on business and attended Mass at an unfamiliar church. I encountered something similar. The irony was that it was at one of those new churches, only recently consecrated, that had been designed to look like a traditional gothic-style church. However, the music—specifically the Mass part—was anything but traditional. On the other hand, it was hardly "modern" either. The music was dorky, silly, childish—and hard to sing—but referred to pointedly on the parish website as "contemporary," "the latest in Catholic music." In fact, this may have been the very same music that my twitter author had reported on.

Upon hearing the music, my first thought was, "This is music inspired by girls skipping rope. What man would enjoy this?" I immediately realized that I should amend the thought to include, "What grown woman with any taste would enjoy this?" I then further refined the thought when I realized that I was being unfair to little girls. Most actual jump rope chants that little girls sing have a touch more *gravitas*. Jumping rope is play, but serious play for little girls and furthermore, being children, their nature is to be childlike. *The music used at this Mass, however, was for adults who were shutting off their brains and whatever culture they may have acquired and, on some level, choosing to* ***play at*** *being children.*

In any other venue such music would be seen for what it was and "laughed out of court." There was nothing "modern" about it, whether in the realm of classical or popular music. But somehow, this very tasteless, childish music was considered quite appropriate for church. This situation, this

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problem, to be fair, is not new—and it is not limited to Catholic churches. Kitsch, sentimentality and bad taste go back to the Protestant hymnody of the Victorian era as well as the Sacred Heart hymns of the early twentieth century.

This is a serious cultural problem in modern times.

I don't have any answers now, but I wanted to begin at least to reflect on this phenomenon. "Kitsch" is a German word that emerges in the 1920's and was sometimes used unfairly by supporters of *avante-garde* art to describe any other art which they did not like. However, I think it does correlate with an actual, and relatively new, phenomenon of the modern era. While "kitsch" is often used to refer to anything that is overly sweet, sugary or sentimental, it can have a more precise meaning: *the desire to enjoy an emotion without having to pay the cost of what it represents.* A classic example would be the politician who professes to care about "the poor," perhaps making speeches on behalf of relevant legislation but, living in a wealthy, gated community, he would be repulsed to have to actually interact with a poor person, say in a soup kitchen. Such a person might be dirty, smelly, uneducated, and definitely not the kind of person he is used to socializing with.

Today, we might call this activity, "virtue signaling," however the *emotion* that the politician enjoys as a result of this activity, would be kitsch—a warm, sentimental glow for being "morally righteousness" without the cost of really being so. Now how does this relate to the example that I gave of church music? In the most basic way, it would be that of feeling some sort of overly simple (and tasteless) joy at being Christian without in any way reflecting on the work, suffering, sacrifice and seriousness involved in actually living the Christian life. Joy, for an adult Christian, would be that "sober inebriation" of which St. Paul speaks, not figuratively skipping about like a twit, like some sort of an undeveloped child in an adult's body.

Kitsch, sentimentality and bad taste go back to the Protestant hymnody of the Victorian era as well as the Sacred Heart hymns of the early twentieth century. This is a serious cultural problem in modern times.

So, this sounds like a great explanation, but some would contest this. I made a somewhat similar point in a class I taught this year but a student asked me, "But what about religious order x? They are doctrinally orthodox, very pious and do very serious, self-sacrificial work with the poor. And they sing hymns like the ones you just criticized —and all the time!" The only thing

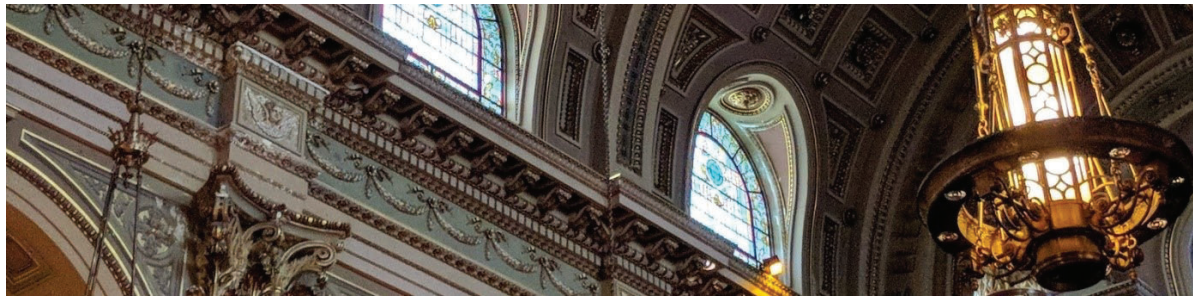
that I could say was that, "For some reason piety and taste don't always go together in modern times. They should, but they don't in all people. If I was dying in a ditch, I would want to be ministered to by such a religious order, but if I had to recommend advisors to an arts organization, I would look for other candidates."

Something that occurred to me after class was to make an analogy to smoking. I am old enough to remember, decades ago, when many people smoked and thought little of it. This would include doctors, nurses and other health-care professionals. In fact you could smoke in most hospitals in the waiting rooms, hallways, probably just about anywhere except the surgery rooms and maternity ward. And yet, these were not bad people. They really wanted to cure people and did sustain the lives of many of the patients. The contradiction—the seeming hypocrisy—was just not noted in those days because smoking was such an ingrained cultural habit.

Interestingly, there is on the other hand, the phenomenon of "High Church Modernism," particularly in the Anglican Church. I had a friend who was a convert from Anglicanism. He belonged to a church that ultimately became a part of the Anglican Ordinariate. One Christmas, however, while on vacation in England he went to an Anglican Midnight Mass at a church were they did the music and the liturgy with the utmost care, precision and good taste. It was splendiferous. Afterward, at this church's reception, he was waxing eloquent to one of the British parishioners about how all of these physical things (incense, vestments, ritual, music, etc.) were symbols of the Incarnation—of God becoming man. After staring at him blankly for a moment, she replied, "Sir, we don't believe in such fairy tales here!"

There is a serious disconnect in modern times between beauty—on the one hand and, often—truth and goodness—on the other hand.

What I think these things prove is that there is a serious disconnect in modern times between beauty—on the one hand and, often—truth and goodness—on the other hand. Very few Roman Catholics are "High Church Modernists." However, there are many good Catholics who are not doctrinal or moral liberals, but think that they can have music that is not beautiful but which—without realizing it—is, being kitsch, not really truthful or moral, either. Such music does not truthfully reflect the emotional seriousness of the faith and is, thus, morally problematic. What we need is a reform, a true healing of culture. ❖



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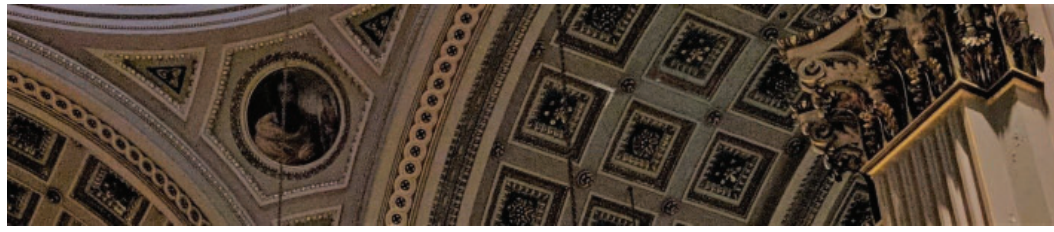

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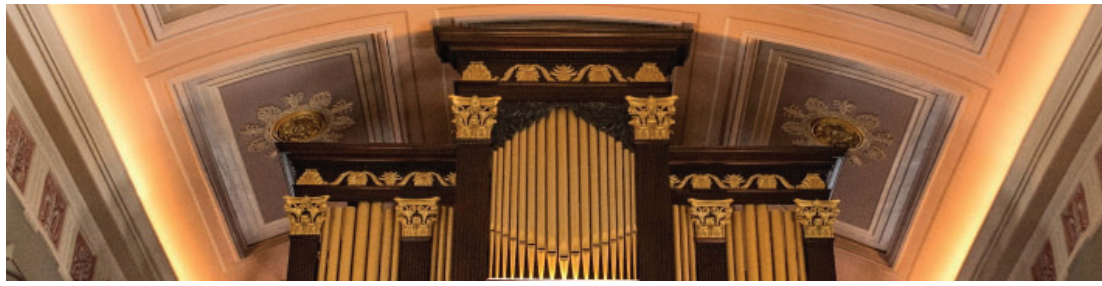

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