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## Formal Structures in Palestrina's Vocal Music

*Zusammenfassung: Formstrukturen in Palestrinas Vokalmusik. Zwar hat man Palestrinas Vokalmusik gründlich erforscht, doch gibt es mehr Stilstudien als Formstudien. Besonders wenig wird von der singulären Formbildung des einzelnen Werkes gesagt. Als Gründe dafür bringt man wenigstens zwei Behauptungen vor: erstens, daß die Musik Palestrinas als liturgische Gebrauchsmusik eine Form im Sinne späterer sogenannter "autonomer" Kunst weder benötige noch besitze; zweitens, daß Palestrinas Werke allein schon als Vokalmusik – durch die detaillierte Anpassung an die Textvorlage – eine genuine Einheit erkennen lassen.*

*Der folgende Artikel argumentiert auf der ästhetisch-theoretischen Ebene dafür, daß das Studium von singulären formbildenden Strukturen bei Palestrina sinnvoll ist. Durch eine Analyse der Motette und der Messe Veni sponsa Christi zeigt er weiter, wie solche Strukturen sich im konkreten Werk durchsetzen und zwar auf eine Weise, die nicht nur den Intellekt befriedigt, sondern sich auch an das Ohr wendet.*

### Introduction

The following article is in two parts:

*Part I* discusses more in principle and from within the field of the theory of science the possibility and relevance of studying formal structures in Palestrina's vocal church music using the same fundamental ideas about form that we apply when studying a symphony by Beethoven for example. Palestrina's music is in an overall sense planned specifically to take into account a sung liturgical text and to fit into a particular practical liturgical situation. And it is written at a time where the first manifestations of the aesthetics of autonomy are becoming apparent but have not yet taken root in practice. My aim is to show that under certain conditions it is nevertheless meaningful to apply a formal analytical approach to Palestrina's works.

That this approach also can prove fruitful – that the overall formal structures do in fact exist – is what I attempt to elaborate in *Part 2* in analysing Palestrina's Motet and Mass "Veni sponsa Christi".

The order of the two parts is logical enough in that the conclusion of the first part is a condition for the developments in the second part. But the reader would be perfectly justified to jump straight to the conclusion, beginning with the analysis and then returning to Part I when or if the theoretical assumptions for the study itself appear to be too problematic!

### *1. The study of form in Palestrina in general*

The style in Palestrina's vocal polyphony has probably been examined more thoroughly and described far better than that of any other composer. The modern scientific study of Palestrina was initiated as early as the 1920s by Knud Jeppesen with his works "Die Palestrinastil und die Dissonanz" (Leipzig, 1925) and "Kontrapunkt" (København, 1929). These works have proved to be epoch-making in the field of Palestrina research as well as for the study of style analysis as a whole.

In the case of *form*, things are rather different. Firstly, the individual works of Palestrina are seldom analysed with regard to their singularity but far more often with regard to their conformity with, or digression from, the style idiom. And the examination of the formal unifying elements is confined for the most part to the registration of technical prototypes (general principles of imitation, use of the *cantus firmus technique*, *Durchimitation* etc.).

In a broad and ordinary sense all music has form – in every epoch, vocal music as well as instrumental music, functional music, art music, popular music etc. has form. Music has form in that it is *formed*. To compose is to organise a manifold of sounds, and such an organisation can without difficulty be regarded as the *forming* of a material.

As such, the observation of stylistic expressions is also an observation of form: of recurring patterns in the shaping of the work in a certain style.

But the analysis of style is not identical with the analysis of form. Style analyses are not even a "kind of" form analysis no more than form analyses are a "kind of" style analysis. In a certain and even essential respect one could say that in his works Jeppesen conveys an extraordinary and ingenious insight into Palestrina's style but does not concern himself with the question of *form*.

What Jeppesen does is observe very short musical passages, "figures", which he categorises and organises according to the regularity with which they recurrently appear. When his studies live up to their best, they enrich our understanding of the style as being something that follows on through the diversities and invests the music with an important and characteristic unity.

What is it then that Jeppesen does not do – and certainly does not even attempt to do?

Every piece of music may be considered as an ordering of orders. The smallest orders of music – music at the level where it is just recognizable as "figures" – are embedded in superior structures, which in turn are themselves embedded in structures of an even higher order. Every ordering is implemented according to specific principles. As such, the form of the musical composition can be defined as the *highest – or most fundamental – unfolded and inherent ordering principles in music*. This at least is one significant meaning of the word 'form'. It is narrower than the aforementioned expression 'form': form as the result of a *shaping*. And it is broader than the expression 'form' understood as the object of the classical theory of form: the study of musical *forms*, musical *schemata*.

Thus one may ask: Does Palestrina's music – in this sense – have form? Are the highest ordering principles of his music of a *musical* nature? Or is it not rather the text, the religious ceremony etc. that initiates the *superior* disposition of the music and creates a unity? To give an extreme example: Can we in a multi-sectional mass by Palestrina, in its meticulous adaptation to the liturgical text and the liturgical situation, conduct a meaningful search for a purely musical cyclic unity in the same way as we can search for, and find, such a unity in a four movement symphony by Beethoven?

The answer seems obviously to be negative:

*Firstly* Palestrina's music is – and must be understood as and analysed as – *functional music*. In order to reveal its own musical nature it must sound within a structure that is larger than its own inner structure. And the principles for the adaptation of the music to this larger structure count as the highest inherent principles for the ordering of music itself. This is the difference as compared to music understood as *autonomous* text: the music "says" the same and "says" it all, no matter the context.

The four movements in Beethoven's 7th symphony are the same music and the same symphonic unity no matter where and when they are played: in this sense the symphony is an autonomous work of art. The thirteen sections in Palestrina's "Veni sponsa Christi"<sup>1</sup> first disclose their full meaning when the mass as a musical composition is played during the mass as a religious ceremony. And to speak of the Palestrina mass as "a unity" must be referred back to the unity of the mass as a religious ceremony. In this sense the music is functional music.

<sup>1</sup> Or five, or six or nine or fourteen, depending on how we conceive the individuality of the movements resp. sections in the Mass.

Secondly, Palestrina's music is *vocal music*. Not only in the trivial sense, that it is written for the human voice. Above all it is vocal music in an *eminent* and *original* sense in that it is unfolded in complete dedication to a pre-existing text.

This is an important addition. A significant part of the history of the emancipation of instrumental music as art music is concerned with a disengagement from vocal prototypes. It is sometimes said that this music is "born with a problem of form". The text provides an ordering principle in vocal music (e.g. the motet) which is naturally lacking in instrumental music (the ricercare). So instrumental music has to develop concepts that can replace the ordering principles that in vocal music are derived from the text. Precisely in this sense it is a question of form. But vocal music *itself* can also be composed in accordance with principles that by their own nature are active in music *without* any (sung) text. And as we know, this is indeed the case with much vocal music from the Baroque period onwards, and it becomes even more marked in later periods where instrumental music almost "oushines" vocal music with its own paradigms.

But of course Palestrina knew nothing of the "inherent problem of form in instrumental music" and therefore also knew nothing of any "solutions" to this problem. Palestrina's music is fundamentally arranged as a setting-to-music of the liturgical text. And in *this* very sense – earlier described as being "vocal music in an eminent and original sense" – it has no form.

I assume that it is reflections such as these that lie behind the fact that the otherwise extensive research on Palestrina's work occupies itself only to a small degree with the problem of form: there is no problem of form?

Against this background my aim becomes polemic in that it proposes two things:

1. It *does* make sense to listen for and search for grand formal structures in Palestrina's vocal music.

2. These structures *are* in fact present.

I take my point of departure in a simple ascertainment: we do in fact perform Palestrina's works *concertante*. Both believers and non-believers gather in the church or the concert hall or sit at home by the loudspeakers whether they are familiar with the text or not, whether they understand it or not.

Let us imagine a concert where Palestrina's Motet and Mass "Veni sponsa Christi" are on the programme together with a *cappella* works of Bach and Brahms. Of course Bach and Brahms sound quite different from Palestrina. Just as they both sound rather different from each other. But they are all masterpieces

*sui generis*, and general comparison of their artistic quality has no relevance. The question is however: Does Brahms' composition, which *par excellence* is conceived in loyalty to the aesthetics of autonomy, live up to this ideal more than Palestrina's composition which in reality bases its structures on something outside the music? Is the artistic "unity" more significant in Brahms than in Palestrina? Is the "unity in the plurality" more obvious?

I assume the answer is no. Thus it follows that the textual and liturgical considerations that regulate Palestrina's music, regulate it in a way that, both in the detail and in the broad perspective, is not merely congenial to but directly promotes pure musical principles of regulation – i.e. *form*.

This leads to two questions:

(I) How can the liturgical-textual model allow the music to be subsumed under pure formal principles without diminishing its own basic regulation of the music?

(II) Which principles are then operative and how do they work?

(I.1) In general we can first point to the wellknown fact that the Palestrina style very seldom transforms and/or transfers mobility in the meaning and expression of the text to movement and development in the music. The music is indeed expressive. But the expression is basically one and the same throughout the individual movement. The changes are to be considered as "fluctuations" or "vibrations" within a static corpus. And as such they are not regulated by the text.

(I.2) Furthermore, it applies – also in general terms – that we are dealing here with texts that each fulfil at least one of the following criteria: a) they are known, b) they are short and c) they are repeated (in certain movements many times even). The text does not need to be more distinct than just *recognizable*, thus providing the possibility of a continuous orientation – also for the audience: "This is how far we've got!"<sup>3</sup> Certainly, the Council of Trent idolizes Palestrina for his treatment of the text: it is clear, unlike much other church music at that time, and the articulation is at the same time both natural and sublime. Moreover it is composed in a way that is completely devoid of sudden theatrical effects and generally of everything that is irrelevant to the text and could disturb the liturgical aim and atmosphere. However, the care for these traits is obviously consistent with the solicitude for superior, pure formal structures in the music.

(I.3) When we concern ourselves more specifically with a particular section such as the *Kyrie eleison*, we note that there is only one line of text, made up of

2 Another reason – that cannot be ignored – is that prominent musical structures in Palestrina's music simply do not "catch the ear" to the same degree that they do in Bach, Mozart, or Brahms.

3 The Mass is a long composition with a long text. But in Palestrina it is of course an *ordinarium missae* and not a *proprium missae*. The text remains the same throughout the ecclesiastical year.

two words with only five or six syllables ('ky-rie-e-lei-son' or 'ky-rie-e-lei-son'). The mode of singing is clearly melismatic. And the *phonemic* diversity is only barely perceivable in the polyphonic complexity, and even then only as a *phonetic* diversity. If we would at all speak of the text in such a movement as 'organizing' the music, it would in fact be a very loose form of organization: Neither the text nor the liturgical situation – nor any "technical" principles in the movement (principles of imitation or the like) – dictate that there should be so many subject entries appearing in such and such an order; that the movement should have *this* or *that* particular length; that it attains the highest degree of unity when the cadence is put here and not five bars earlier or ten bars later; etc.

When the movement nevertheless constitutes such a unity – an audible unity – then this must be based on principles that are to be found in the music itself.

(1.4) It is different in movements with more text – the *Gloria* and *Credo* sections of the mass for example. Here the music is imposed upon beforehand by a detailed regulation that only to a limited degree allows for – let alone promotes – a superior disposition of the music in terms of purely musical principles. The division into lines in the text must and should immediately result in an audible musical segmentation. And obviously the many small and yet unique segments – and the many shifts between the many segments – can only with difficulty be brought together in a superior unity of a purely musical nature.

Palestrina takes up the challenge. Later on we will see how. But it should also be noted that apart from the mentioned mass sections where the long text merely is a given fact, Palestrina (along with other great composers at that time) does not put longer texts to music in one and the same movement.<sup>4</sup>

(1.5) Most Palestrina movements consist of 4-8 lines of text. This is the case with the motets and the corresponding (i.e. motet-formed) "medium length" sections in the masses. Such a model promotes almost the same possibilities for superior formal constructions as the one-lined *Kyrie eleison*. But more than that: the line-shifts *are* there, as in the *Gloria* and *Credo*. But they are precisely of a kind and in number – read: suitably few – that allow the music to be arranged into larger segments by means of transition and contrast, long-term differentiation and long-term recapitulation.

In the same way that Palestrina avoids basing his movements on extremely long textual models apart from the two long-texted items of the mass, he only seldom composes for a text of only one line. As already seen in the mere quan-

4 Even though there is a plethora of text from which to choose! And bringing such "textually long" compositions into the church service would not present a problem, to which hundreds of years of church music history before Palestrina can bear witness.

tity in the entire opus: In the motets and the motet-formed mass sections Palestrina is most of all – Palestrina.

(1.6) But what then about the connections between the individual sections? The *proclaimed* aesthetic idea of a formal *cyclic unity* adapting the individual movements as parts of a whole, which appears as more than just a succession or sum of its parts, is clearly a phenomenon that belongs to far later times. To apply such ideas to a mass by Palestrina is evidently an anachronism. Here the principle of an overall liturgical organisation par excellence applies and apparently allows no possibility for the development of formal unifying structures. The simple fact that most of the items of the mass, as they occur in the *celebration* of the mass, do not follow on after each other as do the movements in a symphony, but are first sung after the insertion of proprium sections, seems to be an effective objection to such a train of thought.

I admit this reservation is a serious one. I will however make two comments:

(a) That a course is broken up into separate units through the intervention of completely irrelevant events does not automatically prevent the experience of *connection* between successive units or of an *overall structure* embedding all units. Today, we should realise this even more than Palestrina ever could. At weekly intervals we pick up a thread in a television serial. In between we have watched other television programmes and probably done a multitude of other things beside watching television! To a certain degree the technique is indeed the same: The television serial has its introductory icons and its signature tune. In the same way the individual sections in the mass composition – due to the principles of the implementation of the polyphonic texture – have their constantly recurring unison (and therefore recognisable) initials.<sup>5</sup> The *continuity* from episode to episode does not pose a problem. And as far as the *overall structure* is concerned – i.e. the establishing and even the proportioning of the whole – we can ascertain the same thing: if the television serial does for that matter pretend to be "composed" as a unity, we easily adapt ourselves to this without any difficulty. We may then observe – for example – that the exposition of the person P in this episode does not fit in with the delineation of the character in previous episodes. Or that the course of action fluctuates too much in relation to the broad epic span laid out from the start. Etc. Or, referring to an experience that Palestrina also must have had, we put away the book, or the story, and pick it up again later in the day, and the next day and the next day. The interruptions are an

5 At the beginning of each episode of the television serial we are usually presented with a summary of the previous events. But this is actually a "service" and not a necessity. When a larger theatre production – not to mention the three acts in a Wagnerian opera – is performed over several evenings, this is not the case.



inconvenience but do not in themselves prevent the experience of continuity, unity and proportion.

(b) And as already mentioned: we perform Palestrina's masses *concertante*. We may hear less of an overall unity in the diversity of the movements than in a Beethoven symphony. But we would be surprised – it would jar on the aesthetically observant ear – if this unity were not present. To put it rather simply, a multi-sectional mass by Palestrina is a closer unity than for example a number opera with a similar number of arias.

Now I hope to have answered question (I) by showing that it is at least *possible* for Palestrina's music – given Palestrina's fund of technique, textures and, all things considered, his detailed style – to submit to formal principles without thereby impeding the overall textual-liturgical regulation.

I will then proceed to question (II): What are the formal principles that *actually* intervene congenially with or even promoted by the overall textual and liturgical regulation? How do they work?

Such a question naturally requires a concrete answer. This will be provided in the following analysis of Palestrina's Motet and Mass "Veni sponsa Christi". But the most important of the principles exhibited should be summarized here.

(II.1) *Metamorphic development*. – An in – itself significant motif is altered slightly from occurrence to occurrence and appears finally in a version quite different from the original. But the metamorphosis has, in virtue of being a *process*, created a connection. (See p. 64-65).

A particular metamorphically developed motif in the motet plays an important role throughout the whole mass. (See p. 69 f.)

(II.2) *Tonal disposition*. – Here we are dealing with a principle of form that obviously belongs to a later period, but in fact Palestrina makes use of it in the motet. (See p. 63-66.)

(II.3) *Cyclic organization of motif material*. – That Palestrina makes thematic use of the individual lines and in particular the first line of the Gregorian prototype (in this case an antiphon), is common knowledge. But in the Mass "Veni sponsa Christi" he uses a characteristic – and clearly audible – cyclic organization of the thematic material: On a large scale, one could say, the mass is purely and simply going through the antiphon a certain number of times. (See p. 71-72.)

(II.4) *Balance and proportioning through textual treatment*. – The short-texted sections are treated melodically and have many repetitions of the text while most of the lines in the long-texted sections are treated syllabically and have fewer repetitions. This well-known procedure can scarcely be a consequence of primarily liturgical considerations. And outside the larger churches in Palestrina's time the ceremonial tradition presents a tremendous number of examples where the text, sung or spoken, is celebrated so that the duration of the

individual movements is a simple consequence of the number of words. In Palestrina the procedure primarily expresses a wish to achieve a purely musical balance. At least it creates the effect of balance: the *Kyrie* section can with its two words (or six words if we perceive *Kyrie eleison*, *Christe eleison*, *Kyrie eleison* as one section) match sections with a much longer text.

But the technique can also be "graded": the extent of melismas and number of text repetitions make it possible to organize proportionings of a higher order between the individual movements as well as between groups of movements. (See p. 87 f. and p. 95.)

(II.5) *Balance and proportioning through segmentation*. – A well-known and even more radical method is simply to divide the liturgical units into smaller musical movements. This may apply to very long-texted items: the *Gloria* is divided into *Et in terra pax* and *Qui tollis*, while the *Credo* is divided into *Pater omnipotens* and *Crucifixus*. But also many short-texted items can be divided: the *Sanctus* is divided into four (five) separate movements that, on the other hand, have many text repetitions and an extremely melismatic use of the text. Again, the liturgy does not at all dictate *that* the divisions *must* be made. And from the text we can only read something about *where* the divisions *could* meaningfully be placed. But the result is again a number of adjustments in the balance and proportional relation between movements and between groups of movements. (See again p. 87 f. and p. 95.)

(II.6) *Superior structures of identity and difference*. – The structure A-B-A is one of the most elementary principles for an overall disposition of music not already regulated by external criteria. We call it for instance "architectonically symmetric". We describe it as an account between a "first", "the starting point", "the familiar" and a "second", "the different", "the alien". We perceive it as a motion "at home-away-back home". Etc.

Palestrina's masses are of course not in "the A-B-A form", as it is called when the term 'form' is used in the meaning "form schemata" (See above p. 52). But the A-B-A structure is still operative along several parameters: (a) The outer sections treat the text melodically, the intermediate sections treat it syllabically. This is a simple consequence of what has already been mentioned regarding the composing of mass items with long and short text respectively. But the structure is *audible*. (b) Similarly the cyclic organization of the thematic material described above is very clear in the outer sections of the mass and less clear in the intermediate sections. Such a development "clarity-confusion-clarity" is structurally similar to – though not of course historically related to – the sonata form for example. (See p. 79 and p. 87-88.)

## II. Formal structures in Palestrina's Motet and Mass: "Veni sponsa Christi"

The Mass "Veni sponsa Christi" is a parody mass. Materially and partly structurally it is based on the Motet of the same name. The Motet, on the other hand, is based on the four-lined Gregorian antiphon "Veni sponsa Christi".

We will therefore take our starting point in the antiphon and make some observations of possible relevance for the use of this movement in a Palestrina motet (p. 60-61). We will then analyse the motet (p. 62-66) and finally the Mass (p. 67-88).

References to the musical score refer to Breikopf & Härtel's edition by Franz Xaver Haberl. However, in the examples I have transcribed the original clefs to "modern" clefs.

### IIa. The antiphon "Veni sponsa Christi"

The antiphon is known in two versions that vary only slightly from one another. The most probable original version is found in "Liber Usualis" (Solesmes Ed.). Palestrina's model is found in the "Compendium Antiphonarii et Breviarii Romanum" (Edition Mediceae). (See Ex. 1)

The antiphon has four lines with many mutual similarities.

All the lines descend initially and lines 2, 3 and 4 have a general descending tendency. (Line 1 is rather "floating".)

Lines 1, 2 and 3 all begin with a descending third. (The repeated note in line 3 makes no difference in this instance because the rearrangement of rhythm, the repetition of notes and the removal of repeated notes all belong to the transformations that Palestrina employs without any loss of recognisable reference.) And lines 1 and 2 even begin with the same descending third: D-B.

Lines 1 and 3 begin with a "seesawing" third, that is to say a descending third immediately followed by an ascending third. Line 2 does almost the same thing except that the ascending third is filled in stepwise.

Lines 1, 3 and 4 begin with a "seesawing" movement. Lines 1 and 3 seesaw as already pointed out, in thirds, line 4 does so in seconds. And if one accepts that line 2 initially is a completed seesawing third then one could say that all 4 lines begin with a "seesawing" movement.

There is rather little stepwise motion in the antiphon, and there is only one instance (the aforementioned completed ascending third) of the melody moving two steps in the same direction.

As *cantus prius factus* for a Palestrina composition the following points can be noted in the antiphon:

1) The predominant descending tendency and the descending initials do not in principle fit in with the textbook, according to which Palestrina's melodic line typically begins with an ascending movement. Does this in fact pose a problem? If so: How does Palestrina solve this problem? Does it indicate circumstances that contribute towards giving the work a special character?

2) The great similarity between the lines does not pose a problem with regard to the motet (where both text and pitch at the outset of the lines are given), but it *can* do so in the mass. For example, it can be difficult to decide whether a particular initiated line in the mass originates from line 1 or line 3 of the antiphon (the motet respectively). But probably this is more of a problem for the analyst – not for Palestrina. For him such a similarity could even prove to be one more source of a cyclic-motivic coherence.

3) The limitations in the use of stepwise motion render the lines of the antiphon suitable as subjects in a motet or a motet-like texture in Palestrina's style. On the background of the "neutral" stepwise motion the leaps used in subject entries can create expression and significance.

Palestrina himself has made two adjustments to the original model (see Ex. 2):

1) When the movement in the motet and the beginning of the mass (*Kyrie II*) refer to line 4, the antiphon's final note succession C-B-G-G is replaced by the stepwise descent C-B-A-G (or a diatonically corresponding stepwise filling in of the fourth IV-I). There are presumably three good reasons for this in Palestrina's aesthetic universe: a) The stepwise descent to the final note rounds off the movement better than the descending third. b) The repetition of a final note on step I seems heavy and "unmelodious". And c) the sequence from steps II-I can be harmonised in a full cadence. – This modification may weaken the contour of the last line (cf. the remarks above on the thematic use of stepwise and leapwise motion). However, when the stepwise descent from step IV-I is prepared for by a leap from below and constitutes the final closing of the whole antiphon, the line *in toto* remains significant and identifiable and therefore usable as an individual subject. And as such it is used several times throughout the mass.

2) The model's only melisma on the syllable "acci-pe" in line 2 is removed. The rest of the text is simply moved backwards and the final note repetition is therefore cancelled out.

*IIb. Paestrina: Motet "Veni sponsa Christi"*

The motet runs in four sections corresponding to the four lines of the antiphon. In many Paestrina motets strict polyphonic, free polyphonic and homophonic passages alternate from section to section. "Veni sponsa Christi" is sustained in a polyphony of about the same degree of strictness from beginning to end.

The pitch register of the four voices is almost equally large and the distance between the voices is almost the same: the ambitus in the soprano voice is f'-g', in the alto b-c', in the tenor g-a' and in the bass c-e'. On the whole each voice uses all notes in the respective ambitus in each section. But we can register that the soprano reaches the highest note only once and does so very abruptly: in bar 32, after more than two bars rest, the soprano commences the last entry of the subject in the second section on the peak-note g'. The effect is strengthened even more by the fact that the distance to the nearest lower voice (alto and tenor respectively) remains a tenth for a whole bar.

The sum total of rests is greater in the outer voices – and particularly in the bass than in the intermediate voices.<sup>6</sup> This is not unusual in a Paestrina movement, and two things should be taken into consideration: (1) In three-part passages the composer's preference for a relatively "modern" positioning of the triad is best fulfilled by three neighbouring voices. In principle this entails the participation of both intermediate voices. (2) In Paestrina – no matter how much he cares for the line – the bass voice is already *beginning* to go its harmonically determined "own way", a trait which becomes characteristic for polyphony two generations later. And it is not only at actual points of cadence that we find figures that have an unmistakable harmony-bearing quality. From this Paestrina develops a sort of "dualism" between two choral timbres: a movement where the bass voice only participates for a third or a quarter of the time and rests in such long stretches as (approx.) 6, 2, 2, 2, 3, 1 and 2½ bars, will in effect appear as an alternation between a timbre including and a timbre excluding the bass voice.

The four sections are 22, 19, 15 and 18 bars long respectively if we count from the beginning of the first to the end of the last instance of the textual item each time. Counting from the first entry of a subject in one section to the first entry in the following section we have 19, 19, 13 and 17 bars respectively.<sup>7</sup> The first, second and fourth sections are therefore more or less the same length. The third section is markedly shorter.

6 Here we only count the rests that have the effect of an interruption. That is to say we ignore rests at the beginning of the passages before the voices have made their initial entry.

7 The deviations between the two methods of calculation are due to interweaving.

The number of entries in the four sections are 7, 7, 7 and 10. Thus the short third section contains the same number of thematic entries as the foregoing sections. And the fourth section clearly has more thematic entries than all of the foregoing. The frequency of thematic entries is therefore greater in the last two sections.

Moreover it is also clear that the interweaving between the 1st and 2nd section and 3rd and 4th section respectively is more *closely knit* than the interweaving between the 2nd and 3rd section. The last "veni sponsa Christi" in the alto voice overlaps the first "accipe coronam" in the tenor by more than 2 bars (bars 19-22). And the last cadencing "quam tibi Dominus" in the soprano, tenor and bass voices overlaps the first "praepraevit in aeternum" in the alto by 2 bars (bars 50-52). On the other hand *all* the voices are brought to full cadence more or less simultaneously on the last "accipe coronam" when the alto begins the next section with "quam tibi Dominus" (bar 38).

The frequency of entries in the four sections as well as the density of interweaving *between* them both contribute to the impression of a basically binary structure.

*1st section:* The first section of the motet differs from the others in several ways some more obvious than others:

(a) The first exposition is of course unique in that the voices enter one by one, from a single voice to four-part song.

(b) The motet opens with an entry in the soprano voice on D. After one bar the alto answers a fifth lower (the Mixolydian tonic G). The subject – a rhythmitizing of the first line of the antiphon – lasts for 3 bars, while the subject plus the *fortspinning* carries over for almost 5 bars as a canonical duet. In bar 6 the tenor voice enters and the tenor and the bass repeat the previous duet in the upper voices an octave below, while the soprano and alto themselves continue in free counterpoint. This construction – the pairwise entries of the voices in canonical duet – is only found in connection with the first line of the text.<sup>8</sup>

(c) The rhythmitizing of the first line of the antiphon is done with very broad durations (brevis and semibrevis). The rhythmitizing of the other three lines is mainly done in minims – at times initially using a syncopic semibrevis promoting a certain drive forward.

(d) Through the use of accidentals, the harmonic repertoire and the cadences, the section remains very true to some sort of a G major tonality. This is not the case to the same degree in the following sections. Here one may faintly see the beginnings of later times' exploitation of tonality as a form-creating factor.

8 In this way the beginning exhibits a construction typical of the Flemish motet.



Furthermore the first section also contains three complete statements of the subject in the alto, soprano and bass voices respectively, still starting from G and

D. *2nd section:* The order of entries is more "random" in the second section than in the first. For example the tenor voice brings the subject a second time before the bass brings it the first time. And the first and second entry of the subject (in the tenor bar 19 f., and in the soprano bar 21 f.) set out on the same note D, before the third entry (in the alto, bar 22 f.) makes use of the lower fifth G.

The *stretto*-effect is more moderately used in the 2nd section than in the others. In the 1st and 4th sections an entry in one voice is occasionally answered in the other in strict intervals already on the second note. In the 3rd section it may do so on the third note. In the 2nd section it does not usually take place until the fourth note.

Two other circumstances contribute to the general impression of a less strict polyphony:

(a) The entrance of the bass in bar 20 f., in which it actually is exposing the 2nd text line, is not an entry of the subject.

(b) The section contains a number of entries of the subject in mildly modified versions. We will examine these more closely because we here, in my opinion, find a key to a deeper insight into the unity of the motet and *in particular* into the structure of the mass transcribed from the motet (see p. 69 f.):

Already with the soprano entry in bar 21 f. (Ex. 3) appears the first "innocent" deviation from the antiphon model, from the first entry of the subject, and from the gestalt that the subject mostly exhibits later on: the penultimate note is lengthened, the final descending fourth is replaced by a descending second and the section continues in a melismatic manner. When the soprano voice entry in bar 21 is heard as an answer to the entry of the tenor voice in bar 19 f., only the first five of the in all six notes of the antiphon model appear as essential to the subject.

In the soprano entry in bar 27 f. (Ex. 4) it is the initial of the subject that is modified, but there is still no doubt that the entry is an entry of the subject. The text coupled with the syncopated entrance after the previous rest, the descending third after the entrance on 'ac-', the ascending second after the initial descending third and the descending third from the syllable 'ac-' to the syllable 'ci-' all point to this. But the descending third after the entrance is filled in with a crotchet melisma. The line does not conform to the text again until after a whole bar, following the intervallic scheme of the subject in consecutive thirds.<sup>9</sup> Thus, also

9 Moreover: when the line is transferred a third, the final descending step (brought instead of the descending fourth, as was introduced in the soprano entry in bar 21 f.)

the beginning of the subject has been put into the "grey zone" in the current apprehension of what should count as the "essence" of the subject. Or one could say: the amount of melodic gestalts conceivable as belonging to the same family has been augmented. The descending third to the second syllable is still there but this time it comes after the end of a melisma.

In the tenor entry in bar 28 f. (Ex. 5) greater things happen. Still there is no doubt that what enters here is the subject. (Again the text is connected to a syncopated entrance after a preceding pause; and what is more, the entry obviously makes up a tonal answering to the preceding bass entry (bar 27 f.)) But this time the initial is rather a *mediation* between the thematic initial's normal variant (cf. the direction of the line and the rhythmic-syllabic pattern) and the variant from bar 27 (cf. the opening interval that even appears in the octave transposition). And this time the fifth note/syllable in the line is led stepwise *upwards* instead of downwards.

The current modifications of the initial and end of the subject have the result that it is this stepwise ascending movement at the centre of the subject that stands out as being most essential to it. The ascent was lengthened by one step in the tenor entry in bar 28 f., and the gestalt "emancipates" in the tenor entry in bar 32 f. (Ex. 6): This entry leaves out the initial and attacks directly into the stepwise ascending movement. This variant refers to the entry in bar 27 in its diatonic structure (affinity in fifths).

By means of this process, a kind of "metamorphosis", the stepwise ascending motion commencing on the unstressed minim has in virtue become a separate thematic gestalt: a new subject. As such, Palestrina draws the greatest possible consequences from it in the mass. Already in the *Kyrie I* he presents a complete exposition of the new subject (soprano bar 10 f., alto bar 12 f., tenor bar 14 f. and bass bar 16 f.). And throughout the remainder of the mass it is applied with more or less the same frequency as the four "innate" subjects. One could presumably also speak of a "technical" gain: a far too consequential use of the antiphon's "innate" lines with descending entries and a general descending tendency could create problems for Palestrina's sense of line that typically opens with an ascending movement (see p. 60-61).

Finally we may note that the 2nd section digresses slightly from the 1st section in its tonal character: There are no full cadences to G major and no use of F# either. F major and D minor chords are extremely frequent. There is a greater degree of pulling to the "left" in the circle of fifths in the 2nd section than the 1st. This can also be seen in a thematic perspective: the subject in the 1st section

leads the line to an end exactly on the ordinary tonic G. The end of the line is this time rhythmitized in the "ordinary" way, i.e. with two minims.



had no step VII, neither in its original position nor in the answer a fifth lower. When the subject of the 2nd section is answered a fifth below it thus contains a step VII in two instances – both times on a stressed beat. (And obviously it is not possible to raise this step from F to F#.)

*3rd section:* With the initial note repetitions in the subject, the 3rd section clearly differs from the others.

But also the accidentals (the use of G#, C# and Bb), the repertoire of chords and the cadences (promoted by the subject itself, in that it is several times rhythmitized by the minim on the sixth syllable) signifies new tonal characters. This happens very gradually after the full cadence that ended the 2nd section, and one could be tempted to speak of "modulations" to Aeolian and Dorian mode.

Notice how the new section first brings the 3rd subject in the *upper fifth* (with G and E as keynotes) so as to be able to "enter into" the closing C major triad from the 2nd section. The remaining entries in this section begin either on the same note as the antiphon line or a fifth below.

*4th section:* The metamorphic development in the 2nd section has furthermore the consequence that the very first subject entry in the 4th section appears in affinity to thematic gestalts from the 2nd section: the first three notes of the alto's entry in bar 50 f. (Ex. 7) are identical in rhythm and interval structure with the tenor entry in bar 28. And when the soprano fills in the third between the third and fifth note in bar 56 f. (Ex. 8) the identity is complete.

The similarities between the subject entries in the 2nd and 4th sections are based on the metamorphosis in the 2nd section. A less obvious, but on the other hand "innate" similarity is heard between the entries in the 3rd and 4th section: the subject in the 3rd section begins purely and simply by bringing three identical notes, whereas three of the four first notes in the 4th section are identical (with an auxiliary note inserted between the first and the third note).

Concerning tonality the 4th section enters in the final Dorian cadence of the 3rd section. Then it changes character in the direction of something that bears more resemblance to the 2nd section. (When answered in the lower fifth the subject emphasises the F.) The chords of the movement do not pull to the "right" in the circle of fifths until the very end where they fall into place in the authentic Mixolydian cadence.

## IIc. Palestrina: Missa "Veni sponsa Christi"

For the purpose of our observations with regard to the structure and development of the Mass – textually, technically and structurally – the schematic disposition on p. 92-94 will be used.

### 1. The thirteen sections

The text in the mass clearly follows the schema for the "Ordinarium Missae" (p. 90-91). But the original 5 mass items (I-V) are divided up into 13 musical sections in all (in reality 14 movements when the section *Hosanna in excelsis* is counted twice because of the repeat), each with its perfect Mixolydian cadence and following double bar. In the schematic disposition disposition the movements are numbered in the *first* column (the column furthest to the left).<sup>10</sup>

Musically I have isolated 70 lines in the thirteen movements (cf. the numbering to the immediate left of the mass text) – i.e. far more than the text is "born" with grammatically and declamatorily (see again p. 90-91). In general, the musical line shifts have been localised by (a) text shifts in connection with the entrance of a new subject for imitative treatment, (b) text shifts in connection with a new beginning after a cadence and (c) text shifts in connection with a marked transition in the texture (typically from polyphony to homophony).

The five mass items are of very different lengths seen from a textual point of view. The division into thirteen sections only slightly makes up for this "imbalance". Certain practical liturgical considerations and – especially – purely musical considerations both demand that longer text segments should be treated differently from shorter text segments. The treatment of text in the *short* sections is as expected generally more melismatic; the movement will contain more text repetitions; there will be more entries within the same exposition of the same subject; and occasionally more than one subject go through with complete expositions based on the same line of text. On the whole the movement comes closer to the typical motet built on the principle of *Durchimitation*. The treatment of the text in the *long* movements is generally more syllabic and the movement will contain fewer text repetitions and can at times – syllable for syllable –

<sup>10</sup> Not all Palestrina's masses develop 13 sections. On the other hand, there will always be at least 10 movements: the first item is always divided into *Kyrie eleison I*, *Christe eleison* and *Kyrie eleison II*, the fourth item is divided into *Sanctus*, *Benedictus* and *Hosanna*, while the fifth item is divided into *Agnus Dei I* and *Agnus Dei II*. And when there are more than 10 sections, there are fairly strict standards as to where the extra divisions can be made.

lable – reach a totally homophonic structure. On the whole the movement will be more *alternating* in texture.

The shorter text segments are found in the outer items *Kyrie*, *Sancius and Agnus Dei*, the longer ones in the intermediary items *Gloria* and *Credo*. That is to say that the music – due to matters that from the outset do not concern the music itself – will be prone to organise itself in an almost "symphonically" large-scale ternary structure: from a more strictly composed *1st part* (consisting of the *Kyrie*) over a more freely composed *2nd part* (consisting of the *Gloria* and *Credo*) again to a more strictly composed *3rd part* (consisting of the *Sancius and Agnus Dei*).

## 2. Technical and textural variants

The four lines of the antiphon appear distinctly as line initials throughout the work. This can be seen in the *second* column of the scheme p. 91-94. Here we find the number of the quoted/paraphrased lines of the antiphon – typically '1', '2', '3' or '4' (or variations of these, which I will discuss later).

The technical treatment of the individual lines of the antiphon varies strongly throughout the whole mass. The majority of the 70 lines of the mass have an imitative polyphonic texture. But the structure of the imitation – including the groupings of mutual imitating voices – can however be organised very differently. And the lines of the mass that are not imitative display other characteristic choral textures:

- (a) A bracket after a line reference indicates that the line is imitated at least once.
- (b) The imitative relationship can be double: two different subjects (or two variants on the same subject) in separate voices can be imitated in pairs. In this case both subjects (both variants) are indicated by an oblique stroke '/' between them. (See for example the beginning of the *Christe eleison* section.)
- (c) When the answer does not differ from the subject the imitation signature '>' appears *alone*. Otherwise the content of the answer is given *after* the imitation signature. (See for example the imitative relation between the tenor and bass voices in line no. 15 of the mass, "miserere nobis" (Ex. 9).)
- (d) A hyphen '-' between two subject designations indicates a direct transition from one subject to another in the same musical line (that is to say in the same voice). (See for example the beginning of the *Benedictus* section.)
- (e) A parenthesis '(' ) around a subject designation indicates a less marked appearance of the subject.

(f) The signature '→' in front of a subject designation indicates an "overlap" between two lines in the scheme: an entry constitutes the ending of one imitative grouping as well as the beginning of another.

(g) The signature 'Cf' after a thematic designation indicates that the subject has a *cantus firmus* function.

(h) 'Hmp' indicates a homophonic texture, whether associated with a subject or not.

In the *third* and *fourth* columns, the first two (or two pairs of) opening notes in the imitative groups are indicated. It can be seen that the mass (with few exceptions which are to be examined later) operates solely with imitation in the fifth and octave. Also the pairwise thematic entries are for the greater part related in fifths and octaves.

An underlining '\_' indicates that the subject enters on the same note as in the original form – i.e. typically on the same note as a line in the antiphon.

Furthermore an imitative group can contain far more than two thematic entries. In the *fifth* column a '+' indicates that the thematic exposition is *complete* – that is to say that the subject is brought at least once in each voice.

In the text column farthest to the right the signature '//' divides two text segments that are used in one and the same exposition of a subject.

## 3. Thematic variants

The majority of the lines in the mass simply begin as lines of the antiphon, with exactly the same succession of intervals and with a diatonic positioning of the initial note that corresponds to the lines of the antiphon. In the scheme they are designated '1', '2', '3' and '4'.

But the mass is "born" with yet another thematic gestalt, which is already developed in the "parodied" motet:

In bars 21-32 of the motet, the ascending stepwise motion beginning on the unstressed minim has been metamorphically developed from line 2 of the antiphon (see p. 64-66). This gestalt has been designated '2mer' in the disposition. Already in the *Kyrie eleison* I (bar 10 f.) it appears as a genuine theme in that it is treated as a subject for imitation in all voices.

A number of the other line initials are clearly derived from the lines of the antiphon. In the following we will look closer at these as they are exposed during the course of the mass. (See also the thematic disposition in Ex. 18.)

The *Christe eleison* is introduced with an entry by the soprano on D strictly following the 2nd line of the antiphon. After half a bar the alto voice enters on G: so far this might develop into a regular lower fifth imitation. But instead the

also joins the soprano a third lower, on and after the soprano's second note. As such the alto exposes an extracted ("split off") variant of 2, hereafter designated 2<sup>1</sup>.

Both the answer in the lower third and the extracted variant are developed in the motet (bar 27 f. soprano-bass and bar 32 f. soprano-tenor).

As seen from the scheme the constellation 2/2<sup>1</sup> is treated three times as the subject for imitation in pairs.

In the *Gloria*, bar 18 f., the 2nd line of the antiphon is exposed in the bass and soprano voices a fifth apart. Here however the soprano replaces the initial descending third with a descending second.

This variant – here designated 2<sup>2</sup> – is also recognised from the (metamorphic) exposition of the 2nd line of the antiphon in the motet (tenor bar 28 f.).

Furthermore it becomes identical to the 4th line of the antiphon when the third leap between the third and fifth note is filled in stepwise. This already happens in the motet in the exposition of the 4th line of the antiphon (bar 56f. in the soprano). And it happens early in the mass viz. in the *Kyrie eleison II* in the closing exposition of the 4th line of the antiphon (bar 18 f. in the tenor and bar 20 f. in the alto).<sup>11</sup> As such it is designated 4<sup>1</sup>.

With its diatonic position (the opening A) and structure, the entry of the soprano in bar 19 so far has a greater similarity with line 4 of the antiphon than with any variant of the 2nd line. On the other hand, it is obviously placed in an imitative relationship to 2<sup>2</sup> (i.e. as dux to comes).

In the *Qui tollis* in bar 28 f. the 4th line of the antiphon is exposed to the text "Quoniam tu solus sanctus" in the tenor, soprano and bass voices. Then (in bar 33 f.) the soprano imitates the last segment of the previous bass entry to the text "tu solus Dominus" in the lower fifth i.e. upper fourth (see Ex. 10). As such the last 5 of the 8 notes of the line has significantly been extracted, making up its own gestalt hereafter designated 4<sup>2</sup>.

In the *Credo* in bar 39 f. the descending line IV-III-II-I – characteristic for the end of 4th line of the antiphon (and thereby for the end of the antiphon as a whole) – is exposed as an imitative subject, designated 4<sup>fin</sup>1.

Each of the five main items of the mass and the majority of the thirteen sections are introduced with the 1st line of the antiphon and always from D over G. It is tempting to hear the beginning of the *Crucifixus* in the same way. But in this particular case it would have to be the end of the line, designated 1<sup>fin</sup>1.

<sup>11</sup> This can unfortunately not be seen in the scheme, as it for the sake of simplicity only contains variations and initial notes of the two first entries in an imitative group.

Several lines in the *Credo* and some in the *Gloria* apparently do not refer to the antiphon at all. We will return to this later on in the analysis of the individual movements.

#### 4. Large-scale formal implications of the thematic development

We have previously discussed (p. 67) how we would expect the texture in sections with short texts to differ from that in sections with longer texts. We shall now see how this is expressed in the thematic developments in Palestrina and how the composer draws conclusions from this with regard to the large-scale form.

Firstly we ascertain that *all* the lines in the main items *Kyrie*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei* (the movements with a short text) open with thematic versions of the four lines of the antiphon. In the *Gloria* and the *Credo* (the movements with long texts) this is also true for a clear majority of lines, but not for each and every line. To be exact it applies to 7 out of 10 lines in the first part of the *Gloria* (*Et in terra pax*), 9 out of 10 in the second part of the *Gloria* (*Qui tollis*), 9 out of 14 in the first part of the *Credo* (*Patrem omnipotentem*) and 12 out of 20 lines in the second part of the *Credo* (*Crucifixus*).

In the *Kyrie* and the *Sanctus* each and every text line is introduced with a position of an antiphon line. In the *Agnus Dei* both movements begin with a complete exposition and 3 of the 5 lines of text open with a complete exposition. (The closing line "dona nobis pacem" opens with an incomplete exposition of the 3rd line of the antiphon but then ends with an supernumerary exposition of the 4th line.) In the first part of the *Gloria* (*Et in terra pax*) 4 of the 10 lines are complete expositions of antiphon variants, in the *Qui tollis* it is 5 out of 10 lines, in the first part of the *Credo* (*Patrem omnipotentem*) 3 out of 14 lines and in the *Crucifixus* only 2 out of 20 lines.

With regard to the thematic closeness and the contrapuntal strictness it is as we would expect. The two successive long-texted main items, the *Gloria* and *Credo*, are textually and contrapuntally more freely composed than the introductory main item, the *Kyrie*, and the closing main items, the *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*. We can even add that the *Credo* is more freely composed than the *Gloria*, and the *Crucifixus* section again is more freely composed than the section *Patrem omnipotentem*.

But how then does Palestrina order his use of the four antiphon variants?

We have earlier noticed (p. 67) that each of the five main items is introduced with the first line of the antiphon and always from D above G. As seen from the



disposition scheme the same applies for the individual sections nos. 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12 and 13. Nos. 7 and 10 could also be included.

So, seven (nine) times in the mass a section begins with the exposition of the 1st line of the antiphon. But each time there is also a certain principle for the arrangement of the succeeding line initials: when they are referring to lines of the antiphon (as most of the line initials evidently do) they are brought in the same order as the lines themselves in the antiphon. That is to say, from an overall point of view the mass is "going through" the antiphon nine times:

*1st time:* The main item *Kyrie* (1st-3rd section) goes through the antiphon once. And each and every line initial refers to the antiphon.

*2nd time:* *Ei in terra pax* (4th section) also goes through the antiphon once but includes some line entries with non-antiphon material.

*3rd time:* *Qui tollis* (5th section) goes through the antiphon once although it does have one or two deviations from the strict order. (On the other hand, the section only contains a single line that is not derived from the antiphon.)

*4th time:* In the *Patrem omnipotentem* (6th section) the principle is not strictly followed, but as a tendency it is clearly audible.

*5th time:* In the *Crucifixus* (7th section) the tendency is barely decipherable and becomes even more difficult to hear when the relations between the lines referring to the antiphon have to be perceived over the many lines that are not derived from the antiphon.

*6th time:* The *Sanctus* and *Pleni sunt coeli* (8th-9th section) together go strictly through the antiphon.

*7th time:* The *Benedictus* (11th section) goes through the antiphon but the reference to the 4th line of the antiphon appears rather early (bar 11f.) instead of at the proper place i.e. at the end of the section.

*8th time:* The *Agnus Dei* I (12th section) goes strictly through the antiphon from the 1st to the 3rd line.

*9th time:* The *Agnus Dei* II (13th section) goes strictly through the whole antiphon. (The soprano and tenor voices even perform the complete antiphon as a canon. This can unfortunately not be deciphered from the scheme.)

## 5. The individual sections

### 1. *Kyrie eleison I:*

From the perspective of a large-scale form the introductory item *Kyrie* makes up the first part of the work. It consists of three sections, all short, all containing an

utmost limited amount of text and all strictly composed as regards material and texture.

In the *Kyrie eleison I* the voices enter in pairs (bar 1f. the soprano and alto and bar 6f. the tenor and bass) building a strict 5-bar canon, note for note as laid down in the motet.

The cadence is authentically Mixolydian. However, the small *Schein-initiation* between the alto and soprano voices in bar 18 contributes to the impression of cadence in functional harmony: DD-D-T.

### 2. *Christe eleison:*

Thematically the movement operates solely with material from the 2nd line of the antiphon. It is significant that the bass voice entry in bar 5 acts both as fourth and last entry in the introductory complete exposition of 2/2<sup>1</sup> and as the first entrance in the complete exposition of 2<sup>1</sup>.

Those not familiar with the motet will not have the opportunity of recognizing the 2nd exposition in the *Kyrie eleison I* (bar 10f.) as having anything to do with the 2nd line of the antiphon. This connection becomes manifest now – a few moments later – by the extraction of 2<sup>1</sup> from 2 (in the alto's parallel motion with the soprano in bars 1-2 and in the bass' parallel motion with the tenor in bars 5-6) and the following thematic exposition of this extraction.

The use of Bb in bar 2 and onwards already indicates a pull "to the left" in the circle of fifths in the same way that the tendency also was in the exposition of the 2nd line of the antiphon in the motet. And even though bars 20-21 bring an F# in the chord succession D-G Palestrina brings the movement to an end with a plagal resolution.

### 3. *Kyrie eleison II:*

In accordance to the basic Mixolydian lay-out the 3rd line of the antiphon enters at the upper fifth, on G, and is answered (in fact the following four times!) on the original opening note C. The last two entries of the 3rd line begin on the lower fifth, F. As with the motet's exposition of the 3rd line of the antiphon one is also here tempted to speak of "modulations" to the Aeolian and Dorian modes (see p. 66).

The six entries of the 4th line (the last four of these in strict *stretto*) all begin on A and D. Several circumstances – e.g. the emphasizing of the F due to the thematic entrance from D – do nevertheless have the effect that the movement does not resolve into full Mixolydian cadence until the very end.

4. *Ei in terra pax:*

From the perspective of a large-scale form the items *Gloria* and *Credo* together make up the middle part of the work. As a whole it is a sequence of four sections, each containing a large amount of text, yet more and more freely composed and still longer and longer. *Ei in terra pax* is the first of these sections.

In bar 7f. – for the first time in the mass – a subject is exposed with apparently no reference to the antiphon. It has been given the designation 'P'. The position is complete and is even brought twice.

For that matter it is not merely the looser relations to the antiphon subjects that makes the movement different from the previous three sections. The more syllabic treatment of the text must also be mentioned. Of utmost importance however, is the characteristic alternation between choral textures:

The opening of the movement contains a polyphony similar to the one in the motet and the short-texted sections of the mass. This becomes intensified by a *stretto* of short, relatively fast thematic initials. Next the *stretto* characteristically leads over to a homophonic texture bringing all four voices to a simultaneous cadence. Then a new polyphony can be built up after the withdrawal of the voices. The circle is complete, but the cadence and the following withdrawal give the impression of structural intersection.

Accordingly the section as a whole runs in *three parts*: bars 1-18, bars 18-28 and bars 28-44.

5. *Qui tollis peccata mundi:*

The section employs the same choral textures just described. But a real intensifying *stretto* effect is not developed until towards the end of the section (and thus the end of the mass item). Furthermore the homophonic segments have another function than in the previous section and the structural intersections – promoting the effect of *four parts*: bars 1-15, bars 15-28, bars 28-39(40) and bars 39-56 – are brought about according to other principles:

The polyphonic texture leads to its first clear cadence in bar 15. Then follows a short homophonic segment (one bar only) that seems more like a catalyst for the following polyphonic development than the closing of the previous one. Thus bars 1-15 constitute the *1st part* of the section.

The next clear cadence effect is found in bar 28. Bars 15-28, the *2nd part* of the movement is held together by significant similarities between the soprano's four melodic initials: in bar 15, as well as in bars 19 and 22, the soprano opens on the same repeated peak note (E). And the initials in bars 22 and 25 are both rhythmically and intervally identical.

In bars 39-40, a homophonic course – and thus the *3rd part* of the section – leads to a cadence. At the same time the *stretto* and thus the *4th part* of the section, bars 39-56, begins. The 4th line of the antiphon is subdivided on the initial syllables in the line "in glo-(ria Dei Patris)", whereby a similarity with the previous line "Cum sancto Spiritu" (sung on the 3rd line of the antiphon) is established. Both lines – and thus all entries in the *stretto* section – begin with a repeated note, descend (in thirds and seconds respectively) and finally return to the opening note.

However, the note repetition as a recurring initial in the final part of the section is gradually prepared before the *stretto*: In bars 33-34 the soprano subdivides the penultimate note of (the aforementioned extraction of) the 4th line of the antiphon<sup>12</sup>, the peak note of the phrase (F) is repeated in the next phrase in the soprano voice (bar 37); and in the following bar the alto "answers" the note-repetition in the lower fourth by repeating the C. And this is exactly the figure, that in the next bar opens the *stretto*. (See Ex. 11)

The use of the repetition figure in significant places (and always followed by a descending motion) also follows a characteristic development throughout the whole movement (see Ex. 12): firstly the movement expounds the 1st line of the antiphon by repeating its first note in semibrevis (Ex. 12a).<sup>13</sup> The second segment of the movement begins with a syncopated repeated note (Ex. 12b). Later the "counterpart" appears at the entrance of lines: the repetition of a note on the thesis to a brevis on the arsis (Ex. 12c). In the third segment the note repetitions begin to appear as subdivisions of the brevis as mentioned above (Ex. 12d). And in the final segment we have no less than three minims repeated (that is to say the previous gestalt with an added thesis (Ex. 12e), and lastly with repetitions from thesis to arsis (Ex. 12f) – i.e. a resolving of the third note in the previous gestalt.

12 In so doing the text segments 'tu solus sanctus' and 'tu solus Dominus' can be sung to the same tune. Palestrina does indeed "show consideration for the text". But he draws, here as well as on other occasions, musical consequences from this "consideration": he develops musical structures that are audible whether one perceives the text or not. – The analysis can easily "explain" the place in the score by referring to the point in the text, but in doing so it cannot claim to have made a complete analysis of it.

13 One could say that it is simply the text itself that dictates the division of the brevis into two semibrevis. But it is certainly a fact from which Palestrina later goes on to draw certain consequences.

6. *Patrem omnipotentem*:

Overall this section is constructed as a main part plus a *coda*: the movement from bars 1-52 is rounded off with a full cadence. After a general rest of half a bar the final text segment is expounded in a *cantus firmus* (in the tenor voice) that exactly follows the complete antiphon (bars 52-67):

The movement also introduces an until then hardly ever employed choral texture: the *pure* two-part strictly imitative (at times almost canonical) counterpoint. And the use of this texture appears important in the establishing of the overall ternary structure (bar 1-23, bar 23-36 and bar 36-52):

The *1st part* develops from the canonical duets in the soprano-alto and the tenor-bass voices (bar 1f. and bar 6f. respectively) into the double four-part *stretto* (bar 12f. and bar 17 f. respectively). This part, which clearly is the longest of the movement, could be subdivided at bar 12 where a short rather homophonic passage leads to a cadence.

The *2nd part* develops in a similar way: after the two-part counterpoint in the tenor-bass and soprano-alto voices (bar 23f. and bar 25f. respectively) the movement develops successively into four-part *stretti* (bar 28 and bar 30 respectively) that via a homophonic passage (bar 33f.) lead to a cadence with a final note of at least a semibrevis in all voices.

The *3rd part* develops in a similar way. However, this time the two-part, counterpoint in the bass-tenor and soprano-alto voices (bar 36f. and 39f. respectively) moves fairly unmediated into the homophonic passage in bar 43f. before the movement as a whole, via an intense almost dramatic *stretto* in bar 48f.<sup>14</sup>, reaches the significant cadence. (The homophonic texture is briefly interrupted in bar 45 with a withdrawal of voices and imitating entries in two voices (tenor and bass).)

The intersection between the 1st and 2nd section is less marked than the others: the effect of the cadence is weaker, and the last exposition (bar 17f.) is not led through in four parts, but fades out to three-part and even two-part texture. Thus the transition from the 1st section to the 2nd section is not a transition from a full four-part choral sound to a two-part texture, but is instead a transition from a two-part texture in the soprano and alto voices to a two-part texture in the tenor and bass voices.

The first line of the section (line 24 of the mass) exposes the 1st and 2nd line of the antiphon in continuation of each other (although the 2nd line is transposed a fifth).

The next line (no. 25) is clearly a rhythmic variant of the 1st line of the antiphon. But the three-fold repetition of the opening note refers to the 3rd line of the antiphon.

Line no. 26-27 exposes (imitatively) a subject that when looked at in isolation has no obvious reference to the antiphon: *R*. It appears in different combinations with the 2nd line of the antiphon in two complete expositions. But this localisation makes it possible to hear a thematic relation between *R* and the 2nd line of the antiphon: all things considered, the intervallic pattern of *R* is identical to the first five notes in the antiphon line when the second note is omitted (see Ex. 13a). The reference becomes especially obvious in line no. 27 where the rhythmitizing of the thematic initials makes it possible for example to hear the bass and alto voices as *dux* and comes in a tonal answer (see Ex. 13b).<sup>15</sup> – But precisely this initial descending third is very characteristic of the 2nd line of the antiphon and the relation is also masked by the text. Therefore in the analytic disposition I have chosen to introduce a new thematic signature at this point.

The note repetition at the beginning of line no. 25 mediated the 1st and 3rd lines of the antiphon. And so it seems to be unclear as to where we actually "are" at the beginning of line no. 28 (introduced in the tenor). Is it the 1st line of the antiphon in the lower fifth or is it the 3rd line in the upper fifth? The passage appears as an exposition of the 3rd line of the antiphon: The succession of intervals after the third thematic note in all the entries as well as the opening notes in the bass and soprano entries in the bars 23 and 25 respectively (the note C) indicate that we here are dealing with the 3rd line of the antiphon. But the transition is rather "gentle", so to speak.

The following two lines (no. 29-30) are clearly *stretti* of the 2nd line of the antiphon. But not one of the entries makes use of the same opening note as this line. Rather the entries take place on notes that typically introduce expositions of the 3rd line of the antiphon (primarily C, and the upper and lower fifths G and F). And also being located as they are in direct continuation of an exposition of the 3rd line of the antiphon (line no. 28) it is possible to hear a mediation between the two lines of the antiphon: the succession of intervals in the 2nd line of the antiphon<sup>16</sup> is of course the same as in the 3rd line of the antiphon when the ascending third leap is filled in (see Ex. 14). This relation becomes very clear when heard between the successive soprano entries in bar 25f. and bar 29f. –

<sup>15</sup> The positioning of the text in the alto voice is my own. In Breitkopf's edition (Fr. X. Haberl) the change in the text occurs a minim earlier, but I suppose this is a mistake. Not only are the thematic identities weakened, but the crotched melisma in bar 17 also ends on a text shift – and even on a syllable that initiates a new *line*.

<sup>16</sup> To be exact: the first five notes of the six – but this also means the five notes that are in use in the actual context.

<sup>14</sup> More on this below, p. 78.



Besides, the lines no. 29-30 in the mass follow very quickly after each other and a melodic lift from "Deum de Deo" to "lumen de lumine" is heard in all voices.

The following two-part counterpoint in the bass-tenor and soprano-alto voices (bar 36f. and bar 39f. respectively) successively employs two different themes: *P* and *4fin*. But this is once more a "gentle" transition: the entrances are in both cases on G and C and they are in both cases emphasised (by repeated notes and syncope prolongation respectively). And both subjects then move down to the lower fourth – *4fin* consequently stepwise, *P* with just one divergence from the stepwise pattern – before they again ascend stepwise.

The following two lines (no. 34 and no. 35) stand out from their surroundings on account of their homophonic texture. The lines already have a mutual textual relation in that they both have the word "propter" as the first stressed main word. This reference is musically made plain by a structure similar to the classical symmetric period in *antecedent* and *consequent*: both lines begin in all voices with a triple note repetition on the upbeat with the word "propter" placed on the second and third note; and both lines lead to a cadence after 2-3 bars, the less more definitive than the first. – Between the two lines there is a short withdrawal of voices after which the tenor and bass discreetly initiate each other in the reestablishing of the four-part texture (bar 45f.). The subject initiated has been designated  $\alpha$ .<sup>17</sup> It consists of the repeated note figure that already represents the entrance of the line and a following ascending fourth leap.

The following line (no. 36) rounds off the main section of the movement as already stated. The subject in this line, designated  $\beta$  is completely without reference to the antiphon. Thus so much more obvious its effect as a madrigalism<sup>18</sup>. On the text "descendit de coelis" ("descended from the heavens") all the voices describe successions of descending thirds in semibrevis. Especially significant is the succession of thirds in the soprano voice: all together it comprises a descent of a ninth beginning in bar 48 on the peak-note G which has been "spared" for 25 bars but prepared for by the ascending tendency in the two previous lines.

The *stretto* is furthermore the most "closely knit" in the mass. Every second voice enters on the thesis (organising the succession of semibrevis synoptically).

17 In naming the thematic material that does not particularly refer to the antiphon, I have endeavoured to distinguish between (1) subjects that appear several times during the Mass and eventually are mediated with some or other versions of a line of the antiphon and (2) subjects that appear acutely so to speak. The first group are represented by capital letters in italics (*P*, *R*, *S* etc.), the second group by Greek letters ( $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$  etc.).

18 Madrigalisms are so seldom in Palestrina and so much against his programme that we are startled when they occur. But that is not sufficient reason to place the term in inverted commas.

and every other voice enters on the arsis. Thus three of the four voices enter with only an interval of a minim.

The coda of the movement (bars 53-67) has a mainly homophonic texture. The primary task of the bass is to found a beautiful harmonic course on the *cantus firmus* given in the tenor. Most of what should be called counterpoint appears in the relation between the soprano and the alto.

### 7. *Crucifixus*:

As previously stated the mass from an overall perspective falls formally into three parts: The first part is the textually meagre but materially and technically strictly composed *Kyrie*. The second part consists of the textually rich but more freely composed main items *Gloria* and *Credo*. The third part consists of the once more textually meagre but strictly composed main items *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*. As such the mass presents certain structural similarities with the (200-year younger) classical tripartition of the sonata form into (1) exposition (stringency), (2) development (freedom) and (3) recapitulation (stringency again).

The *Crucifixus* is the last of the relatively free sections that comprises the middle part of the mass. And if one dares to continue the parallel to the musical logic of the sonata form, it fits in very well that the *Crucifixus* – in the manner of the completion of a development part – is the freest section in the whole work. The *Crucifixus* section holds fewer imitative expositions (and especially complete expositions), it alternates more often in voice combinations and choral textures and is materially less bound to the lines of the antiphon than any other section. Neither does the section as a whole "go through" the antiphon in the specific way described above (p. 72). Moreover the section presents the most syllabic treatment of the text and most frequent use of two-part textures in the work.

The section furthermore makes up the *longest* separate movement in the work. It can be divided mainly into three parts: the *1st part* bars 1-33, the *2nd part* bars 33-67 and the *3rd part* (the "finale") bars 67-87. The first formal inter-section (the transition from the 1st to the 2nd part, bar 33) is marked by the ending of a four-part homophonic passage in an authentic Ionian cadence followed by a withdrawal of voices. The 2nd inter-section (the transition from the 2nd to the 3rd main section, bar 67) is also connected by a homophonic progression into a cadence. But the cadence effect is weaker and is not followed up by a withdrawal of the voices. Much more important for the separation of the final part is its own inner logic: line for line it closely follows the antiphon, partly in a *cantus firmus*-like texture.

Then, we will begin the analysis of the *Crucifixus* section by examining the 3rd (final) part (bars 67–87) more closely. In the first line of the finale (line no. 54 of the mass) the first line of the antiphon is exposed in the bass and answered in the alto in the upper octave. A counter subject (marked 'S') appears in the tenor and soprano. – In the second line of the finale (line no. 55 of the mass) the bass continues with the 2nd line of the antiphon as *cantus firmus*, the texture being rather homophonic. (There is no *fortspinning* inserted between the two bass entries. So the first bass entry also – retrospectively so to speak – upholds the status of *cantus firmus*.) – In the third line of the finale (line no. 56 of the mass) the bass continues with the 3rd line of the antiphon as *cantus firmus*, only this time it is imitatively interwoven with the soprano and tenor. Not until the fourth line of the finale (line no. 57 of the mass) is the *cantus firmus* principle left in favour of an imitative exposition of the 4th line of the antiphon – super-numerary and gradually *stretto*.

Next we turn to the 1st part of the section (bars 1–33):

The beginning of the *Crucifixus* stands apart from the beginning of all the other sections in the mass in that it does not clearly quote any antiphon line. Like all other movements the *Crucifixus* also begins with entries on D (in the soprano) and G (in the alto). But if the reference to the 1st line of the antiphon is discernible in the soprano, it holds more to the end of the line than to the beginning of the line (cf. the signature '1<sup>fin</sup>' in the disposition).<sup>19</sup> And the alto enters with a thematic initial that is derived from the 2nd line of the antiphon (2<sup>met</sup>). It is even a subject whose connection to the 2nd line of the antiphon does not depend on similarity but on a metamorphic development in the motif (see p. 64–65). However, the coupling of 1 and 2<sup>met</sup> does have a significant precursor: the two very first expositions in the mass employed 1 and 2<sup>met</sup> respectively. – The *fortspinning* in the two voices develops already from bar 2 rather "unpolyphonically" in parallel thirds, note against note, syllable for syllable.

During bars 4–6 the two-part texture shifts from the soprano and alto to the tenor and bass voices. It is the *fortspinning* figure from bar 2f. that is now extracted and thematised in an imitative manner (designated 'S'). It is possible in bars 2–6 to hear an exposition of this subject that encompasses all four voices (even though the alto breaks the patterns of octave/fifth relationship between the entries and furthermore runs parallel – not imitative – in relation to the soprano). So much on the first line of the section (line no. 38 of the mass).

19 Obviously, the repetition of the opening note on "Cru-ci-(fixus)" also makes it possible to hear the entry as the 1st line of the antiphon modified only by the elimination of the 2nd note.

The next line (line no. 39 of the mass) exposes the 4<sup>fin</sup> in a three-part *stretto* progressing into a four-part Mixolydian cadence in bar 11.

When this effect is heard in combination with the following withdrawal of the voices, bars 1–11 appear as one unbroken element in the first part of the section.

The development in lines no. 40–42 of the mass is to a certain extent reminiscent of the development in lines no. 38–39 of the mass: two sets of two-part progressions lead over into a polyphonic imitative structure that further leads to a cadence. – However, a more detailed description is called for:

The tenor and bass voices expose the 2<sup>met</sup> in bar 11f. The alto and soprano expose the 4<sup>fin</sup> in bar 15f. In bars 17–18 the tenor and alto join in and the texture becomes four-part. But the subject in the tenor and bass entries is – despite the shift in text – still 4<sup>fin</sup>, and in bar 19 the soprano and alto rest again. In the same bar the tenor uses the gestalt known as *P* as a *fortspinning*-figure. This would hardly have been discernible if the alto and soprano voices did not expose precisely this same subject in the next bar (bar 20) with the same metric placement and the same (or fifth related) diatonic positioning. The *P*-entries in the soprano and alto voices (bar 20) are now heard as an extraction of the tenor line (bar 19f.).<sup>20</sup> – In bar 20 the four-part texture is once more restored but the tenor rests immediately afterwards and the passage ends with a three-part Dorian cadence. It is clear that a formal intersection in bar 23 is less significant than that in bar 11 and that the element bars 11–23 as such is less discernible than the element bars 1–11.

However, the intersection in bar 23 becomes more significant in that the following element (bars 23–33, third and last element in the 1st part of the *Crucifixus*) has a very clear inner organisation: two complete expositions – partly in *stretto* – of a (freely invented) subject 'γ' progress into a homophonic passage leading to a very significant cadence. When we interpret (1) the exposition of γ in "Et iterum venturus est" (bar 23f., tenor and bass) and "Cum gloria iudicare" (bar 24f., alto and soprano), respectively, and (2) the exposition of α in "vivos et mortuos" (bar 25f., all voices) as two completely different musical lines of the mass, it is due to the diatonic placement of the thematic entries. In the first instance the subject is exposed from A and is answered a fifth below on D, and all the entries occur from one or other of these notes. In the second instance the

20 To some extent bars 17–21 mediate the subjects 4<sup>fin</sup> and *P*. In the entries in bars 17 and 18 ("Et ascendit") the bass and tenor *rhythmically* emphasise the descending thirds G–E and D–B respectively. In the entries in bars 19, 20 and 21 ("in coelum" and "sedet ad dexteram ..." respectively) the tenor, alto and soprano emphasise the same descending thirds by simply *employing* them in leaps in an otherwise step by step context.

subject is exposed from G and is answered a fifth below on C. The third entry begins once again on the G. Not until the fourth and last entry (bar 28, alto voice) is the circle complete: the thematic entry from D is immediately perceived as an upper fifth answer to the subject presently being exposed. But at the same time it is identical to the already employed lower fifth version of the subject in the previous exposition.

The 2nd part of the *Crucifixus* (bars 33-67) is most clearly divided at bar 55, where a homophonic passage and a subsequent *stretto* on the subject *4fin* leads to a full Ionic cadence followed by a withdrawal of voices. The element bars 33-55 can moreover be subdivided at bar 47 where the consequent succession of two-part expositions shifts to four-part texture via a (four-part) cadence with semibrevis on the final notes in all four voices.

The 2nd part opens with a series of two-part expositions: in line no. 46 of the mass (bar 33f.) the *Zmet* is exposed in the tenor and bass. The formation of the subject, the voice types and opening notes in the expositions, the distance between dux and comes, the way in which the two-part texture develops from a four-part texture and so on give the passage an air of recapitulation of the middle element of the 1st part (bar 11f.). – And now, just as then, the two-part texture is taken over by the tenor and bass voices after almost four bars of a two-part imitative grouping of the alto and soprano (line no. 47 of the mass, bar 37f.). The imitation is not in strict intervals here. The passage may as well be conceived as a constellation – already employed in the *Gloria* – of the 2nd line of the antiphon and its 2<sup>d</sup> version, the last being intervally identical to 4<sup>1</sup> (see p. 66). According to the diatonic placement of the alto voice (beginning on A) 4<sup>1</sup> is more straightforwardly heard than 2<sup>2</sup>. But the character of imitation is clear enough: (1) Both voices begin on a syncopated semibrevis. (2) The introductory step downwards to the leading note in dux is answered – "tonally answered" so to speak – with a descending third in comes, after which both voices ascending stepwise fill in a fourth or more (see Ex. 15). – The two-part texture in the soprano and alto voices is again taken over after just a few bars by a two-part imitative grouping of the tenor and bass (line no. 48 of the mass, bar 39f.) – still exactly as in the middle element of the 1st part. The subject exposed here mostly resembles the subject exposed at the beginning of the whole section: 5. But the characteristic descending third E-C also mediates it with the 2nd line of the antiphon in the descending third E-C also mediates it with the 2nd line of the antiphon in the diatonically unusual variant just heard in the soprano in the previous line (bar 37f.). – The fourth and last two-part exposition (line no. 49 of the mass, bar 43f.) is in the alto and soprano voices. And as in the previous exposition in the alto and soprano (bar 37f.) there is also here a constellation of (the initials of) 2<sup>2</sup> and 2. The succession of intervals in 2<sup>2</sup> and 4<sup>1</sup> are still identical but the diatonic

placement (the opening note is not A but G) weakens the significance of this identity.

The next unbroken element of the 2nd part of the *Crucifixus* consists of a homophonic passage leading to a full Ionic cadence via a *stretto* on *4fin* (line no. 50-51 of the mass, bars 47-55).

In the 3rd and final element of the 2nd part the development goes the other way round: from the imitative exposition via the homophonic passage to the cadence (lines no. 52-53 of the mass, bars 55-67). The subject in the exposition in bar 55f. has been given the designation *T*. It is of course reminiscent of much familiar thematic material. We are now at a stage in the musical development of the work that structurally corresponds to the closing of the development section of the sonata form and where diverse thematic contrasts *have been* mediated with each other.<sup>21</sup> Yet there is still reason to emphasise the similarity between *T* and the thematic gestalt used in the alto voice in the two-part exposition in bar 43f. The first four notes in the alto entries in bar 43 and bar 57 (line no. 49 and line no. 52 of the mass respectively) are completely identical. And in both instances the line also develops further over almost four bars to a cadence, resting on a dotted semibrevis half way through. In bar 43f. the *T*-gestalt appeared in an imitative relation with the 2nd line of the antiphon. Thus a mediation between the two subjects is indicated.

The divisions and subdivisions of the *Crucifixus* are seen in Ex. 19.

#### 8. *Sanctus*:

The *Sanctus* is the first of the seven lesser texted, materially and technically more rigidly composed and relatively short movements that together – on the large scale – constitute the third and last part of the mass.

The section opens with a pairwise exposition of the 1st line of the antiphon and the subject designated *T* which was introduced at the end of the previous movement. It should be noticed that *T* in this instance is continued in such a way that it from the third note is practically identical to the 2nd line of the antiphon. (Except that the penultimate note is left out and the final descending fourth leap is substituted with a descending fifth leap. (See Ex. 16.) Thus the mediation of *T* with the 2nd line of the antiphon, which was already suggested at the end of the *Crucifixus* (see above), becomes more significant.

From bar 12 a freely invented subject – designated 'e' in the scheme – is exposed in three voices above the 1st line of the antiphon used as *cantus firmus* in the bass.

21 With regard to this comparison to the sonata form see p. 79.



The remainder of the section exposes the original 2nd line of the antiphon and the version designated 2<sup>2</sup>.

9. *Pleni sunt coeli*:

The *Pleni sunt coeli* is the only three-part section in the work. Firstly it exposes the 3rd line of the antiphon with a total of 4 entries in 10 bars. Then it exposes the 4th line of the antiphon with a synoptic attack no less than 10 times in 22 bars. In fact the thematic strictness is even greater: almost all the melodic phrases – strictly thematic or not – enter synoptically and are succeeded by a lower auxiliary (or at least a descending stepwise motion).

10. *Hosanna*:

The *Hosanna* is the only movement in triple metre. It exposes one and the same subject no less than 15 times in 22 bars.

At the opening (the first four notes) the subject clearly refers to the 2nd line of the antiphon. But the stepwise ascent from the second to the fourth note leads each time to a peak note (the fifth note of the subject). Thus the subject has a marked resemblance with the beginning (i.e. the first four notes) of the antiphon, although the ascending third of that line has been filled in. And the filling in itself appears mostly "discreet" in that it in a most natural way can be said to implement the transition from double to triple metre in the 1st line of the antiphon while retaining the accentuation with which we have become familiar through the mass. Lastly the succession of intervals in the subject is identical to 2<sup>2</sup> when the initial descending second is replaced with the descending third characteristic of the main variant (i.e. the original 2nd line of the antiphon from which 2<sup>2</sup> is derived). (See Ex. 17.)

Along the way however it is not at all clear (to the ear) that we are dealing with a triple metre and where the arsis in fact is located: (1) the stressed syllables in the text ("Ho-san-na in ex-cel-sis") fall on unstressed beats in the subject. (2) A number of entrances (the tenor in bar 4f., the soprano in bar 5f., the bass in bar 8f. and the soprano in bar 17f.) begin on the 2nd or 3rd beat. (3) The effect that maybe most of all contributes to the identification of the arsis in the style of Palestrina, the synoptic dissonance, is only rarely represented. It appears only in connection with the five cadences in the soprano and in one instance in connection with the brevis in the soprano in bar 7.

11. *Benedictus*:

The *Benedictus* again belongs to the large group of four-part sections in double metre. But this time the upper voices do not have the designations 'Cantus' (i.e. soprano) and 'Altus', but 'Altus I' and 'Altus II'.

The movement exposes all the lines of the antiphon in the original versions or in established variants. The succession is the original one, the only exception being the insertion of the 4th line of the antiphon (represented by 4fm) at an earlier stage instead of at the end. (See scheme p. 94.)

As in the previous section the opening subject combines the 1st and 2nd lines of the antiphon. This time there is no doubt that the subject opens with the 1st line of the antiphon. But after the completion of this the subject continues directly with the 2nd line of the antiphon. (The last note of the 1st line of the antiphon and the opening note of the 2nd line of the antiphon are one and the same).

Line no. 63 of the mass ("Benedictus qui venit") progresses over 21 bars to a full Ionian cadence. Three of the four subjects (or thematic variants of these) are exposed.

Line no. 64 of the mass ("in nomine Domini") progresses over 16 bars to a full Mixolydian cadence. The course of this passage exposes only the 3rd line of the antiphon with no less than 13 thematic entries. Most of these appear in *stretto*, the "closest" of which (three successive entries with a half beat between each) are found in bar 21f. in tenor, 1st alto and 2nd alto, bar 25f. (tenor, bass and 1st alto) and bar 30f. (1st alto, tenor and bass) – i.e. with more or less the same frequency but with different combinations of the voices.

12. *Agnus Dei I*:

The three lines of the mass (no. 65-67) expose the 1st, 2nd and 3rd lines of the antiphon successively.

In the exposition of the 2nd line of the antiphon (to the text "qui tollis peccata mundi", bar 13f.) both the first and second notes of the line are repeated. Rhythmically this entails an adaptation of the number of syllables to the number of notes in the subject as well as a mutual adjustment of the textual and the metric accentuations. But in addition to this the repetition of the opening note also mediates the exposed 2nd line with the 3rd line of the antiphon. This is emphasised a few bars later when the succeeding exposition of the 3rd line of the antiphon (to the text "misere nobis", bar 19f.) reduces its initial from 3 to 2 repeated notes.

The exposition of the 2nd line of the antiphon seems to begin in the soprano voice on the peak note: G. But after four notes (and three beats after the entrance

of the alto's answer) the soprano deviates from the line of the antiphon and instead, as it appears, develops the descending third succession which in line no. 36 of the mass (designated  $\beta'$ ) was exposed in all four voices with the character of madrigalism (see p 23).

### 13. *Agnus Dei II:*

The *Agnus Dei II* is the only five-part section. The last movement of the work is the one most rich in voices.

The section is probably also the most strictly composed: the soprano and the 1st tenor voices go through almost the whole movement (31 out of 37 bars) in strict canon (in the octave) with three bars between the *canon* and the *resoluto*. The movement is moreover constructed as four successive expositions of the four lines of the antiphon. The first line of the text (line no. 68 of the mass: "*Agnus Dei*") expounds the 1st line of the antiphon. The second line of the text (line no. 69 of the mass: "*qui tollis peccata mundi*") expounds the 2nd line of the antiphon. The third and last line of the text (line no. 70 of the mass: "*dona nobis pacem*") expounds first the 3rd line of the antiphon and then the 4th line of the antiphon.<sup>22</sup> In the exposition of the 1st line of the antiphon (bar 1f.) the canonically related voices, soprano and 1st tenor, are attached to a counter subject (designated  $\gamma'$ ) in the tenor and bass voices respectively. The alto presents the usual lower fifth answer. The soprano and tenor have a certain *cantus firmus* character: the voices run on with very long note values and without any *fortspinnung* (there is simply a rest for 2½ bars after the end of the line of the antiphon).

The 2nd line of the antiphon is exposed in bar 7f. in all the voices from top to bottom in the score (soprano – alto – tenor I – tenor II – bass). Again the soprano and tenor merely follow the line of the antiphon. But their character of *cantus firmus* is weakened: the two voices operate with shorter note values and with certain ornamentations at the end of the line (bars 10-11 in the soprano and bars 13-14 in the tenor respectively). Then they rest for 3½ bars.

The 3rd line of the antiphon is exposed in only three voices (soprano in bar 16f., tenor II in bar 17f. and tenor I in bar 19f.). The canonically related voices (soprano and tenor I) do not develop a *fortspinnung* this time either, they merely have an extra final note added.

22 Three lines of text successively related to expositions of the *four* lines of the antiphon by repeating the third line of text: this pattern is thus employed in both the first item (*Kyrie-Christe-Kyrie*) as well as in the final section of the mass (*Agnus Dei II*).

The exposition of the 4th line of the antiphon begins already in bar 21, that is to say 5 bars after the exposition of the 3rd line of the antiphon. Not because the rests in the canonically related voices are shorter this time (a little less than 3 bars), but because the soprano entry (bar 22f.) is anticipated by thematic entries in two other voices (the alto in bar 21f. and the 2nd tenor in bar 22f.). The 4th line of the antiphon is rhythmized in shorter note values than the previous ones and the attack is syncopic.

In this exposition the soprano and 1st tenor voices each bring the subject twice (with a little more than 2 bars rest in between) while they are still canonically related. The first time the subject consists of the line of the antiphon alone, the second time it develops a *fortspinnung*. – Seen altogether, all the voices bring the subject 1-3 times.

Because of the long pauses between the entries in the soprano and 1st tenor voices the texture only occasionally (and only for one bar at a time, or less) becomes really five-part until bar 31. In bar 31 the canonical clause<sup>23</sup> is lifted and the movement progresses in bars 31-37 almost entirely in a full five-part texture to the final authentic Mixolydian cadence.

### 6. *The large-scale proportions*

An overview of the hierarchical organisation of the mass can be found on page 95:

The mass as a whole is 530 bars long.

On the uppermost level the mass is divided into three parts: the relatively strictly composed and textually meagre item *Kyrie* is the first part, the more freely composed and textually rich items *Gloria* and *Credo* are considered together as the second part and the once more relatively strictly composed and textually meagre items *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei* are together considered as the third part. – The three part structure can in certain respects be compared to the exposition-development-recapitulation structure of the sonata form (see above).

On the new level the mass can be seen as being in five parts: the five items each constitute a part.

23 The soprano entry in bar 31 breaks with the current canon principle in that it – as becomes apparent – is not answered in the 1st tenor after 3 bars. However it does itself appear as an answer in the upper octave to the 1st tenor entry in the previous bar.

And at the lowest level we deal with, the mass is divided up into 14 parts, one for each section, with the recapitulation of the *Hosanna* included as one section.

It now becomes apparent that the rather complicated 14-section structure is balanced out through a series of proportionings of the parts:

(1) The first item *Kyrie*, exposing the material in a strict form, and the last item *Agnus Dei*, gathering the threads together in the strictest manner at the end, are of about the same length (67 bars and 71 bars respectively).

(2) Together the strictly composed, sparsely texted outer items *Kyrie*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei* are approximately the same length as the more freely composed, textually rich intermediate items the *Gloria* and *Credo* (276 bars and 292 bars respectively).

(3) The 3rd item *Credo*, is about the same length as the following item *Sanctus* (154 bars and 138 bars respectively).

(4) The 3rd item is lengthened in relation to the 2nd item as is the 2nd item to the 1st item. The successive lengthenings are approximately in accordance with the ratio of the golden mean.

(5) The number of sections in the three first items is equal to the number of sections in the last two items sections (7 sections).

(6) The first seven sections are successively longer and longer (with the transition between the almost equally long sections, the *Christe* and the *Kyrie II*, as the only exceptions). The last seven sections are more or less the same length.

#### Closing remarks

Palestrina is without doubt a conservative composer. It can seem strange that he is a contemporary of someone like Gesualdo. It is curious that he is at his greatest so few years before an innovation of such great consequence – the opera.

But precisely in the early opera music is bound up with the text to such a degree and in such a way that it could never be adjusted to an overall disposition according to strictly formal principles. And of course this is not the intention either: the singing should follow the motion of speech and its fluctuations from moment to moment. And just as basic the recapitulation (for example) is in a purely musical structure, just as unnatural it is in a dialogical sequence (or for that matter in a course of action or in an emotional development).

But the time we are discussing here is, as mentioned earlier, also the time of another "progressive" tendency: the emancipation of instrumental music as art music. Instrumental music is "coming into its own" in its disengagement from previous vocal models. To this end it must evidently develop pure musical prin-

ciples to replace the principles implied by the appropriation of the music to a text.

What instrumental music affords here is however not merely a "substitution" of a means to an end that seen aesthetically remains the same. It simply gives one of the most important contributions in the history of music to the modern project we call "the autonomous work of art". As such it does not merely outdistance its vocal models. It also develops into a positive continuation of vocal music in those contexts where vocal music itself has already endeavoured to develop principles for a purely musical structuring. As the case is with Palestrina's music.

Maybe the first endeavour should not even be regarded as an endeavour that can provide a foundation for another. Maybe both tendencies, together with many other tendencies in music as well as in other art forms, are expressions of something deeply embedded in those times.

Aarhus, October 1995

#### "Ordinarium Missae" – the text

##### I

Kyrie eleison.

Christe eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

##### II

[Gloria in excelsis Deo.]<sup>24</sup>

Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

Laudamus te, Benedicimus te, adoramus te, Glorificamus te.

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus, Rex coelstis, Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine, Fili unigenite Jesu Christe.

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.

Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

<sup>24</sup> The brackets around the first line of sections II and III denote that these lines are not included in the mass composition. The first line of the Gloria and the Credo are intoned by the priest and the choir does not come in until "Et in terra pax hominibus" and "Patrem Omnipotentem".



Qui tollis peccata mundi: suscipe deprecationem nostram.  
 Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris: miserere nobis.  
 Quoniam tu solus sanctus: Tu solus Dominus, Jesu Christe.  
 Cum sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris.  
 Amen.

## III

[Credo in unum Deum]  
 Patrem omnipotentem, factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibus omnium, et invisibilibus.  
 Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum.  
 Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.  
 Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum de verum de Deo vero.  
 Genitum, non factum, consubstantiali patri: per quem omnia facta sunt.  
 Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de coelis.  
 Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine:  
 Et homo factus est.  
 Crucifixus etiam pro nobis: sub Pontio Pilato passus, et sepultus est.  
 Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas.  
 Et ascendit in coelum, sedet ad dexteram patris.  
 Et iterum venturus est cum gloria, iudicare vivos et mortuos: cuius regni non erit finis.  
 Et in Spiritum sanctum, Dominum, et vivificantem: qui ex Patre, Filioque procedit.  
 Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur, et conglorificatur: qui locutus est per Prophetas.  
 Et unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.  
 Confiteor unum baptismam in remissionem peccatorum.  
 Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum.  
 Et vitam venturi saeculi.  
 Amen.

## IV

Sanctus.  
 Sanctus.  
 Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
 Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.  
 Hosanna in excelsis.  
 Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.  
 Hosanne in excelsis.

## V

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis.  
 Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem.

*Palestrina: "Missa 'Veni Sponsa Christi'"*  
*Schematic disposition*

## I

I: 19 bars.

m. 1-	1 >	<u>D</u>	> G	+	1. Kyrie eleison.
m. 10-	2met >	G	> D	+	

2: 25 bars.

m. 1-	2/2' >	<u>D</u> /G	> <u>D</u> /G	+	2. Christe eleison.
m. 5-	→2' >	G	> D	+	
m. 11-	2/2' >	<u>D</u> /D	> G/G		
m. 17-	2met >	G	> E		
m. 20-	2/2' > 2'	<u>D</u> /D	> F		

3: 23 bars.

m. 1-	3 >	G	> <u>C</u>	+	3. Kyrie eleison.
m. 11-	4 >	D	> <u>A</u>	+	

## II

4: 44 bars.

m. 1-	1/2	<u>D</u> /G	> <u>D</u> /G	+	4. Et in terra pax hominibus //bonae voluntatis
m. 7-	P >	<u>G</u>	> D		5. Laudamus te, Benedicimus te.
m. 10-	P >	<u>G</u>	> D	+	6. Adoramus te, Glorificamus te.
m. 15-	Hmp.				7. Gratias Agimus tibi
m. 18-	2 > 2' (=4')	<u>D</u>	> A( <u>A</u> )		8. propter magnum gloriam tuam.
m. 21-	2 >	<u>D</u>	> G		9. Domine Deus, Rex coelists.
m. 25-	3 Hmp.	<u>C</u>			10. Deus Pater omnipotens.
m. 28-	4 >	D	> <u>A</u>	+	11. Domine Fili unigenite, //Jesu Christe
m. 35-	4 >	E	> <u>A</u>		12. Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,
m. 38-	4 >	<u>A</u>	> E	+	13. Filius Patris.

5: 56 bars.

m.1-	1 >	<u>D/D</u>	> G/G	+	14. Qui tollis peccata mundi,
m.7-	2 > 2 <sup>2</sup>	G	> C		15. misere nobis.
m.10-	1 >	<u>D</u>	> G	+	16. Qui tollis peccata mundi
m.15-	Hmp.				17. suscipe
m.16-	2 >	<u>D</u>	> G		18. deprecationem nostram.
m.21-	3 >	G	> <u>C</u>	+	19. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
					//misere nobis
m.28-	4 >	D	> <u>A</u>		20. Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
m.31-	→4 <sup>2</sup>	<u>A</u>	> D		tu solus sanctus //tu solus Do-
					minus,
m.35-	4 Hmp.	D			21. tu solus Altissimus, Jesus
					Christe.
m.39-	3 >	<u>C</u>	> F	+	22. Cum sancto Spiritu
m.45-	4 >	D	> <u>A</u>	+	23. in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

## III

6: 67 bars.

m.1-	1(-2) >	<u>D</u>	> G		24. Patrem omnipotentem, fac-
					tozem coeli et terrae,
m.6-	1 >	<u>D</u>	> G		25. visibilium omnium, //et in-
					visibilium.
m.12-	R/2 > R/R	C/G	> C/F	+	26. Et in unum Dominum Jesum
					Christum.
m.17-	R/2 > R/2	C/G	> C/G	+	27. Filium Dei unigenitum
m.23-	3 >	G	> <u>C</u>	+	28. Et ex Patre natum, //ante om-
					nia saecula.
m.28-	2 >	F	> C		29. Deum de Deo,
m.30-	2 >	G	> C		30. lumen de lumine,
m.33-	Hmp.				31. Deum verum de Deo vero.
m.36-	P >	C	> <u>G</u>		32. Gentium non factum, consub-
					stantialem Patri;
m.39-	4/fm >	<u>C</u>	> G		33. per quem omnia facta sunt.
m.43-	Hmp.				34. Qui propter nos homines,
m.45-	α > - Hmp.	D	> G		35. et propter nostram salutem
m.48-	β >	G	> C	+	36. descendit de coelis.
m.53-	1-2-3-4 Cf.	<u>D-D-C-A</u>			37. Et incarnatus est de spiritu
					sancto ex Maria Virgine: Et
					homo factus est.

7: 87 bars.

m.1-	1/fm-S/2met-	<u>D-G</u>	> D/G		38. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis,
	S > S/S				//sub Pontio Pilato
m.7-	4/fm >	F	> <u>C</u>		39. passus, et sepultus est.
m.11-	2met >	C	> G		40. Et resurrexii tertia die
m.15-	4/fm >	G	> <u>C</u>	+	41. secundum Scripturas, //Et as-
					cendit in coelum,
m.19-	P	A	> E		42. in coelum //sedes ad dexteram
					Patris.
m.23-	γ >	A	> D	+	43. Et iterum venturus est //cum
					gloria judicare
m.26-	γ >	G	> C	+	44. vivos et mortuos;
m.29-	Hmp.				45. cujus regni non erit finis.
m.33-	2met >	C	> G		46. Et in Spiritum sanctum. Domi-
					num
m.36-	4 <sup>1</sup> (=2 <sup>2</sup> ) > 2	<u>A</u>	> E		47. et vivificantem;
m.38-	(S) >	<u>D</u>	> G		48. Qui ex Patre Filioque procedim.
m.43-	(2 <sup>2</sup> (=4 <sup>1</sup> ))	<u>G</u>	> D		49. Qui cum Patre et Filio
	> 2				
m.46-	Hmp.				50. simul adoratur, et conglorificatur;

m.51-	4/fm	<u>C</u>	> G		51. qui locutus est per Prophetas
m.55-	T	C	> <u>G</u>		52. Et unam sanctam catholicam
					//et apostolicam ecclesiam
m.60-	Hmp.				53. Confiteor unum baptismum in
					remissionem peccatorum
m.67-	1 (=1Cf.)	G/G	> G/G		54. Et expecto
	/δ >				
m.70-	2Cf.	G			55. resurrectionem
m.72	3 > 3 Cf.	<u>C</u>	> F		56. mortuorum,
m.75-	4 >	E	> <u>A</u>	+	57. Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen

## IV

8: 27 bars.

m.1-	1/T(2) >	<u>D/G</u>	> G/C	+	58. Sanctus.
m.12-	1Cf./e > e	G	> G		
m.16-	2/2 <sup>2</sup>	G/C	> G/C	+	59. Dominus Deus Sabaoth
m.22-	2 >	<u>D</u>	> G		

9: 31 bars.

m.1- 3 > G > C + 60. Pleni sunt coeli et terra  
 m.10- 4 > A > E + 61. gloria tua.

10: 22 bars.

m.1- 2 (1) > G > D + 62. Hosanna in excelsis.

11: 36 bars.

m.1- 1-2 > D > G + 63. Benedictus qui venit  
 m.11- 4/m > C > G  
 m.13- 1-2 > D > D  
 m.17- 2-2 > C > G  
 m.21- 3 > G > C + 64. in nomine Domini.

10: 22 bars.

m.1- 2 (1) > G > D + 62. Hosanna in excelsis.

V

12: 34 bars.

m.1- 1 > D > G + 65. Agnus Dei.  
 m.13- 2 > G > G + 66. qui tollis peccata mundi  
 m.19 3 > C > G + 67. miserere nobis.

13: 37 bars.

m.1- 1/5 > 1/5 D/G > D/G + 68. Agnus Dei.  
 m.7- 2 > D > G + 69. qui tollis peccata mundi:  
 m.16- 3 > C > F 70. dona nobis pacem.  
 m.21- 4 > A > E +

## Palestrina: "Missa 'Veni sponsa Christi' "

530

"Exposition"

67

"Development"

254

"Recapitulation"

209

Kyrie

67

Gloria

100

Credo

154

Sanctus

138

Agnus Dei

71

Kyrie

19

Christe

25

Kyrie

23

Et in terra

44

Qui tollis

56

Patrem omnipotentem

67

Crucifixus

87

Sanctus

27

Pleni sunt

31

Hosanna

22

Benedictus

36

Hosanna

22

Agnus Dei I

34

Agnus Dei II

37