

CAECILIA

A Review of Catholic Church Music



The Life and Times of Flemish Boy Choristers in 16th Century Spain

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CAECILIA

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF FLEMISH BOY CHORISTERS IN 16TH CENTURY SPAIN

By Lavern J. Wagner

The year is 1594. On the Spanish peninsula the *siglo d'oro* is pursuing its course to a parsimonious close. King Philip II for the past thirty-five years has maintained his court on Spanish soil with an opulence and ostentation derived from Burgundy. Reared in the tastes of his father Charles V, Philip II has continued throughout his long residence in Spain to live in an artistic elegance to an ample extent imported from northern Europe.

As Charles V maintained a chapel of Flemish singers, so also does Philip II. This requires constant recruitment in Flanders of new singers, and especially boys, since they perform the treble parts in the royal chapel. Now, in 1594, the recruiting of boys about nine years old who possess the requisite beautiful voice is in the competent hands of a retired organist of the royal chapel who has returned to Mons in the Low Countries to live. Michel de Bock had served King Philip II for twenty-eight years before retiring in 1574, and he is a valuable contact in keeping the supply of boy singers flowing southward to the royal court. Recruiting these twelve boys had not been easy. In Antwerp, where the Church of Our Lady was an especially fruitful source of talent, the bishop had tried to prevent the acquisition of one certain soprano. Only the display of royal insistence in the form of letters from the privy council of Philip II had induced the prelate to change his mind. Now the recruits have been provided with new clothes, and are lodged at the home of the former royal organist while waiting to embark at Calais on May 3rd for the sea voyage to the Iberian peninsula.

While the trip to Madrid of these twelve conscripts is not specifically documented, it is possible to graphically reconstruct typical events of their journey by means of similar travels which are so recorded.¹ Thus we find fourteen choir boys in the spring of 1570 on a trip from Madrid to Córdoba, then to Seville, and returning to the capital by retracing their course.

See them now enroute, supplied with their sombreros, leather

¹ The information which follows is taken from Straeten, Edmond Vander, *La Musique*

belts, long robes, cloaks, and other accessories to their wardrobe for the voyage. They undergo the assaults of the heat, of the wind, of the dust, and of the rain, and they manage to minimize these somewhat by the sacrifice of their clothes, especially stockings and shoes, to these destructive forces.

Their baggage is transported on wagons drawn by mules, sometimes eight harnessed together. This is necessary because the road winds through mountains, founders through streams, and traverses the steppes of dry wasteland. When it rains and it is impracticable to walk, the boys pursue their wearisome way on horseback. Sounds which agitate the mules, cries and songs of the drivers, are noises which circumscribe the course of their travels.

The chapelmaster, the valets, and the doctor watch over them. Finally their monotonous course reaches Córdoba, and they leave through the Gallota gateway to take the route which leads to Seville.

They dine en route, and sup at an inn by the wayside. Now the four beds, brought by four wagons, are unloaded, these being the sleeping accommodations for the fourteen boys in this party. The beds are provided with straw mattresses and pillows, and arranged in a dormitory room. The bed clothes are spread out. Prayers, litanies, and the rosary are said on their knees in common.

Finally—Seville! While unpacking, an assessment of damages sustained during the trip is made: boards broken, eating utensils misplaced, clothes in shreds, shoes worn out . . .

Now, when travel has ceased, and while the restoration of equipment proceeds, they are provided with the necessities for school work—paper, pens, ink, without mentioning the book of *Constitutions*, and another of Latin exercises, authored by a certain Dr. Rolando Vinchelío, who is well-known to them.

The feast is Pentecost. The uniform for the day is most elaborate, and the head dress especially is quite a piece of work. The fourteen crystal voices blend with those of the male singers in the vaults of the cathedral, yielding an admirable effect.

There is a limited sojourn in the nearby city of Morón, where, for the first time during the journey, King Philip II makes an appearance, and there is a brilliant fiesta.

Returning to Córdoba, numerous linen shirts imported from Holland are purchased, as well as collars, cuffs, plain shoes and shoes lined with fur. And also while here, one of the boys pays

his tribute to the climate and to the fatigues by becoming ill. A doctor from Córdoba comes to the aid of the party and prescribes a contribution from the pharmacy in the form of a fruit compote as a condiment. However, some member of the group has better sense, and orders two chickens.

Leaving Córdoba, they travel to Ubeda, where they take on provisions of bread and wine. That night they sleep at Baeza, where the room at the inn is very dirty and they scrub it from top to bottom. The route to Madrid continues through Arquillos, Tembleque, and Los Yébenes.

Deo gratias! Madrid at last! The mules are unhitched, the wagons are discharged, and they are at the official residence of the choirboys. Beds are dressed, straw mattresses are stuffed, and woolen ticking is renewed. Saucers are replaced, some of which are earthenware manufactured in Talavera, and kitchen utensils are restored, and all of these needs are more immediate and pressing than that of the books. The entire house is refreshed, two days being devoted to this necessary work.

The hall of studies is provided with the usual furniture, and a new stock of paper, pens, and ink is furnished. These are things for the spirit. As for things of the body, they are issued underwear, cloaks, stockings, shoes, and caps. Shirts are laundered, as well as bed clothes and pillows large and small, and also towels, and napkins, and tablecloths.

A new cook is installed. The master of Latin, while proceeding with the cleaning, also cuts the hair of the boys who are happy at having returned again. It is now June 24, the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, and the heat is excessive.

The life of tranquility is resumed. If the Emperor Charles V loved to travel about his extensive domains, his son Philip II disdained any excursions beyond the limits of Spain. So his trips within Spain were welcome breaks in the routine existence of the choirboys. We have an interesting document, dated 1598, which affords some glimpses into this routine life.²

THE ORDER WHICH IS TO BE OBSERVED IN THE HOUSE OF THE
CHOIRBOYS OF THE ROYAL CHAPEL OF THE KING,
OUR MASTER, IS THE FOLLOWING

1. First, because His Majesty commands to consign the house in which they live, which had in it the said choirboys, and the Dr.

² Printed in *ibid.*, 186-188.

Rolando Vinchelio, Chaplain of His Majesty, who teaches them grammar, and the chapelmaster and assistant, and they have *Constitutions*, so that each one observes that which concerns him, it is ordained that, in the said house will live Matheo Romero, Chapelmaster, and Géry Ghersem, his assistant, and if agreeable, that Dr. Vinchelio or another priest who has the office of master of grammar, and demonstrates how to read and write, will live at the said house, providing for himself in due time a lodging address different from the others, and that the priest who is removed make the office as at his former lodging.

II. That much concern be given to the good education of the said choirboys, and that they know how to read and write, and Christian doctrine according to the catechism, and that they are reared with humility and obedience, and have some devotional exercises, and each night sing the *Salve Regina* in the room where there is the image of Our Lady, and they gather here to clean it when it is unoccupied or not serving for some other thing.

III. That the chapelmaster is not allowed to have more than three servants for himself, and that if he wishes to have some parent, he or she is to be employed as one of the said three servants, and the assistant is not allowed more than one servant.

IV. That the chapelmaster will have for himself and his servants the lodging which is occupied by the Dr. Vinchelio, and the assistant will have that of his predecessor, Adrian Cappi, and the singers will have the same lodging where they are now, and the two rooms which join to the school will be used in such a manner as His Majesty commands.

V. That the assistant always accompanies the choirboys every time they go to the palace, without failing in this unless he is sick, and in that case the chapelmaster goes with them, in the manner that one or the other always assists with the choirboys, so that they go in a composed manner, and with quietude and decency as is appropriate, and observed likewise by the choir.

VI. That the assistant gives the lessons at the accustomed hours, and the chapelmaster apportions the time, and the manner of employing it for the study of grammar and reading and writing, and he will give attention that they take the responsibility of the lessons, and see that they profit, and that they are industrious, and if he wishes to give some lessons or to take to his charge some of the said choirboys, he can do it in a manner as has been done before, so that he will not squander such good ability.

VII. That the government and care of the house will be in charge of the chapelmaster, regarding such matters as are not ordained otherwise, and to him is charged the good and virtuous breeding of the choirboys, and the provision of their food, and the cleanliness of their persons, beds, and clothes, and it is charged also that the assistant on his part help in this, so that in all things suitable order governs, and among all there is harmony and good agreement.

VIII. That the chapelmaster and assistant observe the laudable custom of eating and supping with the choirboys, so that they, by their presence, will be in a position to see the failings which the officials of the house are making in their regulation of the choirboys; and the assistant will give them, during his meal, the astonishing wisdom which his predecessor Adrian Cappel gave each day.

IX. That the disposition of the old clothes of the choirboys will be by the master of the chapel when giving them new clothes, but he is not empowered to do any of these things without giving the cost to the almoner general of His Majesty.

X. That a book will be kept in which is placed an inventory of everything that is in the house, as the beds, blankets, mattresses, bed sheets, and pillows, table linen, hand towels and kitchen utensils, and all the rest that may be bought and purchased at the expense of His Majesty; this book is to be placed with the assistant almoner, and the receipts with all the signatures of the chapelmaster, and that which is consumed should be entered as consumed in the said book, and that which is acquired, entered as acquired.

XI. That into the said house there enter no women, and it have in it only one housemother, that being a spinster woman without suspicion, and of the age of at least forty years.

XII. That the door to the street is locked with a key at night; the six months of the winter, from the first of October until the end of March at eight o'clock, and in the summer from the first of April until the end of September at nine o'clock; and if necessity should happen to require, after established hours, it will be opened by the chapelmaster or the assistant, and be locked afterwards, and they do not have the power to confide the key to some other person, and punctuality is to be observed.

XIII. That the almoner general has the responsibility that this is observed completely, and to excuse from it, and of punishing those who do contrary to it. In Madrid, on the 16th of December in the year 1598.

This document was undoubtedly made necessary because of a two year gap, from 1596 to 1598, during which there was no master of the Flemish chapel. Philippe Rogier, who had served brilliantly as chapelmaster since George de La Hele had expired in 1587, had died himself the end of February, 1596. The following two years were also the last ones in the reign of King Philip II, as he died in September, 1598. There was need for a reorganization, and King Philip III effected it with this document. Matheo Romero was the first Spaniard to be appointed as head of the Flemish singers, and in the years immediately following, a union of the singers in the Flemish and Spanish chapels was completed.

The Flemish chapel had been established by the Emperor Charles V, and was continued by Philip II. Although from the 17th century on its members were Spaniards, it still continued to exist in an unbroken succession until 1791. This was the date of a copy of the statutes under which the chapel had operated since the time of Charles V. The method of its operation is seen in the twenty-five articles which comprise these regulations.³

STATUTES WHICH UNTIL NOW HAVE BEEN OBSERVED IN THE
IMPERIAL CHAPEL, AND WHICH HAVE BEEN OBSERVED IN
THE ROYAL CHAPEL OF HIS MAJESTY, CONFORMING
TO THE USAGE OF BURGANDY

I. First, by order of His Majesty, that all the chaplains, singers and officials and subjects of his Flemish chapel, have for their superior, with all respect and obedience, the almoner general, in all the things touching on the office, welfare and condition, order and harmony of the said chapel, and the penalty for those who do not do this will be made to conform to the gravity of the error or crime of their commission, to that which is above the aforesaid almoner general is entrusted by His Majesty.

II. Further, by order of His Majesty, that from here on the celebration of the divine office in the chapel conforms to the ancient Roman usage, and that is also used for the masses, matins, and vespers as well as other services to which it is appropriate, and that the ceremonies and customs of the Roman curia be observed in the spoken office.

III. Similarly, that every day in the world, the high mass is sung by the singers of the said chapel in this manner: from the day of St. Remigius (October 1) until Easter, at nine o'clock in

³ Printed in *ibid.*, 178-182.

the morning, and from Easter until the said day of St. Remigius, at eight o'clock, whether His Majesty is there or not; and that the vespers are said at three o'clock in the afternoon without waiting for His Majesty if he does not ask that they wait; and when His Majesty has established residence in some other place where it is not possible to have the divine office conveniently celebrated and sung in the palace, he orders that it can be celebrated at the accustomed hour, and that it be done by the chapel in the church most near that can be obtained to his palace, deferring to the direction of the aforesaid almoner general.

IV. Further, that on all the solemn feasts, major and commemorative, the observance be in the place where His Majesty might be, by singing vespers and compline, and it is understood that the major solemn feasts be said differently in the divine office than the commemorative ones, following the ceremonies appropriate for each festival, and all the rest by the Roman usage.

V. Thus similarly, that all the chaplains, singers and officials of the said chapel celebrate the divine office, being obliged to wear long clothes and clerical bonnets, and other clerical dress, with the collars on, with the beard and crown shaven, under the penalty of having pay deducted for the days that they fail to do this.

VI. Similarly, that the aforesaid chaplains, singers and officials, when entering into the church or chapel where they celebrate the office, genuflect, invoking Our Lord God and the patron of the said church or chapel.

VII. Further, that the aforesaid, while saying the above mentioned office, stand on their feet, saying the Introit of the mass and Kyrie Eleison, Gloria, Gospel, Credo, Sanctus, Pater Noster, and Agnus Dei, and the same in the principios of vespers and compline and other hours if delayed; and in the chapters, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, and at the prayers and orations, the head is uncovered; and in the offices of the ferial feasts of Advent and Lent, they are humbly on their knees when they say the prayers, as has been done in past times.

VIII. Further, that during the aforesaid office they each remain silent and refrain from laughing, talking too much and other dishonorable things, under pain of correction and suspension of their wages, or some other manner of punishment according to the crime.

IX. Similarly, that the aforesaid almoner general orders the chaplains, singers and other officials of the Flemish chapel to go

and gather each Friday (unless they are impeded by a legitimate cause) at their house and they are to hold a chapter meeting in which they will take the proper action and fine those who have failed in doing that which they were supposed to do, and the said fine ordained and given in the said chapter shall be executed and collected, for which the said almoner is commissioned and ordered, and this will be converted and distributed and passed around among the aforesaid members of the chapel.

X. Further, if by chance some of those among the above mentioned absent themselves without leave from the aforesaid almoner general who asks notice from them by the observer of the said chapel to the major domo who at that time is to be found in the bureau, for this the wages of the aforesaid absentee are deducted for the time of the absence.

XI. Similarly, that on all the Sundays of Septuagesima, Quinquagesima, and Quadragesima, and Ash Wednesday, on all the Sundays and feast days of Lent and Advent, on all the feasts of Our Lord and of Our Lady, the Mondays after Easter and Pentecost, the day of St. Andrew, of St. Peter in the month of June, St. James, on all the Holy Days and All Souls, there be a sermon in the said chapel, if other things are not demanded by His Majesty.

XII. Further, that the chaplain of the week is to be in front of the altar when beginning matins or other canonical hours and the office of the dead, vested with his surplice, and the same for the chaplain who has to sing the epistle, he being at the foot of the altar, adequately at hand; and having the lessons of matins and lauds he says them at a stand in front of the high altar, and when he has to say them he wears nothing more nor less than his surplice.

XIII. Similarly, when the chapelmaster who has charge of the said choirbook stand, asks to have sung some duo or trio by the aforesaid who are under his command, they are obliged to place themselves in front of the book and do that which they are asked to do, under pain of being punished and fined.

XIV. Further, that the verse and Alleluia be said from hence forward each day, as has been the custom on the solemn days, and that the master of the choirboys be made to tell each one of the singers their turn, and see that they are placed in their order as they should be, without exciting disturbance or interposing one with the other, and that none of these avoid singing the said duo or trio, or other thing which is proper to the said office, which should

be ordered by the said chapelmaster, without having legitimate cause for this, under pain of the above said penalty.

XV. Further, that all the times that the choir boys go from their house to the palace, they are to be accompanied by the said chapelmaster, on their departure as well as on their return, and he being prevented shall charge it to another; and further that the said maestro of the place teach Latin to the children, from the first to the third hour after eating, on feast days and Sundays from the first to the second, and that he does not convey nor wish to convey the said children, nor transport them to sing from house to house, under the penalty of deprivation of the office.

XVI. Further, that the aforesaid treat them and entertain them in the most honest manner which could be desired, in all things, and he is commanded to give them food and drink, to have them go to bed and to arise at the hours which are customary and agreeable to their health.

XVII. Similarly, that the master who teaches them Latin should have to go to the house of the said chapelmaster to give them the lesson, under pain of the above said penalty.

XVIII. Further, by command of His Majesty, that all those of the said chapel should be given clothes once a year, if oftener than this is not ordained and commanded by His Majesty, and that they dress themselves in long clothes of black cloth or camlet, all of one color, loose coats of black velvet, as has been the custom in the past, and that they have the said raiments all of one sort, and that as many of the children who sing in the said chapel should be given clothing one time in the year, as has been the custom.

XIX. Similarly, that all the chaplains, singers and officials of the said chapel will be obliged to take an oath when they are admitted into the service of His Majesty, at the hands of the said almoner general.

XX. Further, that the said chapelmaster does not allow any demand by the choirboys nor by others to take out or to carry away the books of the chapel outside of it, not for teaching the music nor for singing by anyone; and if a case of some action otherwise arises, that the porter of the chapel is obliged to advise the said almoner general, so that he demand it to be remedied, and if in this the said porter should be negligent, that he be punished by the said almoner as he sees fit.

XXI. Thus similarly, that no one order the bells to be rung to begin mass or vespers without being given notice by the said almoner, or in case of the absence of the chapelmaster the services do not begin without his order, and that the said services conform to the Roman usage, as it is said, except when other things do not demand it for some sufficient, competent, and good reason, according as the time and occasion requires it.

XXII. Further, that the said chapelmaster have the care of that which concerns the music, in the said services, so that they sing and speak as is proper, and that all the subjects of the said chapel in this are obedient to him without contradiction, under the penalty of correction as above.

XXIII. Further, by order of His Majesty, that the said chapelmaster, during the divine office, be behind the said choirboys; and that all that which the said chapelmaster has need for entertainment of the boys, for which he knows he will have expense, be provided on the part of the almoner when he signs the item for the extraordinary expense.

XXIX. Further, that all contained in these statutes should be read and declared publicly to all those of the said chapel, so that none will pretend ignorance of this; and that the said almoner has promised to observe and place these among the said statutes, so much and as much as His Majesty would serve and in another case require it.

XXV. Similarly, that the porter and usher of the said chapel find out about these things each day, before the hour at which the said office begins, in order to see and write down about those who do not comply in all the aforesaid, in entering or standing, or being absent in the said chapel or church, and on all this give part and advice to the said almoner general.

With all of these precise directions to follow every day a break in the routine was especially welcome. As mentioned before, this did not come often during the reign of Philip II because he was not a traveler. So when a journey occurred such as that in 1585 it was a particularly memorable event. It was, in fact, so noteworthy that a detailed account of this *jornada* is left to us by Henry Cock, an apostolic notary and archer of the royal guard—a squad of honor in which Flemings predominated. The title of his chronicle is: *Account of the trip made by Philip II, in 1585, to Saragossa, Barcelona and Valencia, written by Henry Cock.*⁴

⁴ *Relacion del viaje hecho por Felipe II, en 1585, a Zaragoza, Barcelona y Valencia, escrita por Henrique Cock*, published at Madrid in 1876.

The most notable event of this trip, and its prime purpose, was the marriage ceremony of Philip II's daughter, Dona Catherine, Infanta of Spain, with Charles Emmanuel, Duke of Savoy. This was splendidly celebrated in the spring of the year at Saragossa. We have a record of the choirboys' traveling to this event in the following receipt for transportation expense.⁵

The salary for three wagons with eight mules in which the boys of the said chapel and their clothes came from Madrid to this city, amounts to seven hundred reales, which for the said purpose was received. Dated in Saragossa, the 21st of March in the year 1585.

Henry Cock gives some details of the royal wedding between the Dona Catherine and the Duke of Savoy. After enumerating and describing all the high personages at the marriage, he says:⁶

In this order they come to the door of the great church, where the Archbishop in pontifical vestments awaits the coming of the betrothed couple, and performs the duty of his priestly office, confirming in the front entrance of the church that which was agreed upon between the Duke and Dona Catherine of Austria, and they go up to the main altar where mass is celebrated, consigning the grace of benediction on the marriage, seated by their attendants, the King Don Philip of Austria and Dona Isabel, the Infanta, according to the custom of the Catholic church. Meanwhile the royal chapel sang a motet which George de La Hele, master of the said chapel, had composed for the aforesaid wedding. At various times the minstrels of the King, with harmoniously whirling music (*con suavisima musica*), pleased the crowned heads of those who were around. The organist likewise played the organ with expert hand to give pleasure to those who were present, and they do not want to do anything in the church but that which is appropriate to such a solemnity.

In May of 1585 the choirboys are at Barcelona, embarking for Monzón. For this trip two wagons are added to the convoy, whether because of increased equipment or because the roads are in such poor condition is not known. A stop on the way to Monzón is Binéfar, situated only a league from the former city. On July 10,

⁵ Printed in Straeten, Edmond Vander, *La Musique Aux Pays-Bas*, VIII, 114.

⁶ Printed in *ibid.*, 113.

1585 they arrive at Monzón, which is the place where the customary reunion of the courts of Aragon and Catalonia takes place.

For this occasion several musical organizations are present, including the chaplains of Castile, the Flemish chaplains, the chaplains of the Crown of Aragon, and the Portuguese chaplains. This is an opportune occasion for the majestic deployment of the vocal and instrumental forces of the Netherlands, having at their head an artist celebrated everywhere—George de La Hele, and as his assistant a musician who will soon attain equally high renown—Philippe Rogier.

The career of the choirboy is necessarily short. Until the age of about nine his voice is not usually powerful enough to be useful in the choir, and then sometime between the ages of about thirteen and sixteen his voice changes from soprano or alto to tenor or bass. This means his career as a boy singer of treble parts is approximately four to seven years.

At the court of King Philip II, what happened to the choirboys when their voices changed? The royal patronage was not suddenly and completely withdrawn. The brightest and most apt were placed in studies which eventually lead to the priesthood. They might spend some time studying at the Spanish university of Alcalá, but most of the Flemings returned to universities in the Low Countries, such as Louvain and Douai. Many of these boys eventually became male singers in the royal chapel, and some, such as George de La Hele, Philippe Rogier, and Géry de Ghersen, attained the top positions of chapelmaster and his assistant.

Regarding the expectations of those boys who were not sent to a university for education, we have an interesting document. From this it can be seen that some of them became castrati singers, but more important, many of them were authorized to receive training on various instruments and remain in the chapel as instrumental performers. This authorization was given by King Philip III at Valladolid on June 9, 1601.⁷

Of those choirboys who are receiving their leave, we know that they are going to leave very good singers in all voices, and that it is good that they should not all be castrated, and there are those who cannot remain with the voices, so it may appear that they can apply themselves to instruments, after they have been very fine singers, they

⁷ Printed in *ibid.*, 189-190.

may be able to learn the organ, bassoon, cornetto, sackbut, oboe, viols, violone, harp and other instruments, and come to be great musicians; it falls to those above to become skilful players, and learn from such good masters as there are. I recommend this therefore; it will maintain the chapel with less cost than up to now, and with those singers who are not able to do anything else, being of no use, and they can be of use, and Your Majesty will possess all types of musical instruments without looking further for them.

King Philip III further agrees to bear the cost of instructing these former singers on various instruments. This document, coming as it does at the beginning of the 17th century, reflects the growing importance of instrumental music during the 16th century. It is now about to blossom forth in an independent musical development.

The *modus vivendi* of the 16th century choirboy was not easy. It could be monotonous and restrictive in its daily routine, and when it demanded travel the hardships of the journey were often intense. But for many boys of talent and perseverance it was the gateway through which they entered a better life—a life which gave them the opportunities afforded by advanced education, and one which was often marked by continuing, and increasing, royal favor.

SOME LINGUISTIC CRITERIA IN ACCOMMODATING ENGLISH MASS TEXTS TO SUNG RECITATIVE AND MELODY

By Sister Jane Marie Luecke, O.S.B.

If one is to believe the thousands of words written during the last twenty-five years in favor of a vernacular liturgy, then we are now to celebrate Mass in English principally in order that our worship may be both understandable and meaningful. With the implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy, words are to become for the English speaking Christian who did not have an aural command of Latin, immediately understandable symbols for communication in public worship—for bringing the Word of God to him, and for expressing his prayers to God. By being linked to the rite of sacrifice, English words with their accompanying actions are to be the vehicle for his more meaningful participation in this “primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.”

Words have always been crucial to Christian worship. As the Constitution on the Liturgy points out, “The two parts which, in a certain sense, go to make up the Mass, namely, the liturgy of the word and the eucharistic liturgy, are so closely connected with each other that they form but one single act of worship.”¹ Indeed, it is because of the importance of the word in worship that the Church hesitated so long in granting its use in the various modern vernacular languages. And I suggest that it is this same importance attaching to the word that has prompted the Church in this century to define so carefully the role of music in the liturgy.

For the role of music, according to the *Motu Proprio* of St. Pius X, “is to clothe with suitable melody the liturgical text proposed for the understanding of the faithful,” hence, “its proper aim is to add greater efficacy to the text.” And negatively, “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.”² These same thoughts are explicit in Pius XII’s 1955 and 1958 documents on sacred music. Both these pontiffs, of course, were referring to a specific kind of music—Gregorian Chant in Latin—and were promoting its specific use in their encyclical letters. I suggest, however, that they were also

¹ *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (Collegeville, Minn., 1963), #56. Numbers refer to paragraphs of the text, not to pages.

² “The *Motu Proprio*,” *The White List of the Society of Saint Gregory of America* (New York, 1928), #1 and #23.

and ultimately defining a character, a spirit, in that kind of music which makes it a model, and it is in this light that I consider these documents of value to us today in our present flurry to ready material for our Mass in English. For the Constitution on the Liturgy has carefully avoided associating Gregorian Chant and Latin in the norms it sets up for "compositions which have the qualities proper to genuine music" (#121). One basic quality will continue to be the faculty of such music to subserve a text, or an action accompanied by a text, if such text and action are to retain their primacy and meaningful dignity in the liturgical service. Gregorian Chant, then, may provide us with an ideality whose principles of rhythm, of meter, and of melody may be analysed in order that one may learn how these relate to the same principles found in language, and how this relationship gives Gregorian Chant its spirit of meaningful prayer and character of subserving the text. Because our concern here is to evolve a guide for clothing English texts with suitable music, we will apply these principles to the music for only those prose texts of the Mass which are central to the service when they are taking place. These are the celebrant's formal reading of the Epistle, Gospel, Prayers, and his exchange of greeting and response with the people; and the people's formal praying with him in the "Lord Have Mercy," the "Glory Be to God," the "Holy, Holy," and the "Lamb of God." By concentrating on these, it is easier to keep the focus on the word's primacy over the musical setting.

Gregorian Chant is not the only chant in the world or in its history. The word "chant" is a common noun and verb, especially in English where we often speak of some of our poets as "chanting" their poetry, meaning thereby that they give their reading a song-like tone. The usage derives ultimately from our poetic progenitors, the Anglo-Saxon scop whose recitations were described as "secgan-singan," a speech-like singing, or singing-like speech. Hence, my use of the term will refer to the Latin chant only when I use the full title, capitalized, Gregorian Chant. For we are familiar with Greek or Byzantine Chant, with Hebrew Chant or Cantillation, and with other Latin chant such as the Ambrosian, to name only a few. Historically these seem to have developed from formal speech with a few, simple intonations; and although each differs from the other, they have some basic rhythmic and melodic principles in common. They follow the free, irregularly metered rhythm of their prose or poetic texts, and they use in their simplest forms a short range of melodic progression. Their difference is in proportion as their languages differ characteristically. For example, Egan Wellecz

says that the kernel of the melodies of both the Eastern and Western churches derived from the melodies of the Hebrew Synagogue, "but their character was considerably modified by the genius of the language to which they were sung."³ And Eric Werner makes this comment: "The influence of the various languages upon cantillation and psalmody has never been carefully examined. And yet, it was a signal and consequential touch, by which language changed entire structures of music."⁴

For all languages have rhythmic and melodic features that are natural for sing-song, for recitative, for chanting, for singing. In English we hear the effect of these in children's play,⁵ as in "'Susie² is⁴ a³ tattle² tale,²" and in the cheering section's "'Hold³ that³ line¹.'" And the same principle operating in language that causes us to use those tonal patterns can be used to chant "'The Lord³ be with² you," which in turn is the same principle that brought about the Latin tonal pattern, ²*Dominus* ³*vobi*-²*scum*, which was then elaborated somewhat to become our *tonus antiquior*: ²*Do*-³*minus* ²³*vo*-³²¹*bi-scum*².

We are assuming here a spoken language, and this fact may discover one of our weaknesses. We are a reading society, and as we have become more universally literate, we have relied less and less on oral communication. However, there have been forces to counteract this situation in the last two decades. Perhaps the now-popular folk song is one of these. However, as yet the general public hears in many folk songs only a pulsing rhythm to which any empty words may be sounded, or they hear a museum kind of relic from another culture. If and when the true "bardic" spirit is again employed in this folk art—that is, when the folk singer is first of all a poet who memorializes present events in meaningful or at least enduring verse and then enhances these verses with spontaneous, memorable, or familiar melodies—then we will have returned to a position to know the significance of the spoken word in communal expression. Then also, we may be able to detect and to exploit the prosodic features of our English language—those which make it like chant or song.

The prosodic features of all languages are stress (intensity), pitch (tone), juncture (the transition of the voice between meaningful sounds), and duration (length of sound). Linguists have

³ Egan Wellecz, "Words and Music in Byzantine Liturgy," *Musical Quarterly*, XXXIII (1947), 307.

⁴ Eric Werner, *The Sacred Bridge* (London, 1959), p. 432.

⁵ Raised numbers before the syllables indicate relatively whole-step pitch levels, beginning with "1" as the lowest.

learned a great deal about these language elements in the last twenty-five years. I would like to present just a small part of their findings.⁶ I do so not to imply that a scientific knowledge of linguistics alone will enable a pastor or congregational director or musician to cultivate a meaningful worship in his parish; I do so only to suggest that a simple grasp of a few of these fundamental principles may enable such a person who already has a feel for words to clarify for himself how words can be primary in music, and hence to convey the right spirit and response accurately and swiftly to his congregation.

By beginning with the prosodic element of duration, or length of sound, the least distinctive of all the features in spoken English, we can bring in some related information about the language that is necessary for a clear understanding of the whole, but not actually a part of a linguistic analysis of duration. Basic is the phenomenon of time. Sounds are things that occur in time (they take time), hence a repetition of sounds is movement in time (marks time), such as "la la la la la." I am not speaking here of rhythm. We have rhythm only when some one of the four elements is recognized as recurring in some sort of pattern, either regularly or irregularly, which pattern makes the beginning and the endings of these movements detectable. Pure sounds, as in music without words, may be rhythmized by any one of these elements—duration, stress, pitch, rests, or even timbre. Complex sounds, such as language sounds, are finally rhythmized by only one of them (the others acting then as variations) and which one depends on the medium. In the absence of such an element, then, there is no rhythm, only the marking of time. For example, we can speak of rhythm in the heart beat only because every second beat is longer than the others (counting 1-2). And there is rhythm in walking because of the differentiation between the lifting of the foot and its touching the ground again, a 1-2 binary pattern. By analogy to these, we invest a mechanical marking of time with a rhythm that does not actually inhere in it; for example, we hear the identical ticks of a clock as "tick-tock." Nature has few other exactly regular rhythms. Her irregular

⁶ Perhaps the study that is most compactly comprehensive, and one that has been most influential, is that by George L. Trager and Henry Lee Smith, *An Outline of English Structure*, *Studies in Linguistics*, Occasional Papers 3 (Norman, Okla., 1951), pp. 35-52. See also perhaps Archibald A. Hill, *Introduction to Linguistic Structures* (New York, 1958), pp. 13-29.

In this and in the following footnotes, I try to pinpoint only a minimum number of sources for the information I use. I do this both to add the weight of recognized authority to my statements and to suggest a source for additional information to those who wish to read further on the subject. To document all of the sources which formed the reading background from which I write would be to make this paper an academic exercise rather than the readable introduction to a little-thought-of aspect of the whole problem of creating an English liturgy, which is its aim.

ones may be best exemplified in the waves of the tide, for in these some movements are larger than others, and sometimes a very large wave actually comprises two or more smaller waves within it. The effect is something like a combination of the 1-2-3 of the heart beat movement with the 1-2 movement of walking in a free mingling. Language moves in this latter kind of rhythm in its prose and also in much of its poetry.

In the concrete of language, the sound-beats are what we call syllables; and if we continue to mark time at the ends of sentences and clauses, we notice that these pauses also constitute beats. That is, they take up a length of time. Now this feature of taking up a length of time differs in importance among different languages. In some (Japanese, Finnish, Samoli, etc.) the length of time given to pronouncing a syllable changes the meaning of the word. These are called "chrone" languages. Duration is the element which rhythms the language, and can usually be measured to two degrees—long and short, with something of a 2:1 ratio between them.⁷ In English, on the other hand, the length of time given to pronouncing a syllable has absolutely no distinguishing effect on its meaning, hence this cannot be the element which rhythms it. This is not to say that the length of time does not vary among different syllables—it certainly does vary, and this variation will color the rhythm. Clusters of consonants, for example, necessitate more time: "glimpsed streams" takes more time to say than "Hi there," although both examples have only two syllables. Also, vowels before "voiced" consonants (b, d, g, j, v, o, z, dj) tend to be longer than those before the "voiceless" ones (p, t, c, k, f, b, s, sh), as can be heard between "God" and "got."⁸ However, the length even in these cases differs from speaker to speaker and even in the same speaker on different occasions, and it cannot be measured as constituting twice as much in one word as in the other; hence, objectively, each can still be said to constitute only one pulse of time, one whole number, albeit a "stretched" pulse in some cases.

Those acquainted with the technicalities of Gregorian Chant may find this concept of the relatively-lengthened beat in the English syllable clarified by analogy to the "punctum," or square note, as it operates in the chant. This unit of time usually represents an eighth note duration (as it did already for the Greeks who called

⁷ Daniel Jones, *The Phoneme* (Cambridge, 1962), p. 121. We know that classical Greek poetry was built on this principle of 2:1 ratio of long and short syllables, and that classical Latin poetry imitated it. However, I can find no classical scholar who will attempt to prove that this is how Latin (at least) was ever spoken, certainly not as it was spoken at any time after the third century A.D.

⁸ Besides the treatment in the studies already listed, I found particularly readable that of Kenneth L. Pike, *The Intonation of American English* (Ann Arbor, 1946), pp. 96-97.

it the *prótos chrónos*), and its being lengthened by a horizontal episema or reduced in a liquescent note either to fit the words or the rhythm of a neum does not change it to a quarter note or a sixteenth note. This example, of course, reflects the equalist interpretation of Gregorian Chant, for the reason that this is the only interpretation that can provide an analogy to the English language. The mensuralist interpretation can be analogous only to Greek and to classical Latin poetic language, and perhaps to some modern chrone languages, hence I cannot apply it here.

The emphasis on this point of the relative equality of syllables in English is important because of the wide and free use of voice changes in our language for subjective reasons. In other words, we have a tendency to superimpose durational differences on our spoken English for the sake of either emphasizing the meaning, or of creating a regularly recurring, pulsing, rhythm. The first is simply the practice of coloring words which seem long in context: "It's a lo-ong, lo-ong time," "Heaven and earth are fil-lded with your glory." Granted, such words may be lengthened in meaningful delivery; however, past a certain point such lengthening is a subjective imposition, and should be restrained if the English text is to retain its objective character.

The second tendency toward lengthening is more complex in its implications and in its consequences. This is what we call imposing "isochroneity" on English—causing the words to fit into regularly recurring measures of the same length, thereby making duration a major rhythmic element. We get this effect in sing-song and in nursery rhymes, although I cannot demonstrate it without employing pitch patterns also. For example, the line we used before, "Susie is a tattle-tale!" is a rhythm (as well as a melody) to which any number of syllables may be used while the time is kept the same: "'3You're ²teach-⁴er's ³pet²!" "'2If ya ³don't watch ²out, ⁴the ³bugey-man'll ²get'cha²." Closer to an example of what is done in a poor poetry reading is something like "Humpty, Dumpty." For in this as in most nursery rhymes, lines are made to take the same time—the length of time between heavy stresses is equalized. Thus, the long last line, "Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty back together again" (some versions use fewer words; I learned it like this and it illustrates my point better), takes the same amount of time as the first, "Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall."

What happens in the above examples is what we have learned to expect in the music of the last three centuries, and to some degree in the poetry also; that is, a certain length of rhythm made up of equal units of time in a set pattern. This pattern imitates, first of

all, the heart beat, and the faculty of such languages and of pure sound (music) to fill equal measures of exact durations meaningfully. As an imitation of this natural phenomenon and as a stylization of it, this pattern is an art form (either art-ful or arti-ficial), and once set up other sounds are made to bend to its requirements. When this happens forcibly, even in music, the pattern calls attention to itself and away from the idea expressed therein. However, in music and in languages where durational differences are the major source of rhythm, the effect is art-ful; but when duration or length of syllables is used to create a regular pulsing rhythm in the English language, it is always arti-ficial (mechanical) for the reason that duration is not a distinguishing feature of English, and hence cannot give the language its true rhythm. Therefore, regulating its durational differences for the sake of a rhythm will always distract from the meaning of its words.

We have, then, a valid example of music being primary over the text whenever English words are set to regularly-timed music. When it is done very well (as in some "art" songs), phrasing may still be done meaningfully; when it is done mechanically, the syllables that are lengthened to coincide with the longer notes of the music usually occur on the downbeat and are consequently heavily stressed also (since stress is the language's natural rhythming element), and the result may be described as a "beating" rhythm. Of course, this is a legitimate form in music whose first aim is rhythmic movement, in dance music, and in the pure sounds of music as a fine art. But when words are to be given primary consideration and melody used only to enhance them, this regularity must bend to allow the words their natural lengths. For all English syllables have the objective, relative length of only one beat, but each should be delivered with respect for its inherent quality, that is, taking the length of time it needs to be said well. In poetry, and also in dignified prose, all vowels are usually pronounced with greater care, so that they are lengthened somewhat from conversation; but when this is done, again there is a proportional irregularity of degrees of length among different syllables in a phrase.

What many people, on first glance, might call the lengthening of a syllable, is actually what we know in language to be the prosodic feature of juncture. Juncture occurs when the voice makes a shift—a heard transition between words or phrases in order to insure the correct meaning. In the broadest sense junctures are represented in written language by punctuation marks; however, when commas are used freely in writing, the speaker does not always use a juncture for each one in speaking, and contrariwise a speaker may

use some kinds of juncture on occasions when no punctuation mark occurs in the written sentence.

The three kinds of juncture most useful to us at this point of our study occur when the following is read as marked by accent and punctuation by the same speaker or group.⁹ "Glory to Gód in the highest, | and on earth + péace to men of good will. # We praise" What happens in the voice in conjunction with the /#/ (double cross) and the /|/ (single bar) junctures is more obvious than what we hear with the /+/(plus) junctures. This is because the former are terminal in character—they close off sounds. /#/ marks the termination of a complete utterance or sense unit. Hence, the sound it represents is a fading away into silence. When a new sense unit is to begin immediately, this silence will be only momentary, but we get the effect of potential silence. With /|/ we have the termination of only a part of what is intended for utterance. Hence the voice is always sustained, although it may be broken just sufficiently for taking a breath in a long utterance. Now, since sound moves in time, something happens time-wise when a juncture occurs in our speech. Anyone with a natural sense of timing and of rhythm recognizes these potential pauses as constituting beats or units of time approximately equivalent to what the syllables themselves constitute. Linguists have supported this natural sense. Careful testing by instruments has shown that in the overall movement of spoken English, a /|/ juncture is roughly equivalent in time to one syllable, and the /#/ to two syllables.¹⁰

What is known as /+/(plus) juncture is less definable in time. In the line quoted above, it indicates that something is heard in the voice when both "earth" and "peace" are given some prominence. What is heard may be described as a sustained sound in very short transition—whatever bridging effect is needed to finish off the sound of the "th" of "earth" and to initiate the "p" of "peace." We call this an internal open juncture. Usually it is part of the time of the preceding syllable; however, when full emphasis is given to both syllables around it, this /+/(plus) juncture will be prolonged to a full beat. This means, of course, that it becomes for all practical purposes a /|/ juncture, rounding off one phrase before the next is sounded. A knowledge of just this much information on the /+/(plus) juncture can be helpful in working with congregational recitation in order that one may understand what is necessary to

⁹ I say by one speaker or group because when the celebrant or leader pronounces the first phrase and a congregation picks up the second, very often a /#/ will occur after "highest" also.

¹⁰ For the latest data on this subject, see Yao Shen and Giles G. Peterson, *Isochronism in English*, *Studies in Linguistics*, Occasional Papers 9 (Buffalo, 1962).

shift from a swift, conversational recitation to a more formal or chanted one. It is also helpful for understanding how to give two successive strong syllables a correctly rhythmical prominence.

Terminal junctures, however, are of more practical importance in our general approach to the relationship of words to music in the liturgy, for they break up the overall, continuous movement of rhythmic sound into graspable, meaningful parts. The pattern of their occurrence in prose texts is significant then. In spoken prose, as in written prose, this pattern is irregular, depending entirely on the number of words used in a given instance to express a given idea. By allowing these junctures to occur according to meaning, we achieve the first major step toward meaningful delivery.¹¹

Again, those acquainted with the technicalities of Gregorian Chant might find an analogy helpful. The function of English juncture is practically synonymous with that of the quarter-, half-, and full-bars in chant. In syllabic Chant, it may be noticed, these will coincide with the occurrence of the various junctures in speaking the text. In melismatic chant, they occur according to the melodic phrases; and what is important about this is that the pattern of their occurrence is like that found in a prose text—at irregular intervals of time or number of notes, and with irregularly grouped neums.

Art again, in both music and poetry, has selected certain lengths from those occurring in natural speech and set them up as patterns. These will usually approximate an average breath-length (like the hexameter and pentameter in poetry), or half a breath-length (perhaps the trimeter and tetrameter). However, in order to understand the full implication of such formalization, we should first say something about stress. For stress is the feature in English that gives us the clue to the rhythmic movement itself within the length or unit bounded by terminal junctures.

As we said above in beginning our survey of language features, in the movement of sound from syllable to syllable in spoken language it is our recognition of the recurrence of some characteristic feature that invests that movement with rhythm—or rather, that causes us to invest it with rhythm. In English this feature is stress, the slight intensification of some syllables in relation to those around them.¹² We recognize this feature most familiarly in our law of

¹¹ In music we would call this phrasing.

¹² Whatever the feature that rhythms a given language, the other elements may often coincide with it also. Thus in classical Latin poetry the long syllable was often also stressed or pitched higher, but when it was not, it was still the long (unstressed) syllable that provided the rhythm. In English, a stressed syllable may often be somewhat longer and may be said on a higher pitch. However, even if the stressed syllable is shorter and said on a lower pitch than two syllable around it, it is still that stressed syllable that provides the basic rhythmic structure.

word accent, and we know from usage that the meaning of a word can change with a shift in the accent, as for example in “cónvict” and convíct.”

Every English monosyllable has a potential primary stress. In words of more than one syllable, only one has a primary stress. For when syllables and then words are joined together in a sequence, different degrees of stress come into play.¹³ These give us our distinctions between the “little” rhythms and the greater rhythm of any utterance. For usually what is bounded by /|/ or /#/ junctures (that is, a clause or sentence) is spoken in such a way as to have only one primary stress. For example, the phrase we used before would comprise two large rhythms: “Glóry to Gód in the hîghest, | and on êarth+peáce to mên of goód will. #” And in swift conversational recitation, two such phrases may even be given only one stress peak, as in the following: “Who tåke away the sins of the wórld, | have mércy on us. #” But for the analyst (and this may well include directors of both singing and speaking choirs) it is useful to understand how these greater rhythms are made up of smaller rhythms.¹⁴

The smallest rhythmic unit in sound has two beats, which may be extended to three beats.¹⁵ Beyond this number the beats would again group into twos and threes: four is 2+2, as it is heard in a sergeant’s “Hút, two, thrêe, four!” Hence, finding the smallest units of rhythm in prose is first a matter of marking each obviously stressed syllable in the phrase. Then, if there are more than two additional beats after any one of these (and the /|/ juncture must be counted as one beat, and /#/ as two) the undercurrent of rhythm may be allowed to come to the surface by overplaying the meaning in a sort of sing-song, and the other potential stresses will reveal themselves. I indicate these, as in the following, by means of a little claret under the syllable:

Glóry to Gód in the hîghest | and on êarth+peáce to mên of
 good will #

¹³ The following symbols are used for these degrees: /´/ primary; /^/ secondary; /\`/ tertiary, and /v/ weak or unstressed.

¹⁴ By way of comparison, in dealing with regularly-measured music no musician would be considered adequately prepared if he did not understand the significance of the time-signature for the individual measures in relation to the rhythm of the whole piece.

¹⁵ The basis for this statement can be found first of all in nature and psychology. It is evident also in our word accentuation in that any word of more than three syllables always has a secondary accent. In music, 4/4 time has a secondary stress on 3, and measures longer than this will reduce to “little” measures: 6/8 may be 2+2+2 or 3+3.

Not everyone would read this phrase in this rhythm, however. If said in a statelier manner, the juncture between "earth" and "peace" would become a full beat and we might have this instead:

Glóry to Gód in the hìghest | and on éarth | péace to mèn of
 gòod will #

Since these points are not equally stressed, it is more convenient to call them "metrical ictuses;" ictuses, because they are the points on which the movement of sound alights in order to take off again; metrical because they give us a gauge for measuring lengths of sound.

Such a measuring off of prose rhythm (hence, irregularly-measured rhythm) to its smallest units is necessary to our present study if we are to be able to judge how music may move rhythmically if it is subserving a prose text. For even so poetic a line as the example above counts, as marked in the second example, 123 123 12 123 12 12 123 123, with three groups in the first phrase, two in the second, and three in the third. This is the typical irregularity of prose meter. Its similarity to that of Gregorian Chant is obvious in the relative equality of each beat, the free use of two or of three beats in successive measures, and of differing numbers of measures in phrases. This is how Gregorian Chant is like prose. The ultimate principle of rhythm in both is the same.

It is from this point of our analysis that we could demonstrate how the art of English poetry is a regularization of these stresses and metrical ictuses. However, since the parts of the Mass we are concerned with include neither metrical poetry nor the more prose-like poetry of the psalms, doing so would be to wander too far from our subject and is hence better left for another paper. The final prosodic feature we are concerned with here is pitch.

Although the beauty and meaning of words can be caught in monotone recitation or chant, the most effective means for heightening the meaning in spoken English is the employment of different pitch levels or tones. As a feature of spoken English, however, differences in tones have significance only in entire sense units, not in any one part of them alone.¹⁶ And although such differences are used in a multiplicity of ways in every part of an utterance to bring out shades of meaning (for example: ²I ³like you.¹ ³I ³like ³you! ³I ¹like ²you? ²I like ³you.¹ ³I ¹like you.¹ ²I ³like you²— [but]) nevertheless, tests show that one of them is somewhat

¹⁶ Sense units may be very short, of course; "Yes?" is a complete one.

semi-standard for normal utterances. This is 2-3-1, which represents beginning on our normal speaking tone, rising somewhat on the most important word near the end, and then falling from it to the close, when there is a full stop such as represented by a period or a question mark. For example, in the *Gloria*, normal spoken intonation would be thus in the following phrase, if it is followed by a full stop: “²We ³praise you¹ #” and we usually write the /1/ at the end rather than at the beginning of the last syllable to indicate a gliding fall, although it may have begun before the last syllable is sounded. On the other hand, if, as is usually done, the four short phrases are said in one breath, the normal intonation would be thus: “²We ³praise you² | we ³bless you² | we a-³dore you² | we ³glorify you²¹ #.”

The simple recitative chant tones used by the celebrant in High Masses are no more than a formalization of these conversational pitch differences.¹⁷ In natural speech intonation then, the following greeting and response might sound like this:¹⁸ “²The Lord be ³with you² || ²And with ³your spirit²¹ #.” As soon, however, as these tones become definite musical intervals, their tonal affinities (their consonance or dissonance as they are heard together) may alter their positions somewhat.¹⁹ This may be one of the reasons why in the *tonus antiquior* the greeting just given does not drop to /1/.

Several other factors also come into play when speech is formalized (even before it is put into singing tones). First of all, in formal language one usually elevates his voice so that he is possibly using /3/ as his level tone, and then rises to /4/ for emphasis. A drop then to /2/ may constitute a momentary termination. I think this may be the reason our liturgical responses are often level chanting with a drop of an interval on the final syllable (and this has become a minor third in places): “³The Lord be with ²you || ³And with your spi-²rit #.” The second factor is a consequence of the first: since the speaking tone has been elevated, the speaker then tends to start lower and to rise to it. This is heard in stage speech and in highly emotional speech, and unfortunately it is also often heard in the common prayers in many religious houses when no other natural intonations are used. Formalized in Latin, it is

¹⁷ See J. Smits Van Waesberghe, *Gregorian Chant* (Stockholm, n.d.), pp. 15-45.

¹⁸ I use a /||/ juncture here for the first time in this paper. It signifies that an utterance is actually complete, but ends on a rising, rather than a falling cadence. Such occurs when a response is expected, and also in some questions and exclamations. It may also indicate very polite speech.

¹⁹ See J. Smits Van Waesberghe, *A Textbook on Melody* (American Institute of Musicology, 1955), especially pages 21-32, 60, and 97.

the pattern we hear in the "Pa²ter ³Noster" in High Mass. In the English responses we have been using for our example, it might be formalized as follows: "The ²Lord be ³with ²you² || ¹And ²with ³your ²spi-¹rit:#." And I suggest that such a melodic pattern follows the inherent features of our English language.

Psalmody in worship followed the same principles as the above in acquiring the melodic patterns we associate with them in Latin—the Psalm Tones: a rising intonation at the beginning of the psalm, an elevation of the voice on the last meaningful stress in each half-verse, followed in the first half by a return to the reciting tone (or rising contour), and in the last half by the falling contour.²⁰ Melismatic chant, finally, was simply a further development from all this, providing melodic ornamentation at each of the important points, and later still in an independent melodic line. Doubtless, many of these melodies were familiar to the people. We know that the *jubilus* used for some of the Alleluias, for example, is a melody borrowed from the Alpine yodelers, and that tunes in different Gregorian words have been traced to popular folk songs of the day.

What we know less about is the original rhythm of these melodies. Probably some of those from the folk songs (at least if these had accompanied some forms of dance) had regular pulsing rhythms. If this is true, then what is significant is the fact that when these melodies were incorporated into Gregorian Chant it was the meter that was sometimes changed, that was freed, in order to maintain the primacy of meaning in the words by following the principle of rhythm found in language. For melodic patterns are common to all men. If we listen to some Gregorian tunes in their simplest melodic structure we can hear patterns found in our present folk and other songs. And we know that in general melodies have been borrowed from one musical form and put into another: waltzes have been jazzed; classical tunes put into popular idioms. It is the rhythm then that finally makes the difference between one expression and another.

²⁰ All that has been written and said in Latin theory and by analogy in English prosody about the "cursus" and "cadences" seems to me ultimately to reduce to this intonational contour which we use in our ordinary spoken language. How the syllables are distributed in them, finally makes very little difference so long as the natural curve (both melodic and rhythmic) is not allowed to be mechanically determined, as by counting syllables only. Paul F. Baum, *The Other Harmony of Prose* (Durham, N. C., 1952), p. 98, says that the commonest cadences in English prose are probably these: mortal life; quick and the déad; Hóly Spírit; stréngth and protéction. Two of these end with a stressed monosyllable, two with an unstressed syllable. The simple linguistic fact that provides the key to handling final stressed syllables in such chant cadences as found in the Psalm Tones is that the rise and the fall occurs on the one syllable, as in "quick and the ³dead¹," whereas when the final syllable is unstressed it will take the drop: "Hóly ³Spí-¹rit."

Although the implications of the last statement may be little thought about, they are not surprising when we study this phenomenon of rhythm. For while rhythm seems to be the most obvious quality of art, it is also the most profound, the most subtle. And to understand its role is to understand the very nature of art. Rhythm is also the "primordial element"²¹ of music, and therefore the first to have been drawn out from the languages that gave birth to song, as the even bodily rhythm of the heart beat was probably first imitated in dancing, especially in groups. For many primitive peoples rhythm was, or is, their only musical manifestation and was so highly developed that we are virtually incapable of reproducing the intricate, irregular patterns they produced, especially in some of their songs and solo dances.²² Today again musicians (as well as poets are breaking from the exclusiveness of a regular metrical beat; for example, by changing the time signatures in successive measures. They are doing so in order to give wider rhythmic expression to human thought and emotion, rather than to physical instinct only.

Gregorian Chant has been called the model for all Church music because it is such an expression. It is so because its principle of rhythm is the same as that in language, whereby it gives attention to the requirements of each sound; it allows these to move in the free combinations of times as prompted by the meaning in a natural (that is, an objective or universal) interpretation; and it uses melodic patterns, as they are also found in language, in such a way as to enhance the meaning.²³ This is why the *Motu Proprio* said that "the more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savour 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." (#3). As stated in the beginning of this paper, I think that such a statement has meaning for us today perhaps chiefly in defining some essences of a kind of music that can subserve words.

In regard to the liturgical texts which have been our only concern in this paper, my study leads me to suggest that we will

²¹ M. Vincent d'Indy, *Cours de composition musicale* (Paris, 1902), pp. 20-21.

²² See especially Sachs, *Rhythm and Tempo*, pp. 39-46.

²³ Archibald T. Davison, *Church Music* (Cambridge, 1960), p. 29, says all of this in another way: "The Church of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, having before it the example of folksong and the dance, and being quite aware of the distracting power of pulsing rhythm as it was represented in these two forms, realized that the presence of a regularly recurring beat would seize upon the attention of the worshiper, if indeed it led him no further astray; and the Church, therefore, carefully avoided rhythm of that kind, making the flow of the music largely dependent on the accent of the Latin text."

supply a fitting musical setting for them only if we listen to them first of all as words—as the Word of God sounded in English with the full beauty of its meaning as expressed through the rhythm and melody of the English language. The musical accompaniment that is born of such an approach is least likely to set up another barrier between priest and people, between the Word of God and the hearers of the Word, between the Christian rite of Sacrifice and the rightful collaboration of Christians in that rite. A repertoire of appropriate settings may finally embody numerous influences, but will be beautiful and hence acceptable only when these have been distilled through individual creative artists—poets and musicians filled with a knowledge of the Word of God, combined ideally of course in the same persons. Since the ideal is seldom discovered, I suggest that the development of such a finally acceptable repertoire should begin with the simplest forms adhering closely to the texts, and should be expected to progress very slowly; albeit there will be and should be prolific experimentation along the way. To work in any other direction will be not to have benefitted from the mistakes of the Protestant reformers, as there are also positive values we should learn from them.

Archibald Davison tells us in his invaluable little book on *Church Music*, written from a wealth of musical and Protestant background, that “our insistence that church music shall be real has resulted in the use in Protestant services of a shocking amount of pedestrian, commonplace music which does, indeed, satisfy the requirement of reality, but reality of a physical and not of a spiritual nature” (p. 95). He blames some of this situation on the fact that Luther adopted the pulsing, regular meters of secular music which “seize upon the attention of the worship, if indeed it led him no further astray” (p. 29), rather than choosing the irregular rhythm of plainsong. Luther, of course, did this for the valid reason that the latter seemed not “a type of rhythm which could be easily grasped” by a congregation. The result, as Davison laments, was the loss of a music that is “an eloquent yet inconspicuous reinforcement of the ideas embodied in the text it accompanies” (p. 129).

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

A striking feature of the liturgical reform of the present century is the revival of congregational singing. Though this was a common practice in the early Church, as the Fathers testify, and was revived by the Protestant reformers, it has been almost entirely absent from the Latin church for more than a millenium, and its restoration poses a number of difficult problems. In spite of recent promotion by the highest authorities of the Church, it has not yet been generally reintroduced, and there is still considerable resistance to it.

We propose to discuss some of these problems here, and to review various arguments for and against the practice. In conclusion, we shall make some practical observations.

Let us begin by asking: should the congregation sing at liturgical celebrations?

Objections to Congregational Singing

A fundamental objection to the practice proceeds from the nature of the proper psychological effect of the liturgy in general, and of liturgical music in particular. This effect is that of contemplation. But congregational singing is a kind of activity and is therefore opposed to contemplation. Therefore congregational singing opposes the proper spirit of the liturgy and should be avoided.

A second objection to congregational singing is that it tends to be dreary and noisy, or else sentimental. But the liturgy ought to have a joyful and beautiful serenity. Hence congregational singing is unfitting.

A third objection lies in the pieces to be sung. Congregational music is of necessity simple. But the great treasurers of church music are almost all written for trained choirs and cantors and are very difficult to sing well. A congregation cannot possibly sing them. Hence congregational singing must be at the expense of better and more effective music.

A fourth objection comes from past experience of dangers of the practice. Congregational singing has been a concomitant of movements of religious enthusiasm, and has, at times, provoked unseemly, or even violent and orgiastic, effects.¹ Such things must be carefully avoided. Hence congregational singing should be avoided or at least severely restricted.

A fifth objection comes from the circumstances that not all are capable of singing. Some are thus excluded from participation with

¹ cf. R. Knox, *Enthusiasm*, Chapter XXI.

the majority of their fellows, and this is in opposition to the character of the liturgy as an act of the whole community.

There is a similar argument to the contrary. The need for music being granted, it should not be performed by persons set apart from the congregation, organists, cantors, choirs, etc., for the people then become merely idle spectators. It should be performed by the congregation.

According to another contrary argument, since the graces received are greater as the degree of participation is greater, the people should sing as much as possible. And the elaborate music which requires a choir should be replaced with simpler music which can be sung by all.

In Support of Congregational Singing

It is almost unnecessary to recall the numerous pronouncements in recent times of the highest authorities of the church, popes and council, concerning congregational singing.

“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.” (Pius X, *motu proprio*.) “In order that the faithful may more actively participate in divine worship, let them be made once more to sing the Gregorian chant, so far as it belongs to them to take part in it.” (Pius XI, *Divini Cultus Sanctitatem*.)

“May it thus come about that the Christian people begin even on this earth to sing that song of praise it will sing forever in heaven: ‘To Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.’ (Apoc. 5, 13)” (Pius XII, *Musica Sacra Disciplina*.) “To promote active participation, the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs, as well as by actions, gestures, and bodily attitudes.” (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Second Vatican Council.)

Thus it is clearly the mind of the Church that the people should participate in the Sacred Liturgy by singing. Many theological and scriptural arguments can be adduced in support of this position. However, we shall limit the present discussion to psychological arguments.

As will be developed in a later paper, the primary psychological effect of liturgical participation is properly one of contemplation.

Generally considered, contemplation comes about in several ways. Study and meditation is one; however, certain kinds of physical activity can also foster it, especially repetitious or rhythmical activity, for example as in the Rosary. Experience shows that congregational singing is one of these.

Furthermore, congregational singing is a very practical means of active participation. The entire congregation, usually, cannot participate in the serving, or the reading. However all, or almost all, can join together in one voice. And unlike serving, which is more akin to physical labor, singing is an intrinsically enjoyable activity under proper conditions. Thus congregational singing could well be the finest means for active popular liturgical participation.

Reply to the Objections

It remains to dispose of the arguments against congregational singing. As for the first, consider two images: a scholar sitting in his study, and a monk in choir. One might suppose the first to be engaged in contemplation, for he sits thinking, and the second in a non-contemplative activity, for he sings, kneels, bows, and turns pages. Yet, the latter may well be engaged in contemplation and the former in a non-contemplative activity, for the scholar may be wrestling with a problem, constructing, examining, and rejecting arguments, while the monk, having mastered the athletic details of the office so that they have become habit, may be engaged in contemplation. Thus we must distinguish those activities which oppose contemplation from those which induce and support it. Under the right circumstances, congregational singing belongs to the latter.

As for the second objection, it is true that congregational singing is often dreary and noisy. This condition is relieved by proper leadership, so that the rhythm and tuning are controlled, the people set at ease, and the tempo taken fast enough that the music has a joyful effect, avoiding turgidity and sentimentality. Congregational singing is improved by the accompaniment of a choir, and sometimes of an organ. Good choir or solo organ music provides, in conjunction, a relief for congregation singing, thus making it even more effective.

As for the third objective, it is generally both possible and desirable to divide the music among choir, organ, and congregation, though in different ways, depending on circumstances. Thus, in a parish, the choir can sing the proper, joining with the congregation in the ordinary. And nothing forbids giving some of the parts of the ordinary to the congregation while others are sung in polyphonic

settings by the choir. But perhaps the finest way of combining congregational singing with the greatest music of the church is to alternate the singing between chant or hymn verses sung by the congregation, and polyphonic versets sung by the choir or played on the organ.² Thus the congregational singing need not exclude, or even substantially reduce, the use of the finest music of the Church.

Concerning the fourth objection, if the texts to be sung contain sound doctrine, if melodies which appeal to improper feelings are avoided, and if the leader is competent and experienced, so that the singing does not become uncontrolled, enthusiastic abuses may be prevented.

As for the fifth objection, there are few who are not capable of singing the short responses. Those who cannot sing the longer pieces can participate by listening. But it is all the more important that the congregational singing be done well, and be relieved by choral and organ music.

We come next to the two contrary arguments. An ancient principal of liturgical celebration, one which became obscured during the Middle Ages, but which is now reiterated by the Second Vatican Council, is that "In liturgical celebrations each person, minister or layman, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy."³ This division of function serves as a sign of the communal and hierarchical nature of the action and arranges that none of the participants be always busy, so that all may enjoy the service. There are parts which the celebrant performs, others which are done, properly, by the deacon, others, according to ancient and continuous custom, by the cantors and choir. To give these last entirely to the people would be objectionable in the same way as was giving everything to the priest.

Underlying the second argument is the erroneous notion that grace is granted in proportion to the amount of exterior activity, independently of the strength of proper interior disposition. Though it may limit to some extent the singing of the congregation, good choir music is capable of rousing the hearers to devotion and thus makes their own singing more profitable.

A further point should be mentioned in this connection. The music of the Church is by tradition antiphonal and responsorial.

² For examples of such arrangements cf. for example Dufay, *Fragmenta Missarum*; *Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae* I, Tom. IV. Also, G. Frescobaldi, *Fiori Musicali*.

³ Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, p. 28.

Thus a Gloria or Credo is properly sung by alternating sides of choir or congregation. If, instead, the congregational singing is alternated with polyphonic versets, say, sung by the choir, the degree of congregational participation remains the same.

The Art of Congregational Singing

The arguments and counter-arguments we have considered lead to an important conclusion: that congregational singing is unprofitable and undesirable unless it is done well. We wish to turn now to the practical question: how does one get a congregation to sing well? Some may even ask: how does one get a congregation to sing at all?

It lies in the nature of music-making that any simultaneous performance by more than one person requires a leader. Even in a professional string quartet, one of the players must take the lead. All the more does a church congregation, consisting largely of persons only slightly trained in music, require a leader. A leader, furthermore, requires two sorts of abilities: musicality and leadership. He must have a fine sense of tuning and especially of rhythm; and he must be able to generate in the people that degree of controlled enthusiasm necessary for good singing.

What, then, is the technique of leadership? There are, in fact, several methods. The oldest congregational music of the Latin Church is of a responsorial form, in which the people alternate with and reply to the singing of the priest or cantor. The leadership is here provided, normally, by the voice of the priest or cantor alone. He sets the rhythm and tone, and the people respond in imitation. This method was adapted to pieces which are not responsorial in form by having the first few notes of the piece intoned by cantors, the rest being then continued by all, a method largely used now to lead monastic choirs. The responsorial method presupposes a priest or cantor with some musical talent and training and an experienced congregation. But it is the simplest, and undoubtedly of all methods the finest.

Another method is accompaniment by the organ. There are some pitfalls here: not all organists seem to be capable of doing it well; nor are all organs suitable, a point we shall discuss below. It is this writer's experience that a congregation sings Gregorian Chant better without organ accompaniment. However, some music requires accompaniment. The vernacular hymns, which have become more popular lately, were, for the most part, written or adapted by composers of harmonized music. Thus they are conceived as harmonized music; and their melodies are so simple that they eventually become tiresome without organ accompaniment. Furthermore, since

the same tune may be harmonized in a number of ways, the organist can add a substantial element of variety.

A third method is accompaniment by a choir. There are pitfalls here, too. Congregations sometimes object to it. To some extent it is necessary, occasionally, as a supplement to the responsorial method. For if the celebrant falters in his singing, the choir director must set the tone or rhythm for the response, and the congregation then follows the choir.

A fourth method is that of the director who stands in front of the congregation much as a choir director stands in front of his choir. It is best that he sing himself, and sometimes it is helpful if he conducts with his hands. This method seems always to be necessary in starting congregational singing in a parish, even for the short responses. Soon, however, the people learn to sing these without such direction, though the congregations this writer has worked with continue to need it for such pieces as the Kyrie and Gloria. But it is to be hoped that as liturgical education and devotion broaden and deepen it will become altogether unnecessary and will be replaced by the purely responsorial method. Some members of the congregation will object that they find the leader distracting; but he is much less distracting than the bad singing that would result otherwise.

The congregational director need not be a trained musician; he need only have average musical talents and the ability to exercise leadership. The best director is often the pastor himself. Congregational hymn-singing at pious exercises is generally successful because it is led from the front by the officiating priest; at Mass the celebrant cannot do this. But the director needs to be instructed and constantly corrected by someone with musical training.

Unfortunately, it is no more possible to write detailed musical instructions for leaders of congregational singing than it would be possible to write a detailed account of how to play the violin. Yet, someone with a good musical background, who is sincerely devoted to the musical discipline of the Church, and is willing to study and learn from experience, can learn to do it.

The Needs of Congregational Singing

We have seen that congregation singing must be led by persons of musical talent and training. Without them, congregational singing will be no more successful, generally, than has been choir singing in the last fifty years. We shall conclude by discussing some other needs, which are not under the immediate control of the leader.

If one walks into a Protestant church he finds fine, fat, buckram-bound hymnals generously distributed in the pews. He also finds a sign with the numbers of the hymns to be sung at the next service, or else finds these printed in the program or bulletin. But in Catholic churches we find the pews stuffed with a motley collection of cards, leaflets, and pamphlets in paper or plastic bindings. The page numbers are usually yelled out by the leader, thereby creating a disturbance. This matter of page numbers could use some attention. As for the hymnal situation, the available Catholic ones are either too small, so that one soon lacks sufficient variety, or else contain mostly choir music, or too much inferior material, or too many compositions by the editors themselves. We sorely need a suitable hymnal. Such ought to be officially commissioned. Privately commissioned hymnals always sprout variant melodies as soon as the copyright is about to expire, so that for many hymns there is never agreement in the congregation as to how to sing it. Even that fine old hymn "Holy God, we praise Thy Name" suffers from this affliction. The work of collection and selection needed for an official American Catholic Hymnal could well be begun now, even before the revision of the Roman books is completed.

We have already indicated the need for a good organ, especially to provide the harmony to the vernacular hymns, which have lately grown in popularity. Many of the organs in our churches are more or less unsatisfactory, however. The older pipe organs often have an excessively romantic or theatrical constitution, high wind pressure, and inarticulate tone. If such organs are played softly they cannot be heard by the people as they sing, since most of their stops sound at low pitches. But when played loud, they are unpleasant and tend to overwhelm and discourage congregational singing. But the worst organs of all for accompanying congregational singing are the electronic instruments. In the majority of these the sound is quite inarticulate, so that the player can convey no sense of rhythm. We shall not go into a technical discussion of electronic organs here; but suffice it to say that because of the way in which the tones are built up, the notes are highly interdependent. Music played on them comes out as mush. They serve for playing soft, sentimental "background music," but cannot set forth the lively harmonies of the great congregational hymns. Some pastors claim that most people cannot tell the difference between a pipe organ and an electronic instrument, which may be. But, having installed electronic instruments in their churches, they wonder why their congregational hymn-singing doesn't work.

There have been important recent developments in organ

building. A new structural and tonal basis is now being used by the best builders: mechanical key action, low wind pressure, a proper number of higher-sounding stops, articulate voicing; and this approach, if well carried out, leads to organs vastly better for accompanying congregational singing as well as for performing the traditional organ music of the Church.⁴ An especially magnificent example of this new style is the recently completed organ in St. Paul's Cathedral in Pittsburg, though even a small organ of this type is very serviceable and to be preferred to an electronic instrument. However, not all attempts at this style have been successful. If one wishes to obtain such an organ he should choose the builder very carefully.

Also required for good congregational singing is a well-designed church building, arranged so that the people are both spatially and acoustically united. In churches of the old "tunnel" shape the sound takes so long to travel the length of the congregation that good coordination becomes very difficult. Objectionable, too, are some of the recent "modernistic" designs which exaggerate and overdramatize the altar, and break the congregation into several separate groups. A floor plan which approximates the shape of the golden rectangle seems to be best. Most architects seem to be indifferent to good acoustics, and anyone building a church must accept a struggle if the acoustics are to turn out right.

The pleasures of singing in the bathtub are proverbial. Though church acoustics are not bathroom acoustics, good acoustics with a long reverberation time are most advantageous. The people get a strong sense of community when they can hear one another. And a sense that their own voices carry is a tremendous psychological aid to stronger and more devout participation. Acoustical tile, rugs, and sound absorbing materials ought to be avoided, unless necessary to correct for a bad shape in a church.

Thus it is clear that congregational singing is no easy way out of the church-music problem. To do it well, and it *must* be done well, will require patient study and experimentation. And it is all the more important now to improve choirs, since they must alternate with and relieve the popular singing. Organs and churches will have to be improved. But the goal is a high one, that of liturgical participation. And good congregational singing effects one of the finest joys of this life.

William F. Pohl

⁴ There is an excellent recorded lecture and demonstration of the new organs by E. Power Biggs, "The Organ". Columbia DL 5288. No one should build a church, or buy or renovate an organ, without consulting *The Organ in Church Design* by Joseph E. Blanton. Venture Press, Albany, Texas, 1957.

LITURGY AND CONGREGATIONAL SINGING *

When we compare the magnificent achievements of ancient and modern Church music with popular Church music, it is like seeing the undergrowth beneath the mighty trunks of forest trees—bushes and shrubs upon which one is inclined to set little value. On the other hand it is obvious that in recent decades, the value of popular Church music has been recognized, not only by priests and people who are fond of singing, but also by the hierarchy, most of all by local bishops. New and improved diocesan hymn-books are appearing everywhere, congregational singing is being encouraged in dioceses where it was never known before. In Austria as in Germany in recent years, for the first time, unison songs have been appointed which are sung everywhere with the same text and melody.

This is no accidental phenomenon: rather it must be considered as part of that religious revival affecting, not the bulk of the people, but a very important section of the Christian people. It began with Pius X who led the way, on the one hand, towards a strengthening of sacramental and liturgical life, and on the other towards a deepened understanding of the Church—to the 'awakening of the Church in the soul'.

It is plain to see that awareness of the nature of the Church has known a revival in our time; and the experience goes on. For all too long, even amongst the clergy, there has been a wide-spread tendency to think of the Church only in terms of the ecclesiastical hierarchy: Pope, Bishops and priests, and to some extent it has been forgotten that the faithful do not merely come to Church, are not merely looked after by the Church, but are themselves the Church. It is true that within this community certain organs have to emerge and must be given authority to exercise their various functions for the good of the whole community, but the whole organism must be alive.

This more complete concept of the Church as the holy community of the faithful was already operative at the beginning of this century. Above all it lies behind the liturgical movement, which is commonly said to have begun at the congress of Catholic societies in Mechelen in 1909, but which had its preparation in the Communion decrees and the *Motu proprio* concerning Church music of Pius X.

* From PASTORAL LITURGY by Joseph A. Jungmann, S.J., by permission of Herder and Herder, 232 Madison Ave., New York 16, New York.

In this *Motu proprio* the active participation of the faithful in the mysteries and in the prayer of the Church is mentioned for the first time. But once mentioned it has been stressed repeatedly by succeeding Popes. Pius X was thinking primarily of the people singing during worship. In general he was thinking first of all of the sung Mass in which the people were to take part, and he expressly stressed the fact that within the Mass (i.e., the *Missa cantata*) and the Office, hymns in the vernacular were forbidden. In the early days of the liturgical revival this was an understandable limitation. It was the confirmation of a settled practice which had been first prescribed universally, at least from Rome, by a decree of 1894. This adherence to the exclusive use of Latin did, it is true, place an obstacle in the way of the progress of congregational singing; at any rate a perceptible tension was created between the demands made by a popular Latin form of hymn-singing, and the demands made by the active participation of the people in the service—a tension which would have to be resolved sooner or later.

At the International Liturgical Congress in Lugano in September 1953, in which seventeen bishops and one representative from the Congregation of Rites took part, two of the four resolutions concerned the position of the vernacular in the liturgy. One of these made the petition: As Pius X made the Eucharistic Bread freely available for the Christian people, might not the Bread of God's Word be made more readily available by letting the people hear the readings at Mass in their own tongues, directly from the lips of the priest. This motion was only summing up what no less a person than Cardinal Lercaro, Bishop of Bologna had expressed to the congress in an extensive referendum. The other resolution concerned the hymns in the Latin Mass. It ran: The congress requests: so that the people may more easily and with more benefit take part in the liturgy, may bishops have authority to allow the people, not only to hear the Word of God in their own language, but to pray and sing in that language even in the Mass (*Missa Cantata*), and so make some sort of response. As well as by Bishop Weskaman of Berlin, the matter was specially represented by the former missionary to China, P. Hofinger. The report in the Liturgical Year Book adds the comment: in this it would be a case of relaxing the prohibitions of 1894 and 1903. (which demanded the exclusive use of Latin hymns); and goes on to observe: 'Heed would have to be paid to the sacral character of the vernacular hymns'. All this leads on to further extension of the possibilities of congregational singing in the various languages, and that for the sake of vitalizing the concept of the Church.

Beside the awakening of the Church in the soul and the desire for active participation in the life of the Church, in public worship, we must mention also a second factor, which concerns the singing of the people within the Mass, that is the better understanding of the meaning of the liturgy, especially of the Mass.

Understanding of the Mass has not been of a very high order since the Middle Ages. People, for the most part, were satisfied if they were simply present at Mass and knew about the sacred mystery which was being celebrated here: and at the same time they emphasized the memory of Christ's Passion, and especially in the later Middle Ages, the adoration of the sacred Body and Blood. In the Mass, therefore, the aspect of Christ's coming to us was stressed. The Mass was seen and described primarily as an epiphany of Christ, an appearance of Christ, or more vaguely, as God's appearance before the congregation. Corresponding to this aspect was the interpretation of the external action of the rite of the Mass in an allegorical way. The Gloria represented the Christmas mystery, the Epistle was the preaching of the Baptist, the Sanctus the entry into Jerusalem, the last blessing was the Ascension. In the external action people wanted to make visible the whole work of Redemption. And this was consistently in line with the fact that the people felt no need to be active themselves. They only wanted to look on, laying hold of the mystery reverently with eye and ear.

This was not a false, but was an inadequate conception of the Mass. For in truth the Mass is more than an epiphany of Christ; it is thanksgiving, sacrificial devotion. 'Eucharistia' is one of the oldest names for the Mass, and the idea of thanksgiving determines its essential structure to this day. Eucharistia means thanksgiving. The authentic action of the Mass begins with the invitation: Let us give thanks, *Gratia agamus*, *Εὐχαριστώμεν*. In essence the Mass is a mighty prayer of thanks which moves on into the thank-offering. It is not just a God-manward happening, a descent of God to man, but, based upon that, is an activity from man's side, a reaching up towards God. It is observance before God, led by Christ who acts through the celebrating priest at the moment of consecration; it is obedience before God indeed, which is fulfilled not by Christ alone, but precisely so that it is offered to God by Him in the midst of His Church and along with His Church. And so this movement upwards is present in the prayers and hymns of the Mass, not in the sense that a solitary individual makes this movement as representative of the rest, but in the sense that the whole congregation is

assembled for the very purpose of entering into Christ's sacrifice, into His thanksgiving, homage and devotion, and so of being raised up to God. Hence the 'we' of the prayers of the Mass; hence all along the line (if we look at the older textual material) the situation was such that the attending people were called upon to answer and confirm the prayers with their Amen—and also to join in the singing.

First and foremost, and according to the oldest tradition, this applies to the hymn which formed the first climax to the prayer of thanksgiving, the Sanctus. For centuries, and in our northern lands, until the height of the Middle Ages, the Sanctus was a song of the people. By the entire congregation taking up the song, there was a simple fulfillment of what was announced by the concluding words of the Preface: *Cum quibus et nostras voces . . .* This is indeed a climax in the liturgical action, and the dignity of the Church on earth should be manifest by its being raised up through the priest's prayer of thanksgiving to join with the Church in heaven to sing the one hymn of praise to God's triune Majesty, thus sharing, while still on this earth, in the praise of the celestial spirits. Obviously the other Mass hymns will be influenced too by this active conception of the liturgy which invites the people to join in, a conception now beginning to take hold and which we are gradually winning back. It would be specially easy to accomplish the active participation of the faithful in the Kyrie because it is the reiterated, litany-like cry of petition which rises to the Kyrios from His people; and likewise with the *Credo*, the profession of faith which ought to be spoken by all present.

These are all conclusions drawn predominantly from the history of the liturgy, and yet they are at the same time fundamental and therefore claim general application. Concerning the people singing at Mass, we are not interested in reviving a custom simply because it once prevailed: we wish rather to reinstate something which was more clearly appreciated in early times for the very reason that it is in harmony with the timeless meaning of the Mass and its liturgy.

In all of this we must bear in mind the well-known fact that the hymns of the Ordinary of the Mass, strictly speaking, were not originally songs in the musical sense of the word: they were spoken chorally with slight intonation, at most in a dignified recitative like that of the chant of the celebrant at the altar. This is obvious of the Sanctus, which was but the extension of the

Preface, and of the Credo, which is only a profession of faith, said in unison. The fact applies least of all, perhaps, to the Gloria which has always had something of the style of a hymn. It is significant that the Carolingian composer, Aurelian of Reaumé was still treating only the following as chants of the Mass: the Kyrie and the Gloria, and besides these, only the Proper chants—Introit, Gradual, Alleluia, Offertory and Communion. By contrast, the Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei are not included.

The Ordinary was the People's portion: but this did not remain so. In festal celebration when richer melody was desired, and then later in general, this became the preserve of the clergy who now formed the choir. Clergy and chorus meant the same thing, and even the sanctuary took from this its name of 'choir' which it keeps to this day. The liturgical recitative, the song of the Church, became the chorale. Within this choir with its chorales there was always the *schola cantorum* as a special group who took over the more elaborate melodies of the antiphonary or the Gradual. The people began to lose their voice.

At the same time the musicianship of the choir progressed and polyphony arose. Having first been tried out on the Proper, this spread to the Ordinary, and to develop its potentialities to the limit, it enlisted the help of the laity. Polyphony now flourished and displayed all of its wonderful richness. Church music had filled up the vacuum created by the silence of the people. Two forces, one positive and the other negative, both worked towards the same end: the positive power of the mightily progressing development of Church music and the negative tendencies which led to the silence of the people. Awareness of the Church vanished, as did understanding of the Mass in its complete sense as Eucharistia and sacrifice of the Church. It is significant that in the Middle Ages the word 'Eucharistia' was no longer translated by 'thanksgiving,' but by *bona gratia*: the Mass was understood to be an actual gift from on high—which it is; but that it was also the upsurge of the Christian people to God, was forgotten.

Today we are again beginning to overcome the people's silence. Does this mean that church choirs and polyphonic High Masses must fall into decay? In the heat of the battle such things have been said. These must be seen in the context of the battle of a young struggling movement which is important for the life of the Church, and which can only prevail after much labour.

The liturgical movement has fittingly been called a renaissance

which the Church has experienced in our own day, a rebirth in which a formerly attained happy condition has been brought back. In the liturgical movement the life of worship of the young Church is revived as a model, as a model for the active participation of the faithful in public worship. But no true renaissance can ignore the years that lie between; it must always try to understand the value of the immediate tradition, and to bring into harmony with the re-discovered values of the ancient model.

The liturgy is the public worship of the Church. Therefore it is and remains an ideal that the whole Church, the congregation here assembled, present its praise to God as a living organism. But the liturgy is the Church's service to God; it is God, infinite, eternal and almighty, who is to be given honour. In all ages and amongst all peoples it has always been accepted as obvious that for the glorification of God only the best is good enough, that to show homage to Him the very highest of which man is capable must be offered. Thus religion and its cult has always been that central point around which the arts have gathered: architecture, plastic and pictorial arts, and music.

The actual assembly of the faithful who are here and now united to worship God, made up of city-folk and country-folk, officials, businessmen and housewives, of parents and their children, can never provide, on their own, what advanced musical art can offer to God's honour. Often they will have to retire into passivity before it. They will not therefore refrain from praising God out of their own mouths also; but at the same time, where it is fitting, they will sometimes ask great music to offer in their name what they cannot themselves perform. And so ever and again all will resound in harmony with the splendour and beauty of the festally decorated house of God, with the richness of the vestments, the gold of the sacred vessels; and in God's house of all creation will join together to sound the praise of the Creator.

Against all this it could be argued that the Church of early times possessed the possibility of taking artistic song and musical instruments into its worship, and that it did not do this; more than this, that through the mouths of its most prominent men it constantly declined emphatically to have such accessories in its spiritual worship.

This shows us that they were unwilling to adopt forms which were current amongst the heathen cults. They did not want to

use the lyres, tympani, and symbols of Greek sacrifice, or the flutes of the Roman. They did not want to become confused with the cults of the gods or with the orgies of the mystery religions with their highly developed music. They had no stress the inner spiritual nature of their own worship in contrast to the external heathenish cults. A more serious consideration, however, is this: the early Church also declined to follow the example of Old Testament reference according to which the Word of God declared that God was supposed to be worshipped in *psalterio et cithara, in tympano et choro, in chordis et organo*. Even Chrysostom considered the instrumental music of Jewish worship to be but a concession to the weakness of the Jews, something to keep them back from worse things. And for a long time even vocal choirs were unheard of.

What should we think of the attitude of the early Church? Besides the contrast to heathendom there is another factor which must be considered. This was the extraordinary mistrust of the world of sense which arose, not from Christian revelation but from Platonic and neo-Platonic philosophy which constituted the intellectual habitat of the early Fathers. For Plato, the body with its senses is but a prison in which the soul is confined during this earthly life. Consequently, the formation of the soul necessitates the rejection of this prison as much as possible. The faculties of sense must be suppressed and weakened, certainly they must not be cultivated. St. Augustine is still deprecating the fact that he finds pleasure in harmonious sound and that the words of the holy Scripture move him more deeply when they are sung than when merely spoken. Ambrose took a different view, and Augustine began, as he admits, to change his. Nevertheless the feeling persisted right up to the flowering of scholasticism in the 13th century. Not till then did that pessimistic outlook give way, and the philosophy of Aristotle propounded the principle that all spiritual life must follow the path of the sense, and that even sensuous passions are not evil but necessary, only requiring to be controlled and kept in due proportion.

The negative appraisal of musical art by the Fathers and their refusal to use it in worship need not be normative for us, quite apart from the fact that Church music of recent centuries, especially vocal music, is something quite different from the noisy instrumental music of the heathendom with its reliance mainly on rhythm.

Congregational singing will once again take its place in the

liturgy, but it will no longer reign alone. This arises from our conception of the liturgy. Congregational singing must be admitted because the liturgy is the *Church's* worship; but the potentialities of Church musical art must also be admitted because the liturgy is *God's* service. The question now is how to achieve the right balance. I would like to suggest a few lines of thought, confining myself to the heart of the liturgy, the celebration of the Mass.

On great feast-days congregational singing will not be absent, but Church music will predominate. On these festal occasions the great settings of the Ordinary of the Mass which have been written during recent centuries will always come into their own. The same sort of thing will take place apart from great festivals in representative Churches in large cities—in cathedrals and the like.

On ordinary Sundays in the average parish, congregational singing according to the prescribed rules, must always have preference. Certain latitude and compromise will, of course, always be possible. There remains the Proper, containing those chants which have more the character of decorative interludes and to execute which the declining Middle Ages created the *Schola cantorum*.

We know that many serious obstacles stand in the way of the polyphonic intonation of the Proper. The chants of the Proper change Sunday by Sunday and can indeed be used but once in the year. In the traditional Latin form their texts are not understood by the faithful, less understood than the text of the Ordinary. Very often the texts are not particularly opposite, bearing a particular reference neither to the rest of the Mass formula nor to the relevant part of the action of the Mass. In short, they need reforming. Several ways of reform are possible, all of which present tasks to the Church music of the future. One line of reform would consist in fixing more appropriate and more easily understood texts for each sequence of Sundays. A radical reform has already been suggested: that even in a Latin High Mass, the Latin chants of the Proper should be replaced with the spirit of the liturgy. And there seems to be no reason why such chants could not be adopted by church choirs just as they were adopted in their older Latin form by the *Schola cantorum*.

With regard to the Ordinary too, the solution can be envisaged in the average parish, whereby congregational singing of the choir would be combined just as a *sol* and choir have been combined

elsewhere, or in such a way that there is an alternation from verse to verse. Such a solution has already been tried—in St. Stephen's in Vienna for example. Only the people's part must remain genuine congregational singing.

Today moreover, congregational singing and Church music are in a position to draw much closer together than they could formerly. All can read, many can read music, and everyone can get a hold of a book. Singing is of a higher standard—at least it is more widespread than it used to be. Congregational singing is no longer felt to be something foreign to worship. Whereas in Pius X's time we were only speaking about Gregorian Chant in Latin, Pius XII speaks in *Mediator Dei* of the fostering of religious congregational singing without reservation, of appropriate hymns which the people should sing within the Mass. Congregational singing in Church has re-awakened. Even Church music will not shrink from recognizing the people's singing as her true, if plainer, sister.

REVIEW

CESAR FRANCK: COMPLETE ORGAN WORKS

Recorded (Stereo and Mono) on the Organ of *Ste. Clotilde Paris*,
by *Jean Langlais*

Released and distributed by Gregorian Institute of America

For several reasons this album is a "must" for any organist with a sincere desire to perform Franck's organ music as nearly as possible as the composer intended.

With few exceptions the original *Ste. Clotilde* organ is the same today as when built in 1859. For tonal quality and balance it is unique among other instruments by the famous builder, *Cavaillé-Coll*.

In *Jean Langlais*, himself a composer of world-wide distinction, we have an ideal interpreter. Anyone acquainted with *Langlais'* playing of his own or others' compositions must realize that here is an unique musical personality, highly sensitive to the expressive and architectural features of what he is playing. It goes far to explain why this blind master, formed in his youth by *André Marchal*, can convey to us the glories of *Bach* and *Franck* with the fidelity that denotes a great artist.

Of the numerous *Franck* performances we have heard over the years, relatively few were convincing—why? Frequently because of inept registration (not always the player's fault), poor taste in tempi, and faulty phrasing or dynamics.

Briefly, here are a few impressions after two complete hearings of the *Langlais* recordings.

First Choral (E major): Controlled *rubato*; breathing pause just before the final *ff* statement; closing bars not too fast.

Pièce Heroïque: Brisk but flexible tempo; second theme only moderately fast; careful spacing for echoes in final *fff* chordal section.

Grande Pièce Symphonique: In movement I, gradual acceleration of triplet-figures preceding the extended development; the magic effect of flutes and finely-textured reeds. In movement II, following the first calmly flowing passage, the second (16th note) theme is not rushed, but crisp with half-staccato touch; the *vox humana* tender and musical, leading canonically to the exquisite coda. Movement III, following the intriguing thematic recapitulation: note the deliberate pace of the fugato, the splendid rolling pedal reeds, the

chordal statement of the theme in major. Even the final codetta is spacious, not hurried.

Second Choral (B minor): The first large section containing six variations of the main "passacaglia" subject, two subsidiary themes and a coda, form a complete unit involving subtly contrasted colors, rhythms and dynamics—all clearly set forth in this superb recording. Much may be learned stylistically from a detailed study of Langlais' performance.

Prière: An eloquent and profoundly moving creation which holds one's affection despite its 12-minute length. The composer is revealed in tender communion with his Maker, oblivious of things terrestrial. Somehow it does not seem too long in Langlais' inspired rendering.

A discreet *rubato* molds the melodic line of the first movement (9/8) in *Prelude, Fugue and Variation*. Strong reed chords then lead to the intriguing Fugue aptly described by Professor Carroll in the music notes as "non-Bach-like" and we may add, intensely Franck-like. The arabesques accompanying the Variation are exquisitely limned.

So strong are Langlais' persuasive gifts that one is almost inclined to accept the excessive length of the *A Major Fantasia*. But his resourceful presentation cannot alter our feelings that this work, despite some rich moments, is over-repetitious.

Probably the most frequently played work of Franck's is his *Third Choral in A minor*, whose opening arpeggio-phrase momentarily recalls Bach's Organ Prelude in the same key. But there the semblance ends; it is genuine Franck in an engaging mood. The bold chordal pile-ups, the irresistible *elan*. The composer's use of the mellow reed-voices, the warm lyricism of the middle Adagio are some of the reasons for its popularity. It is splendidly set forth in this recording.

Fantaisie in C major: This intimate and charming number reveals another side of Franck's nature. In the initial movement a serene descant floats above a canonic repetition of the first theme. The middle section is a playful *allegretto* mostly for manuals, with light registration. The third movement is very slow and quiet with *vox humana* in lingering cadences. Very sympathetically recorded.

In the *Finale in B flat* the glorious reeds of Ste. Clotilde enjoy a field day under the artist's feet and fingers. His dynamics closely follow the composer's markings in the original edition. The development, including the initial theme in minor and a *crescendo*

modulation to the entire original theme in major, is slightly accelerated. On the other hand the final "sprint to the tape" is not frantically overdone. A thrilling performance.

Cantabile (B major): One should notice the careful breathing between sequences, the slightly retarded coda, the delicate and discreet *rubato*; every phrase carefully molded. The player employs a velvety reed—first in the soprano, then in the tenor—against a bourdon or flute; and finally with tender appeals in the coda.

Franck's well-known *Pastorale in E major* is the final offering on Disk No. 3. Here we remark a subtle contrast in tempo between the opening theme and the pungent allegretto and short fugal development that follows. All this is skillfully managed by the performer closely following the composer's indications. A genial, happy closing number.

In reviewing these unique recordings we have purposely avoided any detailed analysis of the music, since this has been ably supplied by Dr. J. Robert Carroll, professor at the Gregorian Institute. Concerning both Franck and Langlais, Dr. Carroll includes valuable notes and scholarly data which contribute much to an intelligent understanding by the listener. He adds: "The most advanced engineering methods and the most precise and sensitive cutting equipment were utilized in the preparation of the master records."

In resumé, we would add a few general comments on the Langlais recordings:

1. Absolute fidelity to the composer's intentions as to registration.
2. Careful adaptation to the reverberation in Ste. Clotilde.
3. Precise enunciation of inner parts through meticulous phrasing.
4. A clear and definitely planned architectonic scheme for each work.
5. Impeccable rhythm, everything always under control.

Considering the unique qualities of this organ as heard in the resonant spaces of Ste. Clotilde, it is obvious that no other instrument elsewhere can reproduce an identical tonal effect. However, there exist today in America a sizeable number of organs capable of closely approximating Cavaille-Coll's masterpiece. Short of a course of study with Langlais at Ste. Clotilde, this wonderful album comes nearest to solving the problem.

Seth Bingham

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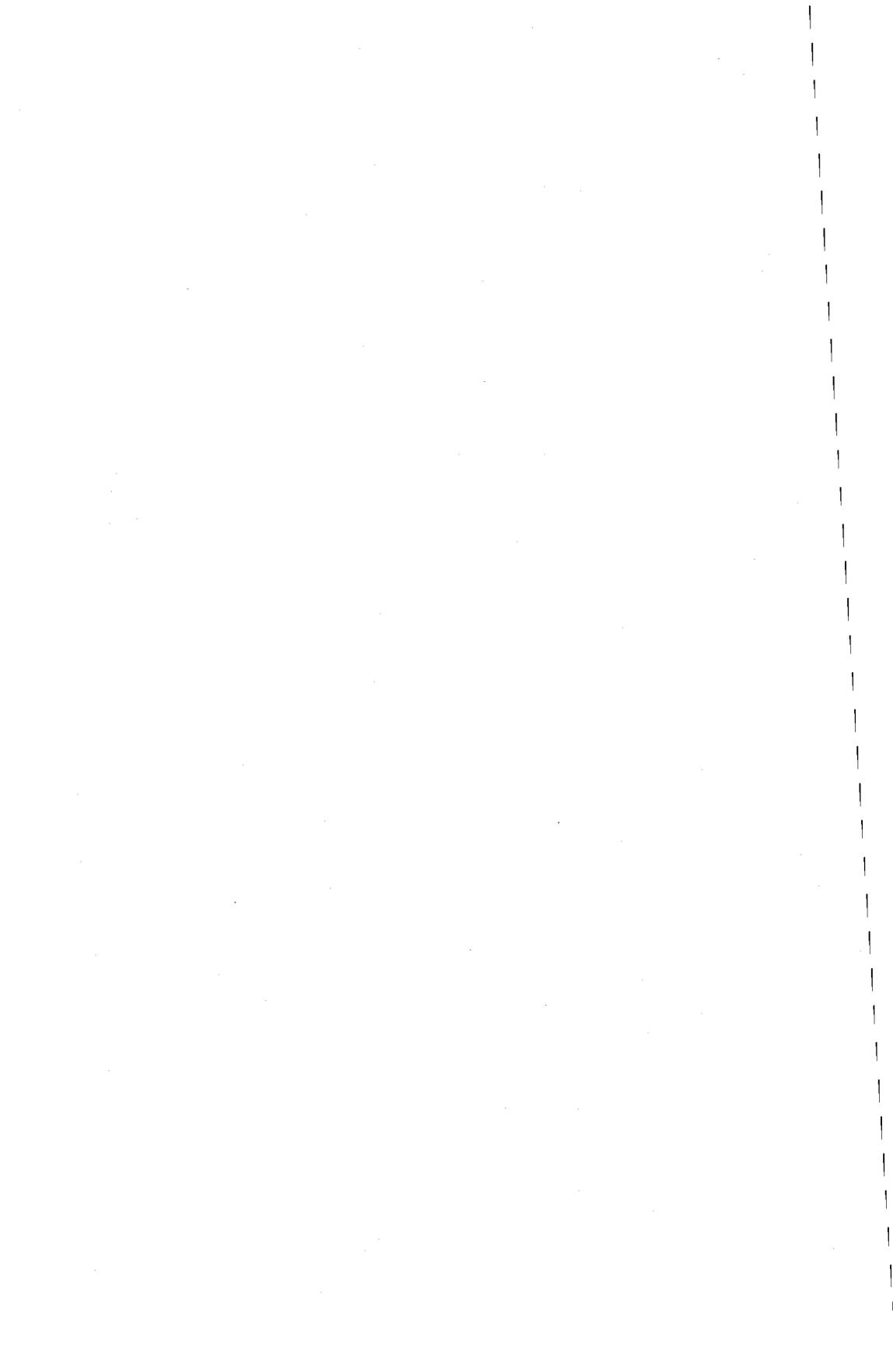
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