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Four Twentieth-Century Mass Ordinary Settings Surveyed Using the Dictates of the Motu Proprio of 1903 as a Stylistic Guide

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FOUR TWENTIETH-CENTURY MASS ORDINARY SETTINGS SURVEYED USING THE DICTATES OF THE MOTU PROPRIO OF 1903 AS A STYLISTIC GUIDE

by

Jonathan Candler Kilgore

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Studies Office
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

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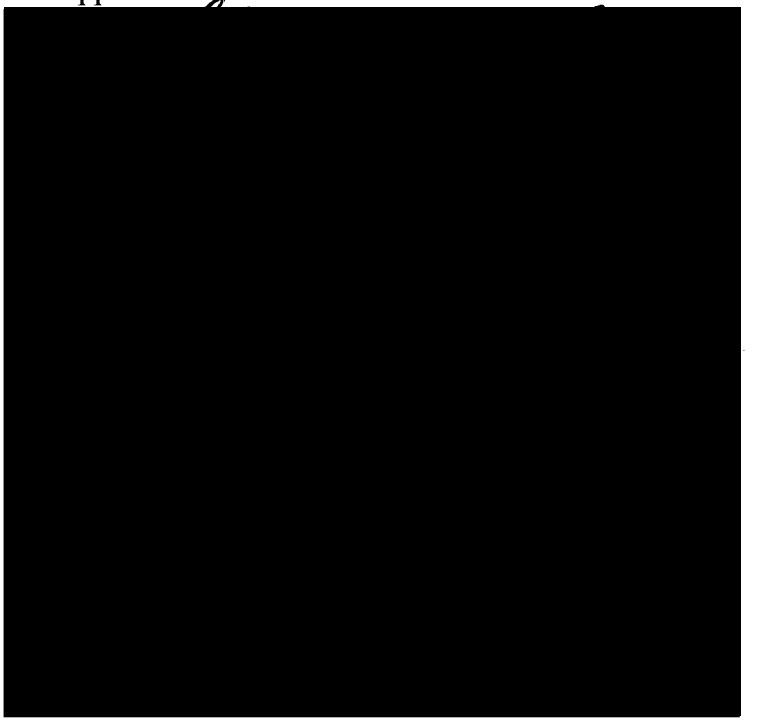

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ABSTRACT

FOUR TWENTIETH-CENTURY MASS ORDINARY SETTINGS SURVEYED USING THE DICTATES OF THE MOTU PROPRIO OF 1903 AS A STYLISTIC GUIDE

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August 2008

In the first half of the twentieth century, major attempts at reform were occurring in music written for the Catholic Church. At the heart of this reform was the 1903 *Motu Proprio* of Pope St. Pius X. This document sought to bring clarity and focus to sacred music through limitation, as well as causing sacred music composers to make changes in their compositional methods. While still being modern, music had to conform to certain rules and regulations in order to be functional within the Catholic liturgy. The document also provided a great deal of detailed information regarding day-to-day occurrences within the confines of sacred music for use in the Catholic Church.

The *Motu Proprio* of 1903 provided guidance in sacred music composition for well over half a century. Twentieth-century composers of Catholic sacred music used a variety of techniques to fulfill their musical aspirations, combining archaic compositional methods with modern textures and styles. The Mass in G Minor by Ralph Vaughan Williams, the *Messe pour double choeur a cappella* by Frank Martin, the Mass in G Major by Francis Poulenc, and the Mass by Igor Stravinsky are examples of works that resonate with the *Motu Proprio* of 1903. While each shows elements of a historical perspective, they also illustrate the continuation of the twentieth-century compositional trend of pushing musical boundaries.

DEDICATION

To my Mom and Dad, whose love and support made everything possible.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

Settings of the Mass in the twentieth century are complex in terms of general style and compositional characteristics. The lack of a definite style and set of characteristics is due, in part, to the wide palette from which composers of the day had to choose. As the nineteenth century came to an end, music was being transformed through both chromaticism and expansion of forms. Even the Mass (in such instances as Verdi's *Reqiuem*) had become almost unrecognizable from its earlier counterpart with the addition of instruments and the expansion of compositional technique.

Partly in response to the turn-of-the-century, large-scale symphonic mass settings, as well as out of a strong desire to codify efforts at sacred music reform, Pope Pius X issued the *Motu Proprio* in 1903, "that sought to establish principles governing the composition of music suitable for the Roman Catholic Church."[1] In essence, this decree set forth guidelines that were to be followed by composers interested in writing music for use in Catholic services. Throughout the twentieth century, several additional papal edicts expounded on the *Motu Proprio*, attempting to find a universal approach to controlling the compositional style and purpose of sacred music. Interestingly, even non-Catholic composers (e.g. Vaughan Williams, Martin, Stravinsky) seemed to give heed to the *Motu Proprio* in their compositional methods. Not until 1962, with the Second Vatican Council, was the definition of "acceptable" music changed.

What followed the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 was a century of distinct compositions in the Mass genre, making it quite difficult to codify any general characteristics.

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[1]Homer Ulrich, *A Survey of Choral Music* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), 184.

Composers of sacred music, while looking to fifteenth and sixteenth-century masters for inspiration, were shaping works that were still "modern" in nature. For instance, in Stravinsky's Mass (1948), one can see and hear chant elements that seem to look back to composers such as Machaut, while harmonic and rhythmic elements are clearly in the "modern" style.

The purpose of this study is twofold: first, to examine in more detail the *Motu Proprio* of Pope Pius X, and second, to provide a discussion of specific works by major composers from the first half of the twentieth century. The second purpose will also include discussion regarding the applicability of the specific works to the *Motu Proprio*. It should be noted that the composers of these works never commented on their knowledge or use of the *Motu Proprio* in the compositional process. However, connections between these works and the decree are found and have been commented on by scholars.

This dissertation will attempt to show the diversity of the mass genre both in purpose and style while also illustrating the confines placed on and used by composers to write appropriate music for Catholic worship.

Methodology

In the beginning stages of research for the current study, one notices a lack of dedicated materials on the topic of Mass compositions. Information and research do exist, but in a variety of sources and in a broad fashion (i.e. typically in composer-specific research). This author is not aware of the existence of a document that discusses the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 with direct correlation to works written by the selected composers. Only in passing is the Papal edict mentioned in research on the particular

masses included in this study (and for the *Messe pour double choeur a cappella* by Frank Martin, it is not mentioned at all).

The dissertation will employ an examination of current and past literature to synthesize a body of information on the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 and the selected Mass Ordinary settings, including historical information as well as a general analysis of applicability of those works to the *Motu Proprio* of 1903.

A portion of this study will focus on the history, design, and purpose of the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 by Pope Pius X. Background information on Pope Pius X, necessary to fully understand his reasoning for and support of sacred music reform in the Catholic Church, will be given. In addition, a thorough look at the document itself will be undertaken to further understand its application and purpose. Each portion of the document will be briefly mentioned to provide an educated foundation and point of departure for further discussion on the individual Mass settings examined by this study.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the symphonic nature of some settings of the mass had become bigger than ever, using larger performing forces and often including extra-liturgical or vernacular texts as well as profane elements. The *Motu Proprio* of 1903 officially addressed the Catholic Church's guidelines for composing sacred music in an attempt to regain control over what was being used in Catholic services. Elwyn Wienandt discusses these changes in sacred music composition, stating:

> The abuses that led to [the *Motu Proprio's*] appearance had been present in earlier years; the issuance of the edict at the beginning of the twentieth century simply indicated that once again the Church felt compelled to state its position, one that was really little more than a modification of what had been considered appropriate for a long time.[2]

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[2]Elwyn A. Wienandt, *Choral Music of the Church* (New York: Free Press, 1965), 421.

The quality of sacred music, according to the *Motu Proprio* of 1903, should be three-fold: "it must be holy...it must be real and true art...but it must be universal."[3] The edict called for a return to Palestrina-like polyphony, limited the use of instruments, and re-emphasized the importance of Gregorian chant and of Latin in services. With the issuance of this Papal edict, composers were forced to re-evaluate their purpose in composition. Those who wanted to continue writing music for the Catholic Church had to either change their methods or discover ways to modify their techniques to conform to what was set forth in the *Motu Proprio*. Others continued to set Latin texts that they intended as concert works, many of which still show some signs of composers' acquiescence to the *Motu Proprio*.

Four specific Mass Ordinary settings from the twentieth century, including works by Vaughan Williams, Martin, Poulenc, and Stravinsky, will be examined in detail. Each work will be placed into context, providing, if necessary, limited background information on the composer. A brief stylistic analysis will be included in order to show works by composers of the twentieth century that illustrate, coincidentally, many guidelines of the *Motu Proprio* of 1903. The selected works will be examined for commonalities and differences in concept, design, texture, style, key relationships, text settings, recurring themes/motives, and applicability to the *Motu Proprio* of 1903.

For this dissertation, concept will refer to the purpose for which a work was composed (Was the work commissioned?). Design will refer to the way in which it was composed (Was it written for liturgical or non-liturgical use?). Texture will refer to the performance forces and instrumentation. Style will refer to the manner of writing and the

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[3]William Tortolano, "The Mass and the Twentieth-Century Composer: A Study of Musical Technique and Style, Together with the Interpretive Problems of the Performer" (D.S.M. diss., The University of Montreal, 1964), 7.

execution of the work. Key relationships will refer both to tonal centers of separate movements of the individual works, as well as to key relationships between movements and any peculiarity in key signatures used by the composers. Text setting will refer to the way in which the composer set the traditional Mass text. Recurring themes/motives will refer to those ideas that are used more than once within a specific work (not simply those that are repeated within a movement). Finally, applicability to the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 will refer to the way in which the specific work fits within the confines of appropriate sacred music as set forth by Pope Pius X. This final section will include the opinion of this author as well as historical research, as needed.

The *Motu Proprio* of 1903 is included, in full form, in the appendix of this study and should be used as a point of reference throughout.

Review of Literature

The majority of information for this study is found either in research on individual composers or in research on sacred music. This author is currently unaware of any stand-alone text on twentieth-century settings of the Mass Ordinary or settings of the Mass Ordinary using the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 as a point of departure.

Texts that focus specifically on the music of the church are plentiful, though many of them were published twenty or more years ago. Perhaps the most applicable and helpful to the current study is Robert F. Hayburn's text *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music: 95 A.D. to 1977 A.D.* This text examines attempts at reform found throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (as well as throughout history on the grand scale). It also gives a great deal of background information on the reforms of Giuseppe Sarto before he became Pope Pius X. Elwyn Wienandt's *Choral Music of the Church* has

proven helpful as well. The author provides a framework for the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 and the changes that occur within the Mass genre from the Romantic era to the twentieth century. Also of interest are texts by Reverend George V. Predmore (*Church Music in the Light of The Motu Proprio*) and Paul Hume (*Catholic Church Music*). Finally, there is a multitude of texts that focus on a specific composer, a group of composers, or nationality.

Scholarly journal entries on the specific topic are as sparse as the texts, and in some instances more so. There is ample research available, but it is often found within the confines of composer or work-specific information. In addition, there is opinionated research available in the form of performance reviews.

Existing dissertations and theses provide the most help in synthesizing the current study. Bruce Lynn Vantine's "Four Twentieth-Century Masses: An Analytical Comparison of Style and Compositional Technique" is by far the widest-reaching and most applicable to all aspects of the current study. The bulk of his study is an examination of Mass settings by Frank Martin, Francis Poulenc, Igor Stravinsky, and Paul Hindemith. Each work is examined by individual movement. In addition, there is a brief introductory chapter that includes background information on all four works.

Also helpful is William Tortolano's two-volume dissertation, "The Mass and the Twentieth-Century Composer: A Study of Musical Technique and Style, Together with the Interpretive Problems of the Performer." Volume I includes a list of works and historical data on the Mass, as well as specific works by twentieth-century composers such as Persichetti, Britten, Vaughan Williams, Poulenc, and Stravinsky. Volume II is a compendium of musical excerpts.

There are a number of other dissertations and theses specific to certain groupings of twentieth-century Masses as well as studies specific to a single composer's work (Dave Brubeck, Persichetti, Stravinsky, Rheinberger, etc.).

An important, if not major gap in the literature deals with the uneasiness with which scholars define the twentieth-century Mass. Aside from the word "Mass" appearing in the title and the text of the Mass Ordinary being employed, there are no set parameters or characteristics. The name "Mass" is even sometimes misleading. For instance, Fredrick Delius's *Mass for Life* contains no part of the Mass text.[4] This study will not attempt to establish defining characteristics of the twentieth-century Mass, but will instead attempt to show differences and commonalities found between works by different composers in the light of the *Motu Proprio* of 1903.

[4]Tortolano, 10.

CHAPTER II

THE MOTU PROPRIO OF POPE PIUS X (1903)

Historical Context

Because of the increasingly secular influences, music of the Catholic Church was in great need of reform at the end of the nineteenth century. Attempts on all levels of the Catholic Church had been made to begin the process of reform, but in essence the specificity of these edicts added to the need for a widespread movement. Each sought to change or 'correct' only a certain aspect of sacred music. Mostly, the focus fell on the strict removal of secular or modern influences from composers' output as well as the complete exclusion of these materials from worship services. Peggy Ann Licon states that the reform attempts prior to the turn of the century "were a reaction to the influence that Romanticism had exerted on the music of the church. This could be seen in the influx of the style of much secular music, particularly that of the theater and the opera."[5]

Hilda Andrews summed up this turn-of-the-century state of church music in her text, *Westminster Retrospect*:

> What was liturgically correct was musically unattractive (as the compositions of the "Caecilienverein" appeared to show only too dismally), what was musically admired was now found to be liturgically unsuitable, the new plainsong of Solesmes for many years fought on unequal terms with the Ratisbon edition which had the authority of the Vatican behind it, faction raged against faction, and the Catholic Press was full of flying verbal missiles. But the very heat of the battle indicated that reform was in the air, and on the Continent the situation gradually improved. Palestrina came to be sung again, even though later scholarship showed the Breitkopf edition to be guilty of many editorial mistakes and wrong interpretations.

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[5]Peggy Ann Licon, "Twentieth-Century Liturgical Reform in the Catholic Church and a Sample of Current Choral Literature (1989)" (D.M.A. diss., Arizona State University, 1989), 40.

> In England, where the Catholic tradition had been strangled for centuries, there was no Cecilian Society, even, to indicate the nature of an improvement. Until the Catholic Emancipation of 1829 it was illegal to sing Mass publicly, and Catholic music was confined to the foreign embassy chapels.[6]

The state of music in the church was affected by a variety of factors, such as the growth of opera and the bleeding of the operatic/dramatic style into sacred music. Earlier edicts and attempts at reform had, for various reasons, been either ignored or region/church specific. Reverend George Predmore claims that these edicts and attempts were not simply ignored. "Surely this is not due to unwillingness but rather to lack of knowledge of the laws and regulations laid down by the Church in respect to sacred music."[7]

Regardless of the reason, the need for reform was apparent. Pope Pius X addressed this need in the introduction of his *Motu Proprio*, and for the reasons of this study, his statement has been included in its entirety:

> And indeed, whether it is owing to the very nature of this art, fluctuating and variable as it is in itself, or to the succeeding changes in tastes and habits with the course of time, or to the fatal influence exercised on sacred art by profane and theatrical art, or to the pleasure that music directly produces, and that is not always easily contained within the right limits, or finally to the many prejudices on the matter, so lightly introduced and so tenaciously maintained even among responsible and pious persons, the fact remains that there is a general tendency to deviate from the right rule, prescribed by the end for which art is admitted to the service of public worship and which is set forth very clearly in the ecclesiastical Canons, in the Ordinances of the General and Provincial Councils, in the

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[6]Hilda Andrews, *Westminster Retrospect* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), 31-32.

[7]Rev. George V. Predmore, *Church Music in the Light of The Motu Proprio* (Rochester: Seminary Press, 1924), 7.

> prescriptions which have at various times emanated from the Sacred Roman Congregations, and from Our Predecessors the Soverign Pontiffs.[8]

Giuseppe Sarto was elected Pope Pius X in August 1903. Having served the church on many different levels (from canon to Bishop), the new Pope had a unique grasp of the need for reform, particularly with *Musica sacra* and with the frequency of Communion.[9] Even from his earliest days at the Seminary of Padua, Sarto's love and passion for music was evident. He continued this passion throughout his career, forming singing schools and even himself teaching students the proper way to sing the chants of the liturgy.

His passion for music was seen not only through his actions as he continued his career, but also in the form of decrees. The Pope issued three decrees prior to the *Motu Proprio*: "The first was issued while he was bishop of Mantua, and the latter two were issued after his promotion to patriarchate of Venice on 15 June 1893."[10] Items addressed in these decrees by the soon-to-be Pope all found fruition in the *Motu Proprio*. The earlier documents included a call for Gregorian Chant to be used more widely and as a model of sacred music, for women to be excluded from church choirs, and for the restriction of musical instruments in church services, to name a few. In fact, Robert Hayburn claims a direct relationship between the first of these three decrees, the *Votum* of 1893, and the *Motu Proprio* of 1903. In his collection *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, Hayburn first states, "This *votum* preceded the pastoral letter on sacred music

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[8]Ibid., 9-10.

[9]Robert A. Skeris, "Sarto, the 'Conservative Reformer': 100 Years of the 'Motu proprio' of Pope St. Pius X," *Sacred Music* 130, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 6.

[10]Licon, 34.

which Cardinal Sarto issued on May 1, 1895. It was the true predecessor of his pastoral letter and also of the *motu proprio* of 1903."[11] Later, in the same chapter, the author again confirms his claim, "The *votum* and the *motu proprio* are really the same document, excluding the introductions."[12]

With his love of music in mind, it is not surprising that only three months after becoming Pope, Pius X issued the second proclamation of his papacy. An encyclical focusing solely on the music of the church and how it should be constructed, implemented, and reformed, the *Motu Proprio on Sacred Music* was issued on November 22, 1903. November 22 was chosen in celebration of the feast day of St. Cecilia as well as the 1300th anniversary of the birth year of Gregory the Great. Paul Hume explains that:

> the term *motu proprio* refers to the method of promulgation (e.g., like the terms "encyclical," "Papal bull," etc.). It means that the Pope has issued the document on his own initiative, and for reasons which he himself finds good and sufficient without the advice of the cardinals. There are *motu proprio's* on many subjects. The one on music, however, is so famous and so important that it has somehow become *the* "Motu Proprio" and the unamplified term is usually given and thought of as the title of the work.[13]

This document was not written solely by the Pope, though the ideas were uniquely his. Father Angelo De Santi, a personal friend, "prepared the first draft of the *votum* in 1893 [and] the *motu proprio* in 1903."[14]

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[11]Robert F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music: 95 A.D. to 1977 A.D.* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1979), 203.

[12]Ibid., 222.

[13]Paul Hume, *Catholic Church Music* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1957), 6.

[14]Hayburn, 220.

As Stephen Macaluso says in his thesis, "the Pontiff's upbringing and natural musical talent, and his eventual close proximity to reform composers, made him an exceptionally eloquent and outspoken musical reformer."[15] One of the innovative features that separated the 1903 *Motu Proprio* from former attempts at reform was its embrace of "modern" music in a sacred context.

Robert Skeris's article on the *Motu Proprio* and the reforms of Pius X provides a succinct glance at the decree of 1903 and its purposes:

> The most systematic and comprehensive expression of the Church's age-old solicitude for the music of her worship, came at the beginning of the XXth century in the *Motu proprio* of Pope St. Pius X. This document evaluated the issues and antitheses of the XIXth century with strong emphasis upon the principle of artistic freedom as applied to composers and executants of church music. In contrast to most earlier papal pronouncements which aimed chiefly at the prohibition of secular trends, the 1903 *Motu proprio* also issued positive commands for the vital cultivation of *Musica sacra.*[16]

General Principles

The primary purpose of the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 was "to recall the Christian people to participation, by singing – particularly in Gregorian chant – in the prayer of the *Ecclesia orans*, the praying Church."[17] This purpose was seen in no small light, coming on the heels "of a two-centuried growth of abuses. Popes, Councils, Sacred Congregations in Rome, diocesan synods, had again and again legislated and counseled...[Therefore,] the *Motu proprio* of Pius X should not be looked upon as a

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[15]Stephen J. Macaluso, "Pope St. Pius X and the Reform of Catholic Church Music in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries" (M.M. thesis, University of Northern Colorado, 1996), 27.

[16]Skeris, 6.

[17]Ibid., 7.

'bolt from the blue.'"[18] Interestingly enough, it is pronounced in the introduction that the document "would stand as a juridical code of sacred music."[19]

The *Motu Proprio* had, at its heart, the definition of music appropriate for use in church services. Sacred music, according to the first section of the document, "should consequently possess, in the highest degree, the qualities proper to the liturgy, and in particular *sanctity* and *goodness of form*, which will spontaneously produce the final quality of *universality*."[20] Pius X delved further into detail, discussing the use of instruments, voices, and text. His claim was that if music possessed these qualities, how could it possibly *not* be an appropriate method of worship.

This necessity for music to embody holiness, beauty, and universality helped to separate the *Motu Proprio* from its predecessors. Pius X was not saying that any particular kind of music (i.e. "modern" music) was not permitted in a service. Rather, that all music must take on the role of a servant to the text of the liturgy and that it should bring the people of God together in a worshipful way. Holy music, according to Pius X, "must, therefore, exclude all profanity not only in itself, but in the manner in which it is presented by those who execute it."[21] His reasoning for this statement was simply that once a piece of music had been used for secular means, it could not be included in church services since it had first been used to lift up the secular. As Henry says, "all these are

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[18]H.T. Henry, "Music-Reform in the Catholic Church," *Musical Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (Jan. 1915): 104.

[19]Licon, 39.

[20]St. Pius X, *Motu Proprio* on Sacred Music, Paragraph 2.

[21]Ibid.

unfitted for sacred uses, either because of their intrinsically worldly suggestiveness or because of their purely accidental or conventional relationships."[22]

Also embodied in Pius X's statement on "sanctity" is the method of presentation of such music. It is here that the controversy was drawn over use of women in church services. The *Motu Proprio* makes reference to a lack of individual style in performance of sacred music. At the time, the female voice supposedly carried the "diva" quality – that desire by the performer to add ornaments to the music in the form of dramatic motions and vocal flare. Pius X promoted simplicity as the best form of reverence to God.

When Pius X included "goodness of form" in his statement of what music should embody, he was making reference mostly to the style in which it was composed. A lifetime supporter of singing schools, he felt that if composers were not properly schooled, their music obviously could not be thought to contain beauty. Partially responsible for the debate over this "goodness" of music were the attempts at reform prior to 1903. Organizations such as the St. Cecilia Society, founded in 1868 by the Rev. Dr. Franz Witt as an attempt to reform music in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, sought to increase the output of sacred music for any liturgical use. Though successful on a local level at vastly boosting the Catholic music repertoire, this led to the inclusion of, as Henry says, "the (artistically) good, bad, indifferent."[23]

The final requirement of the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 was that music embody "universality." The Pope's hope in including this aspect was to unify the vastly different

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[22]Henry, 108.

[23]Ibid., 110.

national styles that had become so prevalent through the former two requirements of "goodness of form" and "sanctity." As he stated, these particular national styles "must be subordinated in such a manner to the general characteristics of sacred music that nobody of any nation may receive an impression other than good on hearing them."[24]

The Different Kinds of Sacred Music

In the second portion of the *Motu Proprio,* the Pope acknowledges the types of music that are acceptable for use in worship services. For him, Gregorian Chant epitomizes sacred music. Making reference to the characteristics found above, the Pope says, "these qualities are to be found, in the highest degree, in Gregorian Chant..."[25] Therefore, the closer a piece of music gets to being chant-like, the more appropriate and holy it is. In addition, the Pope makes a request that the general populace should be better educated in Gregorian Chant, "so that the faithful may again take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as was the case in ancient times."[26]

The three main qualities necessary for acceptable music are also to be found in "Classic Polyphony, especially of the Roman School, which reached its greatest perfection in the fifteenth century, due to the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina."[27] The Pope reasoned that works of this style agree with Gregorian Chant and have at their heart text as the driving force. Much like the section on Gregorian Chant, the Pope ends this section with a request that music of this style must be reintegrated into the services of the Church, especially those on more solemn occasions.

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[24]St. Pius X, Paragraph 2.

[25]Ibid., Paragraph 3.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid., Paragraph 4.

The final type of music discussed by the Pope falls under the guise of "modern" music. This is one of the differentiating characteristics of the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 as compared to prior dictates. In past attempts at reform, "modern" music had been completely excluded due to its earthly and profane nature. Pius X did make statements on what kinds of "modern" music was allowed, stating for instance that "musical compositions...which are admitted in the Church may contain nothing profane, be free from reminiscences of motifs adopted in the theatres, and be not fashioned even in their external forms after the manner of profane pieces."[28]

The Liturgical Text/External Form of the Sacred Compositions

In the third and fourth sections of the *Motu Proprio*, the Pope confirms that the official language of the Church is Latin and that the liturgical texts must not be changed or rendered in such a way as the meaning would be clouded. Specific rules are given for the performance of the Mass, the office of the Vespers, the hymns, and the antiphons of the vespers.

Of particular interest to this study is Pius X's statement that the movements of the Mass "must preserve the unity of composition proper to their text. It is not lawful," he states, "therefore, to compose them in separate movements, in such a way that each of these movements forms a complete composition in itself, and be capable of being detached from the rest and substituted by another."[29]

The Singers/Organ and Instrumental

In this section is found one of the more controversial points of the *Motu Proprio*: that women should not be allowed to be a part of the choir. His reasoning for this looks

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[28]Ibid., Paragraph 5.

[29]Ibid., Paragraph 11.

back to the principle that the members of the choir are fulfilling a liturgical office, which women were prohibited to do. He goes on to say that should the higher sound of women's voices be needed, boys should be used. The remainder of this section of the document includes information on where the choir is to be positioned as well as guidelines on what behaviors would exclude a person from being a part of the choir.

The organ's use as principal means of accompaniment in church services is confirmed by the *Motu Proprio*. The Pope states that long interludes and preludes are to be avoided and does, in fact, acknowledge that the principal means of music in sacred services is vocal music. Therefore, the organ or instruments should always be secondary to the singing.

The document specifies which instruments can and cannot be used; it excludes the piano, drums, and "noisy or frivolous" instruments. If special permission is granted, bands are permitted but only for use in processions outside the church. Small groups of instruments are appropriate for use inside the church, but these instruments must be chosen with the size of the building and style in mind.

The Length of the Liturgical Chant/Principal Means/Conclusion

In one of the smaller portions of the decree, the Pope states that at no time should the liturgy be secondary to the music. He comments on the length of certain Mass movements, specifically saying that the *Gloria* and the *Credo* should be short (due to the Gregorian tradition).

The final two portions of the *Motu Proprio* deal mostly with the establishment of singing schools (*Scholae Cantorum*). Pope Pius X, having been an avid supporter of

music all his life, saw this as an important and integral part of making lasting reform in sacred music. According to Peggy Ann Licon:

> The establishment of church music schools was a vital part of the reform. One of the first was the establishment of The Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome in 1910 by Pope Pius X. The Pope felt it imperative to establish an official center of musical and liturgical education whereby clergy and musicians could learn the true principles of liturgical music.[30]

He also made a request that anyone involved in the teaching or executing of sacred music do as much as possible to understand the intricacies of the art itself and to support reform, so as not to "fall into contempt."

[30]Licon, 44.

CHAPTER III

SPECIFIC WORKS DISCUSSED

Vaughan Williams – Mass in G Minor (1922)

Concept

Vaughan Williams's Mass in G Minor was commissioned by Sir Richard Terry and composed for the Whitsuntide Singers (conducted by Gustav Holst). Completed in 1922 and premiered in December of that year, the work was intended specifically for liturgical use. As Wilfred Mellers points out, "no doubt Vaughan Williams himself, after the war, needed to make music that looked back at the English heritage in purity, even chastity of spirit...He wrote a Mass conceived uncompromisingly in liturgical terms."[31] Simona Pakenham agrees with Mellers's opinion, stating that "the Mass is in the pattern of Byrd and his contemporaries, unaccompanied and polyphonic in texture, unextended, undramatic and plainly intended for its proper use, whether in Latin, or translated for the Anglican Communion."[32]

Ralph Vaughan Williams himself was a professed agnostic. Like others, his was not an overall religious reason for composing in such a genre. Instead, as Fowler points out in her dissertation, the composer never himself made any overtures as to why he wrote a Mass. Fowler looked to scholars Mellers and Kennedy, who both "support the theory that the Mass in G Minor was written as solace for Vaughan Williams and his

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[31]Wilfred Mellers, *Vaughan Williams and the Vision of Albion* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1989), 68.

[32]Simona Pakenham, *Ralph Vaughan Williams: A Discovery of his Music* (London: Macmillan, 1957), 67.

country in the wake of the end of World War I."[33] Kennedy specifically discusses the issue, saying:

> The mixture of diatonic tunes and triadic harmony, the texture of the music – not bare, like Holst's, nor rich, but luminous and soft – and the instrumental use of the human voice were an essential part of the mood in which Vaughan Williams expressed his reaction to the war: not by anger nor upheaval but by a profounder look into the recesses of the human spirit.[34]

Design

Though intended for liturgical purposes, the Mass in G Minor was premiered by the City of Birmingham Choir on December 6, 1922. The first liturgical performance was given by Terry's choir at Westminster on March 12, 1923. Terry's satisfaction with the piece was great, and he went so far as to declare the Mass "to be a perfect example of music prescribed by the *Motu Proprio* of 1903."[35] Widely popular, the Mass is written for double choir a cappella with a quartet of soloists. There is an *ad libitum* organ part, but it is as Vaughan Williams included in the score:

> This Mass is, of course, intended to be sung unaccompanied; the 'organ introductions' are only to be used in case of necessity to give the pitch at the start and to restore it if lost during the course of a movement. Organists are particularly asked *not* to modulate from the key to which the chorus may have fallen, during the course of the movement, back to the true key. An *ad libitum* organo part has been added, which may be used if it is not found practicable to sing the Mass entirely *a capella*.[36]

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[33]Lauren Patricia Fowler, "The Twentieth-Century English Unaccompanied Mass: A Comparative Analysis of Masses by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Herbert Howells, Bernard Stevens, and Edmund Rubbra" (Ph.D. diss., University of Northern Colorado, 1997), 52.

[34]Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 155.

[35]Fowler, 31.

[36]Ralph Vaughan Williams, Mass in G Minor, score (Stuttgart: Carus-Verlag, 1987).

The Mass in G Minor closely resembles the design of Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*, composed in 1910. Michael Kennedy discusses this similarity, saying that "the setting of the Mass is the vocal equivalent of the *Tallis Fantasia* – double choir (double string orchestra), four soloists (string quartet)."[37]

One of the striking features of the Mass in G Minor is the historical perspective of the work, namely with its inclusion of sixteenth-century techniques. As William Kimmel states:

> The predominance of smooth diatonic progression, the great freedom and independence of phrases, the lack of a fixed metric division, necessitating frequent change of time signature, the independence of stress with relation to bar-lines, the domination of musical rhythm by that of the text – all bear witness to the composer's complete familiarity with 16th century contrapuntal techniques.[38]

Kimmel goes further to state that this look backwards is more apparent through the "rhythmic structure and general contour of the melodies [rather] than in their modality or tonality."[39]

It is interesting that Kimmel would make such a statement considering the number of scholars that are quoted as saying that the sheer polymodality of the Mass is the biggest evidence of Vaughan Williams's historical style. Rather, as Kimmel later points out, "this work is not merely an imitation or rejuvenation of an old style but an amalgamation of certain old principles with other, new concepts."[40] Here is the heart of what Vaughan Williams was attempting to do. The period in which the Mass was

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[37]Kennedy, 175.

[38]William Kimmel, "Vaughan Williams's Melodic Style," *Musical Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (Oct. 1941): 492.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid., 493.

composed found him attempting to establish his own Nationalist style, combining the finest efforts of the Tudor Renaissance with English folk-song tendencies.

Yet another aspect of composition used extensively by Vaughan Williams in the Mass is the false (or cross) relation. As Frank Howes points out, this is the composer looking back to false relation usage of the Elizabethan era (much like in the compositions of William Byrd).[41] Simona Pakenham goes so far as to say that "the whole work is built up on a structure of 'false relation.'"[42] In the 1961 edition of his book, James Day gives three reasons for the inclusion and use of false relations in the Mass in G Minor: "first, because it was regarded as a peculiarly English procedure; secondly, because it is essentially a contrapuntal device, brought about by the free movement of independent parts...; and thirdly, because it is a method of freeing the modes from limitations—enabling them, as Frank Howes points out, to modulate."[43]

Research has also led several scholars (James Day and Simona Pakenham, namely) to describe the design of the Mass in G Minor as being a type of offering in the form of music. As Day puts it, "the communal experience of three centuries of west European musical evolution is here read back into liturgical music of the purest and least theatrical kind imaginable: music as aural incense rather than as part of a dramatic action."[44]

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[41]Frank Howes, *The Music of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1954), 137.

[42]Pakenham, 67.

[43]James Day, *Vaughan Williams* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1961), 98.

[44]James Day, *Vaughan Williams* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 128.

Texture

The Mass in G Minor is written for double choir a cappella with a quartet of soloists. As described above, there is an *ad libitum* organ part for those occasions where it is not possible to perform the entire work without accompaniment or support. Vaughan Williams's choice of double choir with soloists helped to earn the Mass in G Minor wide acclaim. As Fowler states, "almost immediately upon its first performance, critics claimed it as a great achievement due to its performing forces and harmonic language. The Mass was cited as an example of the concepts set forth in the *Motu Proprio*, although first performed as a concert mass by the City of Birmingham Choir in 1922."[45]

Much like with the design of the work, the texture can be seen as falsely archaic. James Day specifically discusses the use of solo versus choir in the texture:

> The choral textures of the Mass may sound archaic at first hearing; and most of them can certainly be found in mass settings from the great period of unaccompanied choral liturgical music. In fact, however, they are much more varied than those to be found within any one a cappella mass setting from the sixteenth century. And certainly Vaughan Williams's use of the contrast between soloists and chorus is in the best twentieth-century practice.[46]

As previously discussed, the Mass in G Minor is similar in texture to the *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*. This, as Pakenham has pointed out, is the flip side of Vaughan Williams's seemingly vocal writing for instruments. In fact, the vocal soloists function much in the same way as the solo quartet in *Fantasia*. Both groups of soloists "introduce into the 'mystical' impersonality of the tutti an element of individualized

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[45]Fowler, 48.

[46]Day, 128.

human expressivity, and extract incipient drama from the interaction and, on occasion, the confrontation."[47]

The individual movements of the work make use of the varied palette provided by the three independent vocal groups (chorus/chorus/soloists). Vaughan Williams at times uses the soloists to create a sense of personalizing the music[48] and at other times uses the separate choruses to represent different aspects of the text at hand. For instance, "in the first part of the 'Credo' Vaughan Williams uses antiphony between, and overlapping of, the two choirs to traverse the attributes of Godhead—'visibilium et invisibilium', 'Deum de deo', 'lumen de lumine', and so on."[49]

Style

The style of the Mass in G Minor can be summed up by the word "timelessness." Vaughan Williams achieves this quality mainly through his use of chant as the basis for the individual vocal lines (even when polyphonic). Wilfrid Mellers states it thusly, "Each line, individually considered, could be plainchant, and the rhythm is, or seems to be, non-metrical. The effect of the music is thus time-effacing and non-, even anti-dramatic."[50] Pakenham agrees with Mellers and sums up the, as she put it, "undatable quality" of the work, "On a first hearing, particularly during the "Kyrie," with its undulating contours, the ear places it instinctively in the 'golden age' of Byrd and Palestrina. Listening further it detects the urgent contemporary voice through the deliberately archaic polyphony."[51]

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[47]Mellers, 69.

[48]Ibid.

[49]Howes, 139.

[50]Mellers, 69.

[51]Pakenham, 68.

Another quality has been discussed previously: the "archaic" flavor that is enhanced by the modality and the organum-like harmonies found throughout the work. Though this can be found in other movements, Mellers in a sense primarily refers to the *Kyrie*, saying "the polyphonic texture is concordant, without even passing dissonances. This, with the prevalence of organum-like parallel triads in first inversion, enhances the spiritual, and in a sense archaic, flavour."[52]

Key Relationships

The Mass in G Minor is a polymodal work, which rarely, at best, is ever strictly based in G minor. As Fowler says, "Mass in G Aeolian (natural minor) might be a more accurate description."[53] Vaughan Williams choice and use of specific church modes was of no random selection. "The analysis of the Mass in G Minor and its texts strongly suggests that Vaughan Williams was aware of the modes and their affects. The use of specific polymodal changes for groups of text as well as individual words is reflected by rapidly shifting tonal centers throughout the Mass."[54] The specific modes to which Fowler is referring to are Dorian, Mixolydian, Lydian, Phrygian, Aeolian, and Ionian. Table 1 was compiled by George Houle in his paper "The Emotional Connections of the Modes According to 16th and 17th Century Theorists." It shows the apparent 'affects' of the particular modes most prevalent in the Mass in G Minor and is ranked in importance in the work by Fowler. The statements' authors are identified in parenthesis.

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[52]Ibid.

[53]Fowler, 58.

[54]Ibid., 60-61.

Table 1. Modal affects in Vaughan Williams's Mass in G Minor

1. Dorian	"Presents a certain majesty and dignity which is easier to admire than to explain." (Glareanus) "It is by nature somewhat sad. However by accidental movement we can accommodate it to words that are full of gravity and deal with lofty and sententious concepts." (Zarlino) "The first is meek, devout to see." (Tallis)
2. Mixolydian	"It was in very great use among early church musicians but in our time the mixolydian and its plagal are almost unknown. It has a certain tranquil dignity which both moves and dominates the people." (Glareanus) "Accompanies words or matters that are light, merry, and also those signifying menaces, perturbations and wrath." (Zarlino) "The seventh treadeth stoute: in forward race." (Tallis)
3. Lydian	"The mode was in great use among early church musicians...but the mode seems harsh. I consider the Lydian an excellent mode if one would treat it as the early church musicians did...yet one rarely finds a pure Lydian in which Fa has not been introduced somewhere. The Ionian is more natural than the Lydian, but the Lydian is more dignified." (Glareanus) "Use to express joy and solace to troubled souls; ecclesiastical, not much used by secular composers." (Zarlino) "The fyfth delighteth: and laugheth more." (Tallis)
4. Phrygian	"This mode has a certain mournfulness and...it excited the emotions to lamenting. Some say that it evokes the harsh reviling of the indignant, others say it incites to battle and enflames the appetite of a frenzied rage." (Glareanus) "It goes well with words that cause weeping, such as laments." (Zarlino) "The third doth rage: and roughly brayth." (Tallis)
5. Aeolian	"Simple, open, and pure, most suitable for various songs and especially for setting lyric verses. It has a pleasant seriousness together with an agreeable sweetness charming beyond measure." (Glareanus) "Although its name is new, it is a very ancient mode. It is open, terse, good for lyric verse, and accompanies words about merry, sweet, smooth, and resonant matters. It has a severe grace mixed with a certain liveliness." (Zarlino)
6. Ionian	"The most used of all modes; very suitable for dancing. Little used by old church musicians, yet so admired by church singers that they have changed many songs of the Lydian mode into this mode. Some men attribute a frivolous wantonness to this mode." (Glareanus) "Use for dances and balli, most dance music in Italy is in this mode, and from this it arises that it is considered merry." (Zarlino)

Source: Data from Lauren Patricia Fowler, "The Twentieth-Century English Unaccompanied Mass: A Comparative Analyisis of Masses by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Herbert Howells, Bernard Stevens, and Edmund Rubbra" (Ph.D. diss. University of Northern Colorado, 1997), 59-60.

In addition to this polymodal approach, "From the 'Gloria' onwards, the music is flecked with recurrent elementary cadential progressions; basically, for example, from minor third to tonic (here, both major chords and sometimes with the seventh or second intervening)."[55]

It is important to once again state that Vaughan Williams was not attempting to recreate a work from the past. Instead, as previously stated, "this work is not merely an imitation or rejuvenation of an old style but an amalgamation of certain old principles with other, new concepts."[56]

Text Setting

The text of the Mass in G Minor is the traditional Latin setting of the Mass Ordinary. An oddity for the work is that "in the 'Credo' the word 'apostolicam' somehow was missing. It has been inserted in the bass line but there is no room for it in the tenor, alto, and soprano entries that follow in imitation."[57]

Another oddity in Vaughan Williams's setting is the fourth movement. As Fowler demonstrates, in the *Sanctus* he presents a multi-sectional movement, complete with separate titles: Sanctus, Osanna I, Benedictus, and Osanna II.[58]

The composer's setting avoids elaboration, extension, and over-the-top drama. Dickinson describes it as "direct and suggestive, but uneventful."[59] The author goes further, claiming that though Vaughan Williams's method of text setting seems a good

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[55]A. E. F. Dickinson, *Vaughan Williams* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), 218-219.

[56]Kimmel, 493.

[57]Howes, 135.

[58]Fowler, 57.

[59]Dickinson, 219.

approach, "the economy of expression promises more than it achieves."[60] Dickinson would seem to be alone in this opinion. Other research has shown a real appreciation for Vaughan Williams's careful setting. James Day goes so far as to say, "It is *Gebrauchsmusik* which is not merely an adornment to the service but a revelation of its meaning, and it should be in the repertory of every cathedral choir in the country."[61] In addition to Day's praise, William Tortolano says, "But the true success comes in [Vaughan Williams's] brilliant treatment of the text. The right 'quiet' words seem to be chosen for chordal sequences, and the right 'brilliant' words seem to be chosen for contrapuntal involvement."[62]

Vaughan Williams uses mixed modes in setting the text to achieve certain concepts of feeling. His choice and use of these modes is discussed in more detail above (*Key Relationships*). In the individual movements, Vaughan Williams applies modes and texture appropriately to the overall mood of the movement. For instance, in the *Agnus Dei* he looks to natural text declamation to determine the rhythms. Mellers discusses this, saying "[the rhythms] therefore suggest, more vividly than any previous section of the Mass, individual human beings addressing God in 'fear and trembling' – the more so because the mode is Phrygian on E, often associated with both suffering and healing."[63]

Recurring Themes/Motives

In the Mass in G Minor, Vaughan Williams makes use of repetition in several ways: rhythm, melody, and texture. He many times takes certain rhythmic figures and

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[60]Ibid.

[61]Day, 99.

[62]Tortolano, 124.

[63]Mellers, 73.

repeats them with some variation. He also does this with melodic figures. William Kimmel points out, "A conspicuous feature [of Vaughan Williams's compositional style] is the great frequency of triplet figures and their alternation with duplets and quadruplets. It is also characteristic to find repetitions of the same melodic fragment in varying rhythmic patterns."[64] Texture of voicing (described above) gives a sense of interaction between human beings and God.

Vaughan Williams uses repeated phrases to achieve and enforce overall unity within the work. He uses "the same phrase for the opening of the 'Miserere nobis' in the 'Agnus Dei' as for the 'Kyrie.' Another unifying device is the familiar Vaughan Williams procedure of developing an initial motif set to different words as it expands from a similar opening phrase – the method of the Tudor and baroque fantasia, in fact."[65] Michael Kennedy agrees with the use of motif as a unifying device, stating that "the methods of the Elizabethan fantasy are employed, for instance the use of a motif, always slightly varied, in the different voice parts, thereby giving a unity to the whole colloquy."[66]

Applicability to the Motu Proprio of 1903

The Vaughan Williams Mass in G Minor can be seen as the epitome of appropriateness when considering the guidelines of the *Motu Proprio*. The text is straight forward, with little repetition. The composer's use of chant as a basis for the *Kyrie* as well as chant-like introits for the *Gloria* and the *Credo* also support the work's

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[64]Kimmel, 496.

[65]Day, 129.

[66]Kennedy, 174.

applicability, while at the same time his use of contrasting choral/solo textures is an appropriate inclusion of modern technique.

Martin – *Messe pour double choeur a cappella* (1922)

Concept

Frank Martin's *Messe pour double choeur a cappella* was composed mostly in 1922, with the "Agnus Dei" being completed in 1926. The work was uncommissioned and not intended for any specific performance whatsoever. In fact, it remained unperformed until 1963, when it was premiered in Hamburg. In his analysis of the work, Robert Glasmann suggests that Martin's withholding of the *Messe* was due to the composer's desire that the work not be criticized as art. Martin himself is quoted as saying:

> I did not wish that it be performed, fearing that it would be judged from a completely aesthetic point of view. I looked at it then as a matter between God and me...the expression of religious sentiments, it seemed to me, ought to remain secret and have nothing to do with public opinion. For this reason, this composition stayed in a drawer for forty years.[67]

Much like Vaughan Williams, it seems that Martin's desire to compose a setting of the Catholic Mass stems from an inward desire. Glasmann, using statements made by Martin, makes the following proposition of the composer's purpose: "this was a project undertaken purely to fulfill spiritual needs (no commission was involved)."[68] The author

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[67]Robert V. Glasmann, Jr., "A Choral Conductor's Analysis for Performance of *Messe pour double choeur a cappella* by Frank Martin" (D.M.A. diss., The University of Wisconsin Madison, 1987), 24-25.

[68]Ibid., 26.

goes further to state, "the reason that Martin chose the mass text for his personal, spiritual expression remains unclear."[69]

Design

The *Messe pour double choeur a cappella* is scored for two SATB choirs without accompaniment. Since the work was written only for inward expression of the composer, "Martin felt free to express himself without regard to any musical limitations of the [performing] group."[70] The composer thus makes use of contrasting tessitura and uses divisi within the voice parts. Bruce Lynn Vantine makes a good summarizing statement on the design of the *Messe*:

> The Frank Martin Mass for Double Choir A cappella is a setting in five movements of the traditional Roman liturgical text from the Ordinary of the Mass including the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus-Benedictus (in one movement), and Agnus Dei. Choirs I and II, each consisting of soprano, alto, tenor, and bass sections, sing at times antiphonally, at times together, and in various combinations of multiple voice counterpoint. Divisi writing occurs only occasionally within the individual voice parts.[71]

Like the other composers included in this study, Martin was not Catholic. As mentioned above, it is not exactly known why a composer raised as a Protestant (Martin's father was a Calvinist minister) would choose to compose a setting of the Catholic Mass. In his dissertation on the *Messe*, Robert Glasmann discusses the oddity of Martin composing settings of both the Mass Ordinary and the Requiem Mass. He suggests that perhaps the answer to the question could be found in Martin's statement on his *Requiem*:

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[69]Ibid.

[70]Ibid.

[71]Bruce Lynn Vantine, "Four Twentieth-Century Masses: An Analytical Comparison of Style and Compositional Technique" (D.M.A. thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1982), 10.

> This liturgical text (which, in its riches, evokes in turn the expectation of rest, supplication, pure adoration, or the anguish of the last judgment) I identified with fully, in spite of the fact that, intellectually speaking, it should be foreign to me. These images, originating in the Middle Ages, spoke directly to my deepest thoughts. This thought which no language can express clearly, it is this thought of death that I tried to put into my music.[72]

Though specifically dealing with the text of the Mass for the dead, similarities can be found with the text of the Mass Ordinary. At the core of both texts is eternal life and, as the composer stated, an evocation of "the expectation of rest, supplication, pure adoration."

Texture

Glasmann points out several specific areas of contrast as a feature of Martin's *Messe*. Included in this list are "texture, dynamics, tempo, meter, and tessitura."[73] The author goes further to discuss Martin's use of textural variation and choral orchestration, stating:

> Martin frequently varies the texture of this mass for double choir by alternating between polychoral writing for two SATB choirs to full eight-part writing which is not polychoral...An extension of eight-part writing, choral orchestration, is also to be observed. Here we see such examples as the doubling of a melody in octaves among two or more of the voices, while the remainder of the choir provides harmonic support. In addition, choral orchestration is illustrated with the setting of full choral sounds with the basses in low registers and the sopranos in their upper ranges, while the remaining voices fill out the chords appropriately.[74]

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[72]Glasmann, 19-20.

[73]Ibid., 62.

[74]Ibid., 62-63.

The composer's careful use and manipulation of texture is one of the distinctive characteristics of this work.

Another method of textural manipulation used by Martin is "his fondness for expanding musical texture by superimposing layer upon layer of musical activity."[75] This process is referred to by Bruce Lynn Vantine as thematic metamorphosis. "Beginning with an intervallic germ, the composer built upon it by repeating or expanding the figure, sometimes through the use of sequence. Through this repetitive extension, the composer created momentum and intensity in the lines, intensity which often fades as passages reach their conclusion."[76] Iaian Hamilton also refers to Martin's use of textural manipulation and metamorphosis, stating "so many of Martin's finest works are almost self-imposed problems of handling textures...textures usually of three or more layers, each really self-sufficient, but fused together in a masterly and inevitable manner."[77]

Style

The style of the Martin's *Messe* can best be described by the term "archaic modernism," which refers to the idea of archaic methods and tendencies executed and coupled with specifically modern techniques. As Bernhard Billeter stated, "Martin acknowledged in later life [that] he moved to a linear, consciously archaic style, restricted

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[75]Ibid., 63.

[76]Vantine, 376.

[77]Iaian Hamilton, "Swiss Contemporary Music," in *European Music in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Howard Hartog (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957), 153 & 160.

to modal melody and perfect triads and evading the tonal gravitation of Classical and Romantic harmony."[78]

According to Glasmann, "some of the traits to be observed in the mass that evoke this archaic quality include the use of church modes, pentatonicism, a fondness for cross relationships, a degree of rhythmic flexibility that recalls 'unmeasured' plainsong as well as Renaissance styles, and the use of suspensions at cadence points."[79] Even with the great number of archaic qualities found in the work, this Mass setting is very much modern in the composer's use of tessitura, textural manipulation/contrast, tonality, and harmonic language. Glasmann uses the term "gliding tonality" to refer to the *Messe*, "where a piece ends in a key different than that in which it began."[80] The author also discusses Martin's use of extreme contrast (discussed above) and extended chords (including intervals of sevenths, ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths) as evidence of modernism.[81]

The sense of "archaic modernism" is evident upon witnessing a performance of the *Messe*. As Franz Walter commented after a performance in Geneva in 1974, "perhaps we expected to see a youthful work, marked by numerous influences and even some awkwardness. Even more surprising and joyous, this *Messe* has kept the mindfulness and originality which makes it perfectly modern, even if it is far from the present style of Frank Martin."[82]

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[78]Glasmann, 7.

[79]Ibid., 59.

[80]Ibid., 61.

[81]Ibid., 62.

[82]Ibid., 28.

Key Relationships

The idea of a specific tonal center and key relationships between or within movements proves interesting in regard to the Martin *Messe*. In fact, the composer does not make use of notated key signatures until the "et resurrexit" section of the *Credo*.

The *Kyrie* movement, as Glasmann says, is tonally ambiguous (leaning toward either A or E). Martin then moves to a more solid feeling of D (major and minor) throughout the *Gloria* movement.[83] As a point of reference, Glasmann states that it is through the "use of extended pedal points" that a movement will establish a tonal center.[84] Moving from the *Gloria* to the *Credo*, we see the composer's use of dominant to tonic connection (A major to D minor). As mentioned above, Martin begins making use of key signatures with the beginning of the "et resurrexit" section of the *Credo*, a practice he continues for the remainder of the *Messe*. The sense of Martin's use of "gliding tonality" (mentioned above) is most evident in the many tonal/modal shifts of the *Credo*. The movement ends with a strong F-sharp major chord, but does not have the same dominant to tonic connection to the *Sanctus*. Instead, Martin shifts modes with the *Sanctus* beginning in F-sharp minor.

Much like the other works included in the current study, Martin's *Messe* exhibits a definite quality of modality, using the old church modes as a basis. This modal quality is most apparent in the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria*, with their lack of key signatures and use of cross relations. Glasmann goes on to state that "determining which mode Martin is using

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[83]Ibid., 87.

[84]Ibid., 61.

for a given section of music is often difficult, for he will introduce accidentals which temporarily undermine the identity of the mode."[85]

Vantine provides agreement with Glasmann, stating:

> Clear tonal centers are heard at important structural points throughout the Mass. Between these harmonic goals, the extended tertian structures and chords of addition often cloud the harmonic movement and momentarily obscure the pitch area with mild dissonance. It is important to note that Martin consciously avoided traditional dominant to tonic functional progression. Instead, he substituted a modalization of the harmonic language based on plagal movement.[86]

Text Setting

In his *Messe pour double choeur a cappella*, Martin makes use of a traditional setting of the Latin Mass text. As Glasmann states in his study, "Martin is normally very conscientious in the setting of the text so that proper syllabic stress is maintained."[87] Bruce Vantine agrees, stating:

> In the careful setting of text to achieve natural syllabic stress through the rhythm and music, Frank Martin stands alone [among the four twentieth-century mass composers examined by Vantine]. He employed both syllabic declamation as well as some long melismatic sections. His highly singable lines meticulously take into account the natural rhythm of the words.[88]

There are a few instances in the *Messe* where the composer's choice of syllabic stress seems more awkward and atypical. Two examples are pointed out by Glasmann and, in the opinion of this author, have more to do with interpretation than improper

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[85]Ibid., 100.

[86]Vantine, 386.

[87]Glasmann, 71.

[88]Vantine, 407.

design by the composer.[89] Both fall within the *Credo* and can be avoided through careful use of syllabic emphasis by the choir.

On the whole, Martin uses little text repetition. As in most Mass settings, the *Agnus Dei* movement proves to be an exception.

Recurring Themes/Motives

The best example of recurring material is found at the beginning of the *Kyrie*, in bars 1-8 of the alto lines. As Vantine suggests, this chant is responsible for "generating materials not only employed in the Kyrie but in the entire Mass as well...An important motivic characteristic here is the abundant use of seconds and thirds, intervals which prove to the basic to the materials of the entire Mass."[90] It is these intervals, coupled with the idea of the work as exhibiting archaic modernism, which provide a sense of cohesion and unity within the *Messe* as a whole.

Applicability to the Motu Proprio of 1903

Martin's *Messe*, though a bit more contemporary in compositional style than the Vaughan Williams Mass in G Minor, fits within the guidelines of the *Motu Proprio* of 1903. It is in Latin with little, to no extraneous text repetition. The text is set with proper stress and syllabification. The work certainly fits the three characteristics of sacred music (holy, true art, and universal).

Probably the only *Motu Proprio* guideline that was not adhered to in Martin's work was that the *Agnus Dei* was composed separately from and four years later than the rest of the work. This final movement still contains the sense of "archaic modernism"

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[89]Glasmann, 71-72.

[90]Vantine, 10-11.

and intervallic cohesion as the rest of the *Messe*, but the design and setup of the movement is somewhat different. Glasmann suggests, as an example of this difference, to "consider the static movement of the second choir in the Agnus Dei. No where else in the mass is the second choir relegated to the status of 'constantly accompanying body.'"[91]

Another slight difference is the lack of the solo plainchant intonation for the *Credo*. In its place, Martin uses a setting of the text "Credo in unum deum" set as "a homophonic, choral chant harmonization."[92]

Poulenc – Mass in G (1937)

Concept

Francis Poulenc's Mass in G is an uncommissioned work, dedicated to the composer's father, Emil. Premiered on May 2, 1938, the work was written for the Chanteurs de Lyon at the Dominican Chapel (in the Faubourg St. Honoré). An important note about this work is that it was both intended for liturgical use and was premiered in a church setting on a Sunday morning.[93]

Poulenc was raised Catholic, but as Kenneth Gabrielse states, "When his father died in 1917, he abandoned the faith."[94] This abandonment continued until a spiritual revival was experienced by the composer in 1936. With new fervor, Poulenc began work on the Mass and had a new "intense desire for the composition of religious music [that]

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[91]Glasmann, 112.

[92]Vantine, 43-44.

[93]Henri Hell, *Francis Poulenc*, translated by Edward Lockspeiser (New York: Grove Press, 1959), 50.

[94]Kenneth J. Gabrielse, "A Conductor's Analysis of *Gloria* Settings from Five Masses and A Pedagogical Approach to Their Performance" (D.M.A. diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1996), 91.

remained with him the remainder of his life."[95] Keith Daniel goes further to say that this awakening was "precipitated by the tragic and violent death of the composer Pierre-Octave Ferroud" and that Poulenc "sought compositional refuge and solace in the choral genre."[96]

Unlike other settings in the current study, with the Mass in G the composer himself discussed his conception. For the purpose of the following study, his statement is included in full below:

> In arriving at Anost in August 1937, I had decided to write a Mass dedicated to my father's memory. Because I am from Aveyronais stock, that is to say Montagnard and already Mediterranean, the Romanesque style has always been at the root, quite naturally, of my preferences. Thus I tried to write in a rough and direct style, this act of faith called a Mass. This roughness is especially striking in the opening *Kyrie*, but do not forget that at the beginning of the Church, the unbaptized could also sing this hymn with the priests. It is what explains the almost savage style of my *Kyrie*. For the *Sanctus*, I thought of the heads of angels intermingled in the frescos of Gozzoli in the Riccardi Palace in Florence. It is a carillon of voices. As for the concluding *Agnus*, sung by a solo soprano in a high register, it symbolizes the Christian soul, confident of a life after death.[97]

Design

The Mass in G is written for mixed a cappella choir. In his doctoral thesis, Bruce Vantine describes the work as follows, "Employing both tutti and soli ensemble combinations of voices, the forces of the Mass in G include sopranos, altos, tenors, and

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[95]Ibid.

[96]Keith W. Daniel, "Poulenc's choral works with orchestra," in *Francis Poulenc: Music, Art and Literature*, edited by Sidney Buckland and Myriam Chimènes (Brookfield: Ashgate, 1999), 48.

[97]Carl B. Schmidt, *Entrancing Muse: A Documented Biography of Francis Poulenc* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2001), 242-243.

basses of the choir which are frequently each divided a2, a3, and even a4. An extended soprano solo is featured in the Agnus Dei."[98] In addition, the composer makes use of accidentals rather than giving a set key signature. This lack of notated key signatures continues throughout the work.

An oddity of the Mass in G is its lack of a *Credo* movement. Though the composer never spoke about his reason for this omission, it has been a point of scholarly speculation. As Benjamin Ivry points out:

> One commentator hazarded a guess that Poulenc omitted a Credo from his Mass because he was 'guided by a faith so secure that he apparently felt no need to state it outright.' One might equally assume that he left out the Credo because his faith was recent and relatively insecure, or simply that in this brief Mass, what was left out in general was as striking as what was included – there is no orchestra nor even an organ to accompany the Mass in G.[99]

Though the *Credo* is missing, the work is still a five-movement mass; consisting of *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus*, and *Agnus Dei.*

Ivry goes further to describe the concept of the Mass as representing "the craggy primitiveness of religion that Poulenc cherished on pilgrimages to Rocamadour…[in] the Mass in G, Poulenc sought a new wildness in the humblest aspects of Catholic worship."[100] This wildness is attributed, Ivry says, possibly to Poulenc acknowledging a militant form of Catholicism which was associated with fascism, nationalism, and anti-

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[98]Vantine, 78.

[99]Benjamin Ivry, *Francis Poulenc* (London: Phaidon Press, 1996), 101.

[100]Ibid.

semitism. This movement, called the *Action Française*, was "much in vogue in the 1930s in France."[101]

Poulenc himself described the work as "harmonically speaking, [his] most complex a cappella work."[102] It contains little ornamentation, and instead focuses on simplicity and realism. Daniel describes the work as containing "a full, rich texture (often opening to six parts, and occasionally to as many as nine) while avoiding anything that could be construed as excessive, rhetorical, or ornamental."[103] In his review of a recording of the work, Aaron Copland confirms the composer's success with the simplistic aspect of the Mass: "Eclectic as ever, charming as ever, musical as ever, this Mass is not at all severe and forbidding. *Au contraire*. It was meant to be sung in all simplicity in a sunny church in Southern France."[104]

Texture

The Mass in G reflects Poulenc's choral style: "emphasis on harmony" with "dominance of a homophonic texture."[105] His is an orchestral conception of the human voice, much like Vaughan Williams but in a different manner, using wide ranges and the full palette of color available in the human voice. Keith Daniel states that Poulenc, especially in the *Gloria* of the Mass, uses "varied and alternating groups of two and three voices... This technique...is similar to cross-choir orchestration, and is but one example

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[101]Ibid.

[102]Keith W. Daniel, *Francis Poulenc: His Artistic Development and Musical Style* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982), 223.

[103]Ibid.

[104]Ivry, 102.

[105]Daniel, 200.

of Poulenc's orchestral conception in certain of his choral pieces. Another texture employed with some regularity is a successive entrance of several voices at short time intervals, a sort of 'piling on' texture."[106]

The work uses an SATB choir, with divisi in all parts. Though he makes no note in the title of "mixed choir with solo," Poulenc sets the *Agnus Dei* with an extended solo soprano introduction. Much like the other Mass settings in the current study, Poulenc's includes a sense of historical perspective through the use of plainchant-inspired melodies and rhythms. These will be discussed in more detail below.

Style

Poulenc was once quoted as saying "My music is my portrait."[107] This statement certainly holds true with the Mass in G. As discussed above, the work was the result of Poulenc's religious reawakening in 1936, which changed much about the composer's outlook on both life as a whole and on his work as a musician. On the topic of his sacred output including and following the Mass, Poulenc said, "I try to create a feeling of fervor and, especially, of humility, for me the most beautiful quality of prayer...My conception of religious music is essentially direct, and, I dare say intimate."[108] Daniel goes further to say that "Poulenc's only criterion when writing religious music was that the sentiment be sincere."[109] In her article about the poet Eluard, Sidney Buckland provides a thorough definition of his religious style: "[It] was neither sanctimonious, nor bigoted, nor rarified. It was firmly rooted in earth, among the people, in the lives of men...There was about his

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[106]Ibid.

[107]Ibid., 99.

[108]Ibid., 238.

[109]Ibid.

religion a sensuality, an earthiness indivisible from that of his life. Discussing his Mass of 1937, Yvonne Gouverné described it as a work 'flowing with sap and promises.'"[110]

These statements relate directly to the Mass in G. The influence of plainchant, universally recognized as one of most simplistic and sacred approaches to music, can be found in both the *Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei* movements (most notably with the solo soprano opening the latter). In addition, another aspect of Poulenc's outlook on sacred music can be found in the Mass through its soprano-dominated texture. Benjamin Ivry supports the idea that this texture shows that "religious worship was in Poulenc's sonic imagination an affair for pious country women."[111] Others have described the Mass as a resuscitation of "a singing and dancing tradition that was obsolete...with touchingly original vulnerability."[112]

Most notable about the Mass in G in terms of style is the inherent difference in the overall feel of the movements. In his book, Keith Daniel takes the descriptions put forth by the composer himself and adds a few additional opinions regarding the movements not specifically mentioned by Poulenc. His impressions about the stylistic changes between movements are listed in Table 2.

Though his study focused specifically on the *Gloria* movement of the Mass in G (and others), Kenneth Gabrielse included a section on Poulenc's choral traits. His examination of Keith Daniel's book on the composer provided a table with general style

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[110]Sidney Buckland, "'The Coherence of Opposites': Eluard, Poulenc and the Poems of *Tel jour telle nuit*," in *Francis Poulenc*, edited by Sidney Buckland and Myriam Chimènes (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 159.

[111]Ivry, 101.

[112]Wilfred Mellers, *Francis Poulenc* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 77.

characteristics found both in the Mass and in much, if not all, of Poulenc's choral writing.

See Table 3.

Table 2. Stylistic change between movements of Poulenc's Mass in G

Movement	Overall Style/Feeling
Kyrie	Power
Gloria	Power
Sanctus	Joyous repose in a sweetly romantic manner
Benedictus	Quiet, subdued, chromatic
Agnus Dei	Confidence of life after death

Source: Data from Keith W. Daniel, *Francis Poulenc: His Artistic Development and Musical Style* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982).

Table 3. Musical traits of Poulenc's choral style as defined by Keith Daniel

1. The dominance of a homophonic texture
2. Varied and alternating groups of two and three voices
3. A distinct melody set against a differing accompaniment
4. A false counterpoint created by use of an ostinato or chromatic line that lacks individuality
5. Clarity between the voice parts; crossing voice lines never clashing
6. Distinctive 'Poulenc chromaticism' created three ways; rapid harmonic change, use of diminished triads and sevenths, and use of appoggiaturas
7. Solo lines resembling plainchant
8. Use of *fauxbourdon,* parallel 6/3 chords moving conjunctly
9. All music controlled by strong tonality
10. Passages of rich harmony, full texture, often chorale-like in rhythm and tempo, and abundant with seventh chords, added sixths, ninths, and elevenths
11. Meter changes that occur frequently
12. Conservative rhythmic language

Source: Data from Kenneth J. Gabrielse, "A Conductor's Analysis of *Gloria* Settings from Five Masses and A Pedagogical Approach to Their Performance" (D.M.A. diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1996), 93-94.

Key Relationships

In the Mass in G, Poulenc never assigns a specific key signature. The composer instead uses accidentals as necessary, which gives the feeling of a lack of overall key, barring the title of the work. Within the movements of the Mass, there are frequent shifts of tonal center, which, coupled with the complex harmonic style, lead to what Daniel refers to as a "sense of purification."[113] As he states in his book, "The most important concept of Poulenc's cadential practices is that no matter how ambiguous, fluid, or colorful the harmonies before a cadence may be, the sense of tonality is always clarified at the cadence."[114]

As with other discussed Mass settings, Poulenc's Mass in G shows some sense of modality, especially in the *Agnus Dei.* Yet again, the influence of plainchant is evident along with this use of modality. Warren Werner has described the opening soprano solo in the final movement in succinct detail, giving a better look at the movement and, in a sense, of the entire work:

> Completely in the Gregorian tradition is the soprano solo that opens the 'Agnus Dei' of the Mass in G. Its melismatic, free-flowing melody moves among the tones of the Mixolydian mode that places the final, D, midway in its g'—g'' tessitura. (Medieval terminology would classify this melody, with its range extending a perfect fifth below the final, as Plagal.) A tonally-oriented ear might hear this opening phrase in G Major until measure 3, but then the insistence on D, the melody's focal center, begins to take effect and a reassessment of the material in Mixolydian terms takes place.[115]

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[113]Daniel, 84-85.

[114]Ibid., 84.

[115]Warren K. Werner, "The Harmonic Style of Francis Poulenc" (Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa, 1966), 144-145.

Mellers suggests that these modal shifts were used by Poulenc as a specific method to invoke a sense of "the startlements as well as the holy *mysterium* inherent in the ceremony of the Eucharist, in a manner no doubt conditioned by the outward savagery and inner agony of [composer-friend] Ferroud's death."[116]

Text Setting

Though Poulenc uses the traditional Latin text of the Mass Ordinary, there is nothing quite so ordinary about the way he sets it. Poulenc makes great use of text repetition throughout the Mass, the least of which can be found in the *Gloria.*

Bruce Vantine mentions the issue of text stress in his study, pointing out that "numerous examples of unusual text setting can be found in the Mass in G."[117] Scholars have debated on the reason behind Poulenc's odd setting. Gary L. Ebensberger gives two possible reasons:

> This problem was discussed...with Jean Burger, an eminent European trained musicologist, choral conductor and composer, and he agreed that these 'errors' in syllable stress in the Latin words are not an oversight on Poulenc's part, but occur for two reasons:
>
> 1. French prosody of Latin. It is simply the way the French pronounce Latin.
> 2. When a French composer sets a text, be it at the 'pop' music level or at the serious level of the art song, the concern is not so much for which syllable, but for how many.
>
> Poulenc's concern with the number of syllables is clearly evident in his frequently changing meters.[118]

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[116]Mellers, 77.

[117]Vantine, 110.

[118]Henry Sellers, "Francis Poulenc and His Sacred Choral Music: Some Style Characteristics: Part II," *Choral Journal* 17, no. 8 (April 1977): 13.

Text-led meter changes are also acknowledged by Warren Werner. In his dissertation, Werner states that these frequent meter changes occur "when the prosody or phrase construction demands."[119]

With the atypical text setting, one notices immediately that Poulenc seems to place undue stress to the ending syllable of words. This can be heard in almost every movement of the Mass. For instance, due to rhythmic selection, in the *Kyrie* movement the final syllable ("-son") of "eleison" is stressed rather than the usual second ("-lei"). Also, in both the *Sanctus* and the *Benedictus* movements, the final syllable ("-sis") of "in excelsis" is stressed rather than the second ("-cel").

Even with the multitude of odd syllabic stresses, there are instances in which the Latin text is set in a typical manner. This occurs most notably in the *Sanctus* movement, from the beginning up to "Hosanna in excelsis," where the composer returns to his method of stressing the atypical syllables of the text.

Recurring Themes/Motives

When considering the Mass in G as a whole, Poulenc does not use much musical repetition. One notable instance of repetition can be found in the *Sanctus* and the *Benedictus* movements. The melodic material for the text "Hosanna in excelsis" is stated in both movements with slight rhythmic differences due to notation. This is striking only due to the composer's omission of the *Credo* movement and subsequent separation of the *Sanctus* and the *Benedictus* into separate movements.

Bruce Lynn Vantine suggests that the material from the plainchant-like opening of the *Kyrie* movement provides a point of departure for the entire Mass. "The intervals

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[119]Werner, 34.

of the second, the third, and the fifth," he claims, "provide a basis for materials presented throughout the Kyrie and the Mass itself."[120]

Applicability to the Motu Proprio of 1903

Poulenc's Mass setting is quite possibly the least applicable of the works included in this study. Namely, it is missing a *Credo* movement. Also, as Elwyn Wienandt points out, "[it] does not qualify on several counts of theatricality and because the celebrant's intonations have been set polyphonically [rather than as a solo]."[121] "Theatrical qualities," like those referred to by Wienandt, include the introductory solo to the *Agnus Dei* as well as the wide and dramatic tessitura coupled with Poulenc's outlook on religion as earthy and sensual.

In reference to the omission of the *Credo*, Bruce Lynn Vantine suggests that it is due to "the practice in many present day worship services to have the congregation participate in the statement of the Creed."[122] This is an interesting thought considering that the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 called for more congregational involvement in the worship services while at the same time saying that the office of the Mass should be performed as a whole, without omitting a particular movement. So as this author sees it, though Poulenc was not adhering to one aspect or portion of the Pope's edict, he allowed for the execution of an entirely separate aspect – one that none of the other works included in this study contain.

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[120]Vantine, 81.

[121]Wienandt, 425.

[122]Vantine, 355.

Even with these issues considered, the work did not make use of any existing materials of the profane and was intended for liturgical use. Therefore, in the opinion of this author, the Mass in G does adhere to the three qualities of sacred music as laid out in the *Motu Proprio* of 1903.

Stravinsky – Mass (1948)

Concept

Stravinsky began work on his Mass in 1944 and completed the work in March, 1948. As Michael Steinberg points out, "the Mass is one of the very few works by Stravinsky composed not in response to a commission but from inner need alone."[123] Stravinsky was baptized in the Russian Orthodox Church at his birth, but in his early teens began to separate with the church's ideals. It was not until 1926, following a religious experience with a group of pilgrims, that he reinitiated his ties with the church and became an active believer again.

This reinvigorated sense of the eternal was not Stravinsky's sole reason for embarking on the composition of a Mass. In an interview with Robert Craft, Stravinsky himself said, "My mass was partly provoked by some Masses of Mozart that I found in a secondhand music store in Los Angeles in 1942 or 1943. As I played through these rococo-operatic sweets-of-sin, I knew I had to write a Mass of my own, but a real one."[124]

It is interesting that a Russian Orthodox musician would compose a work intended for Roman Catholic congregations. "I wanted my Mass to be used liturgically,"

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[123]Michael Steinberg, *Choral Masterworks: A Listener's Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 270.

[124]Ibid., 270-271.

he said, "an outright impossibility as far the Russian Church was concerned, as Orthodox tradition proscribes musical instruments in its services – and as I can endure unaccompanied singing in only the most harmonically primitive music."[125]

The four years taken to complete the Mass were due to other commissions and works that pulled Stravinsky from his personal project. The premiere of the work was on October 27, 1948, at La Scala in Milan. La Scala was an interesting choice for the event, since Stravinsky had hoped his work would be used for solely liturgical reasons. In a letter to the conductor of the work's premiere, Stravinsky showed his regret for the venue, saying "such a shame that this Mass, conceived in the modest tradition of Flemish motets, with a small choir of children and men, had to have its premiere at the Scala in Milan. That sumptuous place is the last one I would have considered for this music."[126]

Design

The score of the Mass calls for mixed chorus and double wind quintet with markings for the discanti and alti parts that children's voices should be employed rather than women's. The instrumentation includes 2 oboes, cor anglais, 2 bassoons, 2 trumpets in Bb and C, and 3 trombones. Much like his other works, Stravinsky uses a particular method of composition in which the orchestra and voices are thought of as one larger group of instruments. There is not much doubling of parts between the two groups and, typically, one is not more important than the other. Rather, he "uses the instrumental

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[125]Ibid., 272.

[126]Igor Stravinsky, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence Volume I,* ed. Robert Craft (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), 232.

complement as another, different, choir, more often prompting, or punctuating, or adjacent to the voices."[127]

In the Mass, however, it was Stravinsky's desire that the text be the focal point of the work, creating "very cold music, absolutely cold, that will appeal directly to the spirit."[128] Though the work was fully liturgical in design, it has been rarely used in Catholic services, a point which continued to disappoint Stravinsky. Some would say that from its premiere at La Scala, the work was 'doomed' to a life of secular concert hall performances only.[129]

Texture

The texture of Stravinsky's Mass is codified by symmetry, a central concept within the work. Bob Griffith points out in his study that "this symmetry includes key relationships, the use of chant, length of movements, texture, rhythm, and the use of solo voices."[130] Key relationships will be discussed at a later point.

In many of the ways Stravinsky composed the Mass, it can arguably be a look back to past masters of the Mass genre. His use and insistence on chant-like rhythms and melodies is one of the main components of this argument. As Gilbert Amy says, "In referring to the Mass, we have already noted a return to medieval sonorities and practices: diaphonies (in the 'Gloria'), predominance of the 'open' intervals (fourths and

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[127]Paul Griffiths, *The Master Musicians: Stravinsky* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992), 143.

[128]E.W. White, *Stravinsky* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 408.

[129]André Boucourechliev, *Stravinsky*, translated by Martin Cooper (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1987), 227.

[130]Bob Griffith, "Mass Settings by Three Twentieth-Century Composers: Poulenc, Stravinsky, and Bernstein" (M.M. thesis, Baylor University, 1981), 58.

fifths on open strings), specific instrumentation, and so forth."[131] She goes further to say that although there is evidence of these medieval tendencies, "there is no direct reproduction of musical sources five or six hundred years old, but rather a re-creation of them, filtered through the ear of an architect of twentieth-century music."[132] Amy is confirming what many other researchers have found regarding Stravinsky's work: with the Mass, he was not as interested in historical perspective as he was in the language and his inner need for setting it in such a way as to be applicable for liturgical use.

The vocal lines of the work reflect Stravinsky's desire for simplicity. Amy makes reference to Stravinsky's "preference for the middle register"[133] in works such as *Symphony of Psalms*. This preference can also be found in the Mass, where Stravinsky keeps the vocal writing in a three-octave range (typically from G_2 to F_5). There are only two instances in the work where Stravinsky passes these boundaries. In the *Credo*, the bass range is extended to F_3 for the text "Crucifixus etiam pro nobis: sub Pontio Pilato." Likewise, in the *Sanctus* the sopranos' range is extended to G_5 for the text "...gloria tua."

Symmetry of texture centered on the *Credo* can also be seen in Stravinsky's scoring of the movements. The *Kyrie* and the *Agnus Dei* use antiphonal chorus and orchestra. The *Gloria* and *Sanctus* use antiphonal soloist and chorus (soprano/alto in the *Gloria* and tenor/bass in the *Sanctus*). The central *Credo* uses the chorus as main emphasis. Boucourechliev summarizes this symmetry with the following table:

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[131]Gilbert Amy, "Aspects of the Religious Music of Igor Stravinsky," in *Confronting Stravinsky: Man, Musician, and Modernist*, edited by Jann Pasler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 204.

[132]Ibid.

[133]Ibid., 197.

Table 4. Symmetry between movements of Stravinsky's Mass

Kyrie	Gloria	Credo	Sanctus	Agnus Dei
chorus & orchestra	soloists (S/A) & chorus	chorus (syllabic scansion *pp*)	soloists (T/B) & chorus	chorus & orchestra

Source: Data from André Boucourechliev, *Stravinsky*, translated by Martin Cooper (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1987), 229.

Style

Stravinsky composed his Mass in such a way that it would be appealingly reverent and in no way 'vulgar.' Unlike the larger-scale works of earlier composers such as Poulenc and Vaughan Williams, Stravinsky's Mass calls for a small group of performers, both choir and orchestra, and is strikingly austere.

Much like other works from Stravinsky's neo-classical period, the Mass contains an element of combining aspects of the past with new ideas and techniques. At no time did Stravinsky confirm that this was his goal in writing the Mass, but his penchant for simplicity, for chant-like melodic lines, and for his use of text greatly illustrate a look back in time to earlier composers of Masses.

It should be mentioned that prior to beginning work on the Mass, Stravinsky had recently completed a detailed study of Monteverdi that, as Griffith states in his thesis, "heightened [Stravinsky's] interest in the seventeenth century. The influence of this study can be seen in his greater insistence on counterpoint, polyphony, and using the Mass as a genre."[134] He was also engrossed in music of Jacopo da Bologna and Machaut. Still, Stravinsky continued to state his reason for the composition of the Mass as purely an inner desire to write a purely liturgical work – one that was not necessarily an exercise

[134]Griffith, 10-11.

in reinventing music of the past. Robert Craft also confirms this, stating that "this Mass is no mere exercise in musical style but a work born of religious faith."[135]

As stated previously, the interaction between the choir and orchestra is one of great interest. Instead of the orchestra doubling or accompanying the choir, Stravinsky has the instruments adding accent and a form of musical commentary on the voices. He viewed both the choir and orchestra as one large-scale palette on which to build variety while at the same time continuing a sense of unity.

Key Relationships

As stated above, key relationships are a part of the symmetry used by Stravinsky to create cohesion within the work. Griffith has some interesting observations about these relationships, claiming that symmetry exists both between the beginning and ending tonal centers of each movement (within the movements) and between the movements themselves. However, it is important to keep in mind that, as Paul Griffiths points out, "the music [of the Mass] seems to exist both after the exact definitions of major-minor harmony have dissolved and before they have yet crystallized, to be contemporary at once with Schoenberg and with Josquin."[136]

There is an evident intervallic relationship between the first three movements, but after that, Griffith's analysis is not as concrete. His claim of the key relationship of a second existing between the ending of the *Kyrie* and the beginning of the *Gloria* and likewise, between the ending of the *Gloria* and the beginning of the *Credo* holds true. However, he then says that the *Sanctus* begins in B – perhaps meaning the first pitches of

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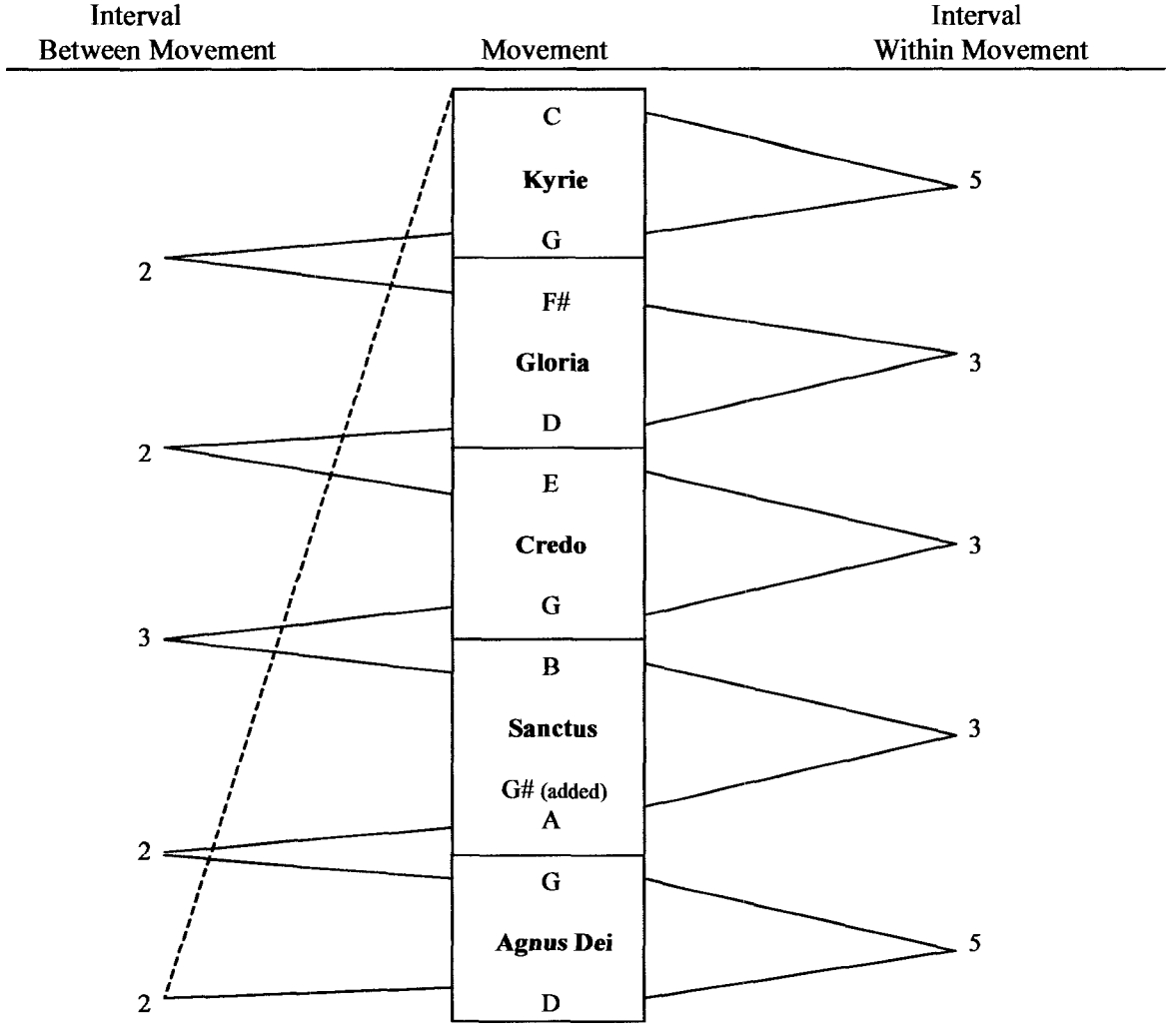
[135]Robert Craft, *Stravinsky: Glimpses of a Life* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 288.

[136]Griffiths, 143.

the movement. This author cannot see that B is in fact the tonal center of the beginning of the *Sanctus*. Likewise, the relationship of a second between the *Sanctus* and the *Agnus Dei* and between the *Agnus Dei* and the *Kyrie* are somewhat suspect. Griffith's Table of "Symmetry of Key Relationship in Mass" is included (Table 5).

Table 5. Symmetry of key relationships in Stravinsky's Mass



Source: Data from Bob Griffith, "Mass Settings by Three Twentieth-Century Composers: Poulenc, Stravinsky, and Bernstein" (M.M. thesis, Baylor University, 1981), 58-59.

Text Setting

Text was of the utmost importance to Stravinsky when setting his Mass. He wanted the work to appeal to the soul of the believer and therefore used little ornamentation of the text, following the traditional Latin of the Mass. The only repetition of text is in the *Sanctus* and the *Agnus Dei* and is used for emphasis of a shorter text. Stravinsky had a concern with adhering to the text while exploiting the sounds of the Latin words. It is in this way, according to André Boucourechliev, that Stravinsky "figures as an intermediary, entirely devoted to serving the *function* of the text and obliged, in some way, to preserve its timeless character. Accordingly all musical 'gesture' is banned from the Mass, which demands a hieratic quality, a bare, 'stripped' style and a syllabic setting of the text not unlike chanting (close to the old tradition)."[137]

The text is set in such a way as to give a sense of chant and timelessness to the music. Stravinsky uses atypical text stress at times in order to continue an idea of the prosody being subordinate to the musical rhythm. As Amy states in her study, "The musical rhythm is not subordinate to the prosody: just the opposite...As we see in the Mass, the 'rhythmic theme' must impose its order on the Latin phrase even if this involves some mispronunciation."[138] This stems from his fascination with the syllable being the most important aspect of text. In *An Autobiography*, Stravinsky explains, "the text thus becomes purely phonetic material for the composer. He can dissect it at will

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[137]Craft, 227-228.

[138]Amy, 199.

and concentrate all his attention on its primary constituent element – that is to say, on the syllable."[139]

Recurring Themes/Motives

Stravinsky does not employ repetition or motives in his Mass, instead focusing on modification of syllabic stress. Repetition of text does exist, in a limited fashion, in the *Sanctus* and the *Agnus Dei*, but, as stated above, it serves only to create emphasis for a shorter text where Stravinsky saw the need. The text "pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua" is the first repetition within the work. A duet of solo voices (tenor and bass) intones it with limited instrumental involvement, followed by a full solo ensemble statement of the text before the choir rejoins. This same pattern of repetition is followed for the "benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini" text, though it is the full choir with a very active and accented instrumental section. There is a final set of repetition in homophonic fashion for the text "Hosanna in excelsis."

The *Agnus Dei* movement contains three a cappella declarations of the text. Though melodically and rhythmically different, they are also set apart by the voice parts that initiate the phrase (men first, followed by women, and finally the entire choir).

Applicability to the Motu Proprio of 1903

Stravinsky's Mass (1948) fits within the confines of the three required characteristics of sacred music as put forth by Pope Pius X. Upon examination, the work is indeed "holy, true art, and universal." Stravinsky calls for the use of boys' voices rather than women and allowed the composition of the work to be led in large part by the text itself.

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[139]Igor Stravinsky, *An Autobiography* (New York: Norton, 1936), 128.

In reference to the use of wind instruments in his Mass, Sister Mary Christian Rosner proposes the claim that "Stravinsky has been fully cognizant of the requirements for liturgical instrumental music according to the *Motu proprio*."[140] Stravinsky's careful selection of instruments, limited in number and not including any from the banned ("frivolous or noisy") category, is responsible for Rosner's claim.

The aspect of Stravinsky's Mass that makes it not as applicable to the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 is the composer's occasional use of atypical text stress. As explained above, Stravinsky thought of the text in the most basic and phonetic breakdowns, manipulating these building blocks as he saw fit to garner the desired effect.

[140]Sister Mary Christian Rosner, "Contemporary Trends in the Musical Settings of the Liturgical Mass" (Ph.D. diss., Eastman School of Music, 1957), 64.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

Sacred music composition during the late nineteenth century was greatly removed from the ideal of music for worship. Attempts at reform set in motion by individuals and organizations on all levels of the Catholic Church failed, mostly due to their specificity in focus and to their lack of a reasonable method of enforcement. It was not until Giuseppe Sarto ascended to the papacy shortly after the turn of the century that reform took a different approach. Sarto chose the name Pius, after the last great reform pope, thus becoming Pope Pius X. His lifetime spent attempting to bring focus in music back to the Catholic Church saw fruition with his *Motu Proprio* on sacred music. Though the term "motu proprio" refers to a document containing the opinions of the pope and can refer to a number of subjects, this decree focused specifically on sacred music.

The *Motu Proprio on Sacred Music* of Pope Pius X, issued on November 22, 1903, was a watershed document in Catholic music reform. The introduction declared the decree to be a "juridical code of sacred music" and acted as a guide for all aspects of sacred music in respect to Catholic worship. Not until the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s were the edicts set forth in this document retracted or modified. Thanks to the efforts of Pope Pius X, composers of sacred music at the turn of the century had to reevaluate the purpose and methodology of their work. In order for them to have the capability of pushing musical boundaries, these composers had to seek ways of including techniques of past masters (Renaissance and Medieval) while at the same time adhering to the seemingly strict guidelines of the *Motu Proprio* of 1903.

Many composers were successful at this endeavor. Mass Ordinary settings by Vaughan Williams, Martin, Poulenc, and Stravinsky show ways in which composers of the twentieth century were able to find middle ground between appropriateness in the eyes of the Catholic Church and the composer's own desire for innovation and exploration in music. Though this middle ground exists between the works examined and the *Motu Proprio* of 1903, it has not been established by the composers themselves that they attempted to adhere to the guiding principles of the decree. Scholarly opinion can be found which suggests that Vaughan Williams and Stravinsky were both aware of the document (Vaughan Williams due to critical praise from Sir Richard Terry and Stravinsky due to his selection of instrumentation).

Both the Vaughan Williams Mass in G Minor and the Martin *Messe pour double choeur a cappella* are text-driven works, using proper syllabic stress and little repetition. They are a cappella and, of the four works examined by this study, are the best examples of Pius X's *Motu Proprio* in action. In the area of modernism, the Vaughan Williams Mass in G Minor makes use of contrasting texture between choirs and solo quartet while the Martin *Messe* makes use of extended harmonies, gliding tonality, and extreme contrast (in the areas of texture, dynamics, tempo, meter, and tessitura). Both works are based on plainchant models and have striking similarities in the opening *Kyrie* movements, though Vaughan Williams does not use his *Kyrie* material as the model for the remainder of the work.

Poulenc's Mass in G is perhaps the work furthest from the confines of the *Motu Proprio* of 1903. Lacking a central *Credo* movement, the work is very modern indeed, even theatrical in nature – with, for example, its overly dramatic solo introduction to the

Agnus Dei. Though not the definitive reason for the omission, the lack of a *Credo* movement allows for congregational involvement in the chant recitation of the Creed. Poulenc's Mass thus allows for the unique application of congregational involvement in the service – a strong desire of Pope Pius X that can be found several times in his decree.

With its inclusion of instruments and lack of dramatic flare, Stravinsky's Mass is unique among the four works examined. Though the *Motu Proprio* of 1903 is very specific about the use of instruments in sacred music, Stravinsky appears to show his understanding of this decree in his selection of a limited number of wind instruments. It is instead the composer's atypical use of text stress that allows for concern of the work's applicability. Through his work, Stravinsky was able to continue his development in the areas of rhythmic interest while at the same time producing an end result that could be used in a liturgical manner.

It is the conclusion of this study that while great advances were being made in music at the turn of the twentieth century, the trend in sacred music composition, specifically with settings of the Mass Ordinary, was works that were being produced which barely resembled their past genres (i.e. Verdi's *Requiem*). The *Motu Proprio* of 1903 attempted to bring compositions in the genre under control by giving clarity to what types of music were acceptable in Catholic worship services. Though a binding and detailed document, the decree did not keep composers from their desire to expand musical horizons and seek out new directions for music. Instead, it allowed for a striking synthesis of old and new, producing unique compositions that served multiple purposes.

APPENDIX

MOTU PROPRIO: TRA LE SOLLECITUDINI, SULLA MUSICA SACRA
POPE PIUS X

(November 22, 1903)

Among the cares of the pastoral office, not only of this Supreme Chair, which We, though unworthy, occupy through the inscrutable disposition of Providence, but of every local church, a leading one is without question that of maintaining and promoting the decorum of the House of God in which the august mysteries of religion are celebrated, and where the Christian people assemble to receive the grace of the Sacraments, to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar, to adore the most august Sacrament of the Lord's Body and to unite in common prayer of the Church in the public and solemn liturgical offices. Nothing should have place, therefore, in the temple calculated to disturb or even merely to diminish the piety and devotion of the faithful, nothing that may give reasonable cause for disgust or scandal, nothing, above all, which directly offends the decorum and sanctity of the sacred functions and is thus unworthy of the House of Prayer and of the Majesty of God. We do not touch separately on the abuses in this matter which may arise. Today Our attention is directed to one of the most common of them, one of the most difficult to eradicate, and the existence of which is sometimes to be deplored in places where everything else is deserving of the highest praise – the beauty and sumptuousness of the temple, the splendour and the accurate performance of the ceremonies, the attendance of the clergy, the gravity and piety of the officiating ministers. Such is the abuse affecting sacred chant and music. And indeed, whether it is owing to the very nature of this art, fluctuating and variable as it is in itself, or to the succeeding changes in tastes and habits with the course of time, or to the fatal influence exercised on

sacred art by profane and theatrical art, or to the pleasure that music directly produces, and that is not always easily contained within the right limits, or finally to the many prejudices on the matter, so lightly introduced and so tenaciously maintained even among responsible and pious persons, the fact remains that there is a general tendency to deviate from the right rule, prescribed by the end for which art is admitted to the service of public worship and which is set forth very clearly in the ecclesiastical Canons, in the Ordinances of the General and Provincial Councils, in the prescriptions which have at various times emanated from the Sacred Roman Congregations, and from Our Predecessors the Sovereign Pontiffs.

It is with real satisfaction that We acknowledge the large amount of good that has been effected in this respect during the last decade in this Our fostering city of Rome, and in many churches in Our country, but in a more especial way among some nations in which illustrious men, full of zeal for the worship of God, have, with the approval of the Holy See and under the direction of the Bishops, united in flourishing Societies and restored sacred music to the fullest honour in all their churches and chapels. Still the good work that has been done is very far indeed from being common to all, and when We consult Our own personal experience and take into account the great number of complaints that have reached Us during the short time that has elapsed since it pleased the Lord to elevate Our humility to the supreme summit of the Roman Pontificate, We consider it Our first duty, without further delay, to raise Our voice at once in reproof and condemnation of all that is seen to be out of harmony with the right rule above indicated, in the functions of public worship and in the performance of the ecclesiastical offices. Filled as We are with a most ardent desire to see the true Christian spirit flourish in every

respect and be preserved by all the faithful, We deem it necessary to provide before aught else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for no other object than that of acquiring this spirit from its foremost and indispensable fount, which is the active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church. And it is vain to hope that the blessing of heaven will descend abundantly upon us, when our homage to the Most High, instead of ascending in the odor of sweetness, puts into the hand of the Lord the scourges wherewith of old the Divine Redeemer drove the unworthy profaners from the Temple.

Hence, in order that no one for the future may be able to plead in excuse that he did not clearly understand his duty and that all vagueness may be eliminated from the interpretation of matters which have already been commanded, We have deemed it expedient to point out briefly the principles regulating sacred music in the functions of public worship, and to gather together in a general survey the principal prescriptions of the Church against the more common abuses in this subject. We do therefore publish, *motu proprio* and with certain knowledge, Our present *Instruction* to which, as a *juridical code of sacred music (quasi a codice giuridice della musica sacra)*, We will with the fullness of Our Apostolic Authority that the force of law be given, and We do by Our present handwriting impose its scrupulous observation on all.

INSTRUCTION ON SACRED MUSIC

I

General Principles

1. Sacred music, being a complimentary part of the solemn liturgy, participates in the general scope of the liturgy, which is the glory of God and the sanctification and

edification of the faithful. It contributes to the decorum and the splendor of the ecclesiastical ceremonies, and since its principal office is to clothe with suitable melody the liturgical text proposed for the understanding of the faithful, its proper aim is to add greater efficacy to the text, in order that through it the faithful may be the more easily moved to devotion and better disposed for the reception of the fruits of grace belonging to the celebration of the most holy mysteries.

2. Sacred music should consequently possess, in the highest degree, the qualities proper to the liturgy, and in particular *sanctity* and *goodness of form*, which will spontaneously produce the final quality of *universality*.

It must be *holy*, and must, therefore, exclude all profanity not only in itself, but in the manner in which it is presented by those who execute it.

It must be *true art*, for otherwise it will be impossible for it to exercise on the minds of those who listen to it that efficacy which the Church aims at obtaining in admitting into her liturgy the art of musical sounds.

But it must, at the same time, be *universal* in the sense that while every nation is permitted to admit into its ecclesiastical compositions those special forms which may be said to constitute its native music, still these forms must be subordinated in such a manner to the general characteristics of sacred music that nobody of any nation may receive an impression other than good on hearing them.

II

The Different Kinds of Sacred Music

3. These qualities are to be found, in the highest degree, in Gregorian Chant, which is, consequently, the Chant proper to the Roman Church, the only chant she has

inherited from the ancient fathers, which she has jealously guarded for centuries in her liturgical codices, which she directly proposes to the faithful as her own, which she prescribes exclusively for some parts of the liturgy, and which the most recent studies have so happily restored to their integrity and purity.

On these grounds Gregorian Chant has always been regarded as the supreme model for sacred music, so that it is fully legitimate to lay down the following rule: *the more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savor the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple.*

The ancient traditional Gregorian Chant must, therefore, in large measure be restored to the functions of public worship, and the fact must be accepted by all that an ecclesiastical function loses none of its solemnity when accompanied by this music alone.

Special efforts are to be made to restore the use of the Gregorian Chant by the people, so that the faithful may again take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as was the case in ancient times.

4. The above-mentioned qualities are also possessed in an excellent degree by Classic Polyphony, especially of the Roman School, which reached its greatest perfection in the fifteenth century, owing to the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina, and continued subsequently to produce compositions of excellent quality from a liturgical and musical standpoint. Classic Polyphony agrees admirably with Gregorian Chant, the supreme model of all sacred music, and hence it has been found worthy of a place side by side with Gregorian Chant, in the more solemn functions of the Church, such as those of the Pontifical Chapel. This, too, must therefore be restored largely in ecclesiastical

functions, especially in the more important basilicas, in cathedrals, and in the churches and chapels of seminaries and other ecclesiastical institutions in which the necessary means are usually not lacking.

5. The Church has always recognized and favored the progress of the arts, admitting to the service of religion everything good and beautiful discovered by genius in the course of ages – always, however, with due regard to the liturgical laws. Consequently modern music is also admitted to the Church, since it, too, furnishes compositions of such excellence, sobriety and gravity, that they are in no way unworthy of the liturgical functions.

Still, since modern music has risen mainly to serve profane uses, greater care must be taken with regard to it, in order that the musical compositions of modern style which are admitted in the Church may contain nothing profane, be free from reminiscences of motifs adopted in the theatres, and be not fashioned even in their external forms after the manner of profane pieces.

6. Among the different kinds of modern music, that which appears less suitable for accompanying the functions of public worship is the theatrical style, which was in the greatest vogue, especially in Italy, during the last century. This of its very nature is diametrically opposed to Gregorian Chant and classic polyphony, and therefore to the most important law of all good sacred music. Besides the intrinsic structure, the rhythm and what is known as the *conventionalism* of this style adapt themselves but badly to the requirements of true liturgical music.

III

The Liturgical Text

7. The language proper to the Roman Church is Latin. Hence it is forbidden to sing anything whatever in the vernacular in solemn liturgical functions – much more to sing in the vernacular the variable or common parts of the Mass and Office.

8. As the texts that may be rendered in music, and the order in which they are to be rendered, are determined for every liturgical function, it is not lawful to confuse this order or to change the prescribed texts for others selected at will, or to omit them either entirely or even in part, unless when the rubrics allow that some versicles of the text be supplied with the organ, while these versicles are simply recited in the choir. However, it is permissible, according to the custom of the Roman Church, to sing a motet to the Blessed Sacrament after the *Benedictus* in a Solemn Mass. It is also permitted, after the Offertory prescribed for the Mass has been sung, to execute during the time that remains a brief motet to words approved by the Church.

9. The liturgical text must be sung as it is in the books, without alteration or inversion of the words, without undue repetition, without breaking syllables, and always in a manner intelligible to the faithful who listen.

IV

External Forms of the Sacred Compositions

10. The different parts of the Mass and the Office must retain, even musically, that particular concept and form which ecclesiastical tradition has assigned to them, and which is admirably brought out by Gregorian Chant. The method of composing and

introit, a *gradual*, an *antiphon*, a *psalm*, a *hymn*, a *Gloria in excelsis*, *etc.*, must therefore be distinct from one another.

11. In particular the following rules are to be observed:

a) The *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo,* etc., of the Mass must preserve the unity of composition proper to their text. It is not lawful, therefore, to compose them in separate movements, in such a way that each of these movements form a complete composition in itself, and be capable of being detached from the rest and substituted by another.

b) In the office of Vespers it should be the rule to follow the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*, which prescribes Gregorian Chant for the psalmody and permits figured music for the versicles of the *Gloria Patri* and the hymn.

It will nevertheless be lawful on greater solemnities to alternate the Gregorian Chant of the choir with the so-called *falsi-bordoni* or with verses similarly composed in a proper manner.

It is also permissible occasionally to render single psalms in their entirety in music, provided the form proper to psalmody be preserved in such compositions; that is to say, provided the singers seem to be psalmodising among themselves, either with new motifs or with those taken from Gregorian Chant or based upon it.

The psalms known as *di concerto* are therefore forever excluded and prohibited.

c) In the hymns of the Church the traditional form of the hymn is preserved. It is not lawful, therefore, to compose, for instance, a *Tantum ergo* in such wise that the first strophe presents a romanza, a cavatina, an adagio and the *Genitori* an allegro.

d) The antiphons of the Vespers must be as a rule rendered with the Gregorian melody proper to each. Should they, however, in some special case be sung in figured

music, they must never have either the form of a concert melody or the fullness of a motet or a cantata.

V

The Singers

12. With the exception of the melodies proper to the celebrant at the altar and the ministers, which must be always sung in Gregorian Chant, and without accompaniment of the organ, all the rest of the liturgical chant belongs to the choir of levites, and, therefore, singers in church, even when they are laymen, are really taking the place of the ecclesiastical choir. Hence the music rendered by them must, at least for the greater part, retain the character of choral music.

By this it is not to be understood that solos are entirely excluded. But solo singing should never predominate to such an extent as to have the greater part of the liturgical chant executed in that manner; the solo phrase should have the character or hint of a melodic projection (*spunto*), and be strictly bound up with the rest of the choral composition.

13. On the same principle it follows that singers in church have a real liturgical office, and that therefore women, being incapable of exercising such office, cannot be admitted to form part of the choir. Whenever, then, it is desired to employ the acute voices of sopranos and contraltos, these parts much be taken by boys, according to the most ancient usage of the Church.

14. Finally, only men of known piety and probity of life are to be admitted to form part of the choir of a church, and these men should by their modest and devout bearing during the liturgical functions show that they are worthy of the holy office they

exercise. It will also be fitting that singers while singing in church wear the ecclesiastical habit and surplice, and that they be hidden behind gratings when the choir is excessively open to the public gaze.

VI

Organ and Instrumental

15. Although the music proper to the Church is purely vocal music, music with the accompaniment of the organ is also permitted. In some special cases, within due limits and with proper safeguards, other instruments may be allowed, but never without the special permission of the Ordinary, according to prescriptions of the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum.*

16. As the singing should always have the principle place, the organ or other instrument should merely sustain and never oppress it.

17. It is not permitted to have the chant preceded by long preludes or to interrupt it with intermezzo pieces.

18. The sound of the organ as an accompaniment to the chant in preludes, interludes, and the like must be not only governed by the special nature of the instrument, but must participate in all the qualities proper to sacred music as above enumerated.

19. The employment of the piano is forbidden in church, as is also that of noisy or frivolous instruments such as drums, cymbals, bells and the like.

20. It is strictly forbidden to have bands play in church, and only in special cases with the consent of the Ordinary will it be permissible to admit wind instruments, limited in number, judiciously used, and proportioned to the size of the place – provided the

composition and accompaniment be written in grave and suitable style, and conform in all respects to that proper to the organ.

21. In processions outside the church the Ordinary may give permission for a band, provided no profane pieces be executed. It would be desirable in such cases that the band confine itself to accompanying some spiritual canticle sung in Latin or in the vernacular by the singers and the pious associations which take part in the procession.

VII

The Length of the Liturgical Chant

22. It is not lawful to keep the priest at the altar waiting on account of the chant or the music for a length of time not allowed by the liturgy. According to the ecclesiastical prescriptions the *Sanctus* of the Mass should be over before the elevation, and therefore the priest must here have regard for the singers. The *Gloria* and the *Credo* ought, according to the Gregorian tradition, to be relatively short.

23. In general it must be considered a very grave abuse when the liturgy in ecclesiastical functions is made to appear secondary to and in a manner at the service of the music, for the music is merely a part of the liturgy and its humble handmaid.

VIII

Principal Means

24. For the exact execution of what has been herein laid down, the Bishops, if they have not already done so, are to institute in their dioceses a special Commission composed of persons really competent in sacred music, and to the Commission let them entrust in the manner they find most suitable the task of watching over the music

executed in their churches. Nor are they to see merely that the music is good in itself, but also that it is adapted to the powers of the singers and be always well executed.

25. In seminaries of clerics and in ecclesiastical institutions let the above-mentioned traditional Gregorian Chant be cultivated by all with diligence and love, according to the Tridentine prescriptions, and let the superiors be liberal of encouragement and praise toward their young subjects. In like manner let a Schola Cantorum be established, whenever possible, among the clerics for the execution of sacred polyphony and of good liturgical music.

26. In the ordinary lessons of Liturgy, Morals, Canon Law given to the students of theology, let care be taken to touch on those points which regard more directly the principles and laws of sacred music, and let an attempt be made to complete the doctrine with some particular instruction in the aesthetic side of sacred art, so that the clerics may not leave the seminary ignorant of all those subjects so necessary to a full ecclesiastical education.

27. Let care be taken to restore, at least in the principal churches, the ancient *Scholae Cantorum*, as has been done with excellent fruit in a great many places. It is not difficult for a zealous clergy to institute such *Scholae* even in smaller churches and country parishes – nay, in these last the pastors will find a very easy means of gathering around them both children and adults, to their own profit and the edification of the people.

28. Let efforts be made to support and promote, in the best way possible, the higher schools of sacred music where these already exist, and to help in founding them where they do not. It is of the utmost importance that the Church herself provide for the

instruction of her choirmasters, organists, and singers, according to the true principles of sacred art.

IX

Conclusion

29. Finally, it is recommended to choirmasters, singers, members of the clergy, superiors of seminaries, ecclesiastical institutions, and religious communities, parish priests and rectors of churches, canons of collegiate churches, and cathedrals, and, above all, to the diocesan ordinaries to favor with all zeal these prudent reforms, long desired and demanded with united voice by all; so that the authority of the Church, which herself has repeatedly proposed them, and now inculcates them, may not fall into contempt.

Given from Our Apostolic Palace at the Vatican, on day of the Virgin and Martyr, St. Cecilia, November 22, 1903, in the first year of Our Pontificate.

PIUS X, POPE[141]

[141]Erwin Esser Nemmers, *Twenty Centuries of Catholic Church Music* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1949), 197-206.

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