INTRODUCTION TO INSTALMENT 2

This instalment of the Trent 91 edition concentrates on functional chant settings, most of which are probably the work of the 'chief mind' of the Trent 91 paraphrase collection. The Dedication Propers (nos 22-27) are similar to the *Salve festa dies* and *Sedit angelus* settings given in my previous editions: the Superius-based chant is barely elaborated at all except at cadence-points. But the Dedication Propers tend to have dispensable Contra primus voices, and in other instances amongst these settings the Contra primus is almost dispensable. This leads me to the suspicion that these pieces might have been mostly worked out in three-voice form before the fourth parts were added. The Gradual, Alleluia and Offertory settings (nos 23, 24 and 26) are notably extended, with devices such as faster-moving lower voices and lower-voice motivic imitation enriching the texture (although some of this imitation might be fortuitous, given the way that the four-part texture may have been created). Also, the way in which the fourth part has been added sometimes creates diminished fifths (see no. 26, 106-108 and no. 27 at 6). Little more need be said about these settings except that their similarity and their copying together in Trent 91 are persuasive that they were a specially composed set, even if they are slightly disordered in the manuscript. Perhaps the stylistically similar Dedication hymn setting (no. 28) was also part of this set. A longish search through fifteenth-century sources also reveals that these may be the earliest extant complete set of polyphonic Dedication Propers.

It would be gratifying to find a suitable single occasion when such music might have been first used. Unfortunately, one important occasion that comes to mind is probably too early for these pieces. In the 1440's and '50's Frederick III added a new chapel of St. George to Wiener Neustadt castle, and later made it available for use by the newly-founded Order of St. George.[1] Perhaps another ceremony in the early 1460's might have prompted the writing of these Propers. Frederick was an avid builder; he made additions to St. Egidius's Cathedral in Graz (which were finished ca. 1464) and later during his reign the church of St. Mary Magdalene in Linz was also enlarged.

The Tenor cantus firmus manner of the Dedication Propers composer seems to be represented by *Salve sancta parens* setting no. 30 and the alternatim Kyrie setting no. 31. In the former the Tenor is monorhythmic, it looks unelaborated, and it is set in a triple-rhythm style with mobile outer voices familiar from later western settings of *La Spagna* and *Tandernaken*. The piece is unusually low-pitched with its Contra bassus descending to low C, and the largely non-imitative texture perhaps has one or two more upper-voice pairs of consecutive fourths than are generally found in western long-note cantus firmus settings. Sequential motives in its Superius link no. 30 to similar Superius patterns in Kyrie no. 31, which is another setting with a long-note Tenor and a true bass.

While Sanctus no. 32 might look superficially similar, it is quite different for the following reasons. It has a schematically presented and elaborated-chant Tenor which proceeds in more-or-less sectionally decreasing values. Also its lower Contra is a crossing part, and the movement of its outer voices seems untypical of either the work of the *Salve sancta parens* composer or the Trent 91 'Sequence anonymous'. It is possibly a one-off contribution to the Trent 91 repertory by a composer whose work is otherwise unknown, but it might not stand that far outside the rest of the repertory since chant segments in diminished values also occur in one of the manuscript's *Alle Dei Filius* settings (f. 145v).[2] Its texture is also very similar to that in slightly older and probably local cantus-firmus Sanctus settings such as the Trent 89 Sanctus f. 187v, which is part of a small family of such settings shared between the later Trent Codices and Strahov.[3]

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[1] Further on the likely cultivation of Mass Propers at the Habsburg court and the Wiener Neustadt castle chapel, see Strohm, R., 'The Medieval Mass Proper and the Arrival of Polyphonic Proper Settings in Central Europe' in Burn, D. & Gasch, S. (eds), Heinrich Isaac and Polyphony for the Proper of the Mass in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance (Brepols, 2011) pp. 31-57.

[2] Published in *Ex Codicis I/II* pp. 64-67.

[3] Published in *Ex Codicis II/II* pp. 61-65. I am tempted to draw comparisons between Sanctus no. 32 and the work of the anonymous described in my article 'The Advenisti / Lauda Syon composer…' on the grounds that no. 32's schematic Tenor and its unconventional omission of color would be typical of the notational tricks of which this individual was fond. However, there is not enough common material between works to take this idea further.

The three Kyrie settings nos 33-35 are all short, and in my study 'Trent 91; first steps…' I only had space to state that they are very similar. Now that this edition is in progress they present an excellent opportunity to draw comparisons with other paraphrase pieces in the same repertory. Kyrie no. 33 begins very similarly to the Sanctus *tro.* Angeli et Archangeli (<u>DTÖ</u> no. 1229) and Kyrie no. 34 ends with pedal-point motion in the Contra - which is also found in some other <u>Trent 91</u> chant settings, notably nos 26, 27 and 45 in the present instalment and also *Hec dies* (<u>DTÖ</u> no. 1216).[4] Kyries no. 33 and 34 are also aurally quite similar to the <u>Trent 91</u> *Ista est speciosa* setting. The brevity of these Kyrie settings is also instructive for chant paraphrase purposes, although I will have a little more to say about this below.

Kyrie no. 36 – if it is by the same anonymous – breaks the bounds of strict chant paraphrase since it has migrant chant treatment, free extensions to its chant-based material, and is musically more ambitious than the latter settings. Its Contra primus has moments of floridity, and its use of long-note technique for some paraphrase passages makes it similar to later Kyrie settings by Isaac and Senfl. This particular piece may only have been one of several that set a stylistic trend, but it is significant here that apart from the lower Contra crossing the Tenor this Kyrie is aurally forward-looking. Works similar to this setting were still being composed in the early years of the sixteenth century. The complexity of its duple sections perhaps also weakens the case for the O/cut-C mensural equivalent that I have given: as with western pieces in triple-then-duple mensurations the increasing complexity of duple sections eventually makes the O semibreve = cut-C breve equivalent unworkable. Perhaps another factor for not maintaining a strict equivalent here is the presence of chant sections between polyphonic sections with different mensurations. Both of these elements probably make a slightly more relaxed pace for no. 36's cut-C sections realistic.

Kyrie no. 37 provides the common ground which links no. 36 to other pieces in this repertory. Like no. 36, no. 37 is extended and has a long-note Superius passage in one of its Christe sections with the chant-bearing Superius in a mensuration different to that of the lower voices. No. 37 also has a dispensable Contra primus like the Dedication Propers. It is also stylistically very similar to no. 36, and the end of its final Christe section features a pedal-point cadence as in Kyrie no. 34 and Kyrie no. 36's first polyphonic section. No. 37 is a through-composed setting of the <u>MEL</u> 171 chant, and as such only requires repetition of one section (the initial first Kyrie). Using duple mensuration throughout, its simple chant presentation is also akin to that of the *Salve festa dies* setting <u>Trent 91</u> f. 98v.[5] *Salve festa dies* has a refrain plus elements of musical rhyme at section-endings. Internally related passages also occur in Kyrie no. 37; several pre-cadential passages are melodically and harmonically very close to each other. No. 37 also features one repeated paraphrase segment in approximately halved values (at 154-173) which is another technique shared by some of the settings previously cited. Finally regarding no. 37, a few cursus marks and corrections made throughout may reveal that somebody – perhaps not long after the copy was made – either tried to check it for section-endings within the through-composed texture or possibly used the music for singing.

The next four Gloria settings vary in approaches to setting chant in minimally elaborated fashion. No. 38 is the most mechanical setting, being more or less texturally unvaried throughout its considerable length. Its Superius decorates the <u>BOS</u> 24 chant with stepwise additions and clichéd cadence-points, otherwise giving most of the chant notes as successions of breves. It is very like the <u>Trent 91</u> *Sedit angelus* setting in both texture and pitch (the Superius reaches high A) and imitation plays a minimal role. Nos 38-40 all contain the additional word 'Jhesu Christe *altissime*' and give small variations of Gloria text word-order which are reflected in Germanic chant traditions.

No. 39 is also lengthy but a little more varied, with a short internal passage of sesquialtera and equally brief patches of rapid lower-voice movement to provide rhythmic contrast. The Contratenors in both this setting and no. 40 are less bass-like than in no. 39, leading me to suspect that these Gloria settings might be fairly early works by the main <u>Trent 91</u> anonymous. No. 39 also uses Superius-Contra consecutive fifths very

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[4] Published in *Ex Codicis I/II* pp. 33-36.

[5] Published in *Ex Codicis I/II* pp. 37-40.

occasionally as a legitimate progression (see measures 232-233).[6] Gloria Dominicale no. 40 (which is more succinct than either of the previous settings) seems to pair with Kyries nos 33 and 34. The latter have the same 'Dominicale' destination and approximately the same voice-ranges as no. 40. While there are other chant-based Glorias with which to compare these settings, it is probably inaccurate to describe the plain method of chant-setting here as specifically Germanic; the Gloria of Ockeghem's five-voice Missa *Sine nomine* gives the Superius sections of its chant treatment in quite undecorated fashion. The four-voice Trent 91 Gloria DTÖ no. 1163 (which is possibly by Martini) also gives some of its Superius chant presentation in simple values, as does the Clibano Credo setting in Trent 89. The Gloria trope no. 41 follows exactly the same chant presentation method as the preceding Glorias: chant values in the Superius tend to be monorhythmic, and elaboration generally only occurs towards cadence points.

The two *Veni Sancte Spiritus* antiphon settings (nos 42 & 43) pose a problem in that they are quite like the two *Regina celi* settings copied adjacently in Trent 91.[7] It seems likely that these *Regina celi* settings are the work of a single man, but the case is less clear for the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* settings. This is because the four-part setting no. 43 has a Contra primus which moves under the cantus firmus Tenor as well as over it, while in the four-voice *Regina celi* the Contra primus tends to stay above the Tenor. Three points in favour of common authorship for the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* settings are that their parent chant material seems close, the Tenor of setting no. 43 is like that of the four-voice *Regina celi* in that its cantus firmus is nearly monorhythmic, and in both pieces the Contra primus seems inessential. Whoever wrote setting no. 43, it is an attractive and well-worked piece which – unusually – features slightly more variety than is usual with Trent 91's chant-based repertory. Its closing measures feature progressions which do not appear to need editorial flats, while its opening needs a considerable number of them. Additionally, the fact that its first Contra crosses its Tenor should not be an obstacle to common attribution (*Salve sancta parens* no. 30 does the same) and in common with most of these pieces there is a moderate amount of dotted-rhythm activity in the Contra parts.

The remaining pieces in this instalment follows stylistic trends already outlined. *Asperges* no. 44, *Ave Maria* no. 45 and *Da pacem* no. 49 are simple Superius paraphrase settings of their parent chants, and nos 46 and 47 are both settings of troped chants whose added sections seem to have had quite a wide circulation. No. 50 (*Alleluia Dies sanctificatus*) was not included in the previous instalment of this edition with other Mass Propers because it has minor features in common with the pieces surrounding it here. *Verbum caro* no. 51 should be compared with the other setting of this chant in Trent 91 (instalment 1 no. 1) since it shows the main Trent 91 anonymous and the 'Sequence anonymous' using the same chant.

To return to the issue of paraphrase, certain features of these pieces are good illustrations of the way in which fifteenth-century composers tended to mould plainsong material. In Kyrie no. 36, the probable *bistrophae* in the composer's MEL 39 chant model are reflected in the initial long-note paraphrasing Superius (see measures 7-10) but are discreetly avoided in a subsequent appearance (see Superius 56-64). There is also a degree of musical concealment of these values in another setting of the same chant (no. 31) where the plainsong is in the Tenor. Evidently some features of Gregorian chant were not always thought compatible with paraphrase method. Much the same thing can be observed in Kyrie no. 35's chant-section C and the Superius paraphrase immediately following it. At the same time, the short Kyrie settings nos 33-35 and Gloria no. 41 show how well these composers subordinated conventional paraphrase style to the demands of musical simplicity. Elsewhere in this selection of works, voice behaviour conforms to what might be more normally expected from composers embellishing chant. The Superius 'Amen' of Gloria no. 40 has three successive cadential clichés which are almost identical (see measures 267-277), *Alleluia Vox exultationis* no. 24 has an expansive verse section which features a three-against-four internal cadence (at 140-144), and the same rhythmic device occurs in the *Terribilis est* Contra primus at 17-19. Also, the lower voices of *Alleluia Dies sanctificatus* (no. 50) have patches of rhythmic activity tending towards what might be expected from composers like Agricola and Obrecht (see 133-144). Unlike these later masters, the Trent 91 paraphrase composers generally do not seem to have favoured extended sequential patterns in active

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[6] The troped *Recordare* setting no. 46 contains a slightly higher concentration of upper-voice consecutives.

[7] Published in *Ex Codicis I/II* pp. 25-33.

lower voices which support long-note upper parts. However, the idea must have occurred to them since the Tenor of *Ave Maria* no. 45 has a sequential passage at 115-123.

Those examining the music of <u>Trent 91</u> for the first time through this edition will possibly be unaware of a further important feature of this polyphonic 'liber usualis'. In the context of its time it is a practical collection, in which the style of the paraphrase pieces would be largely within the capabilities of a choir or ensemble of average talent. The Superius parts of the pieces presented here are mostly undemanding, and the ranges of some of them at their written pitch are suitable for choirboys rather than falsettists. Quite how juvenile singers might have been used for the <u>Trent 91</u> repertory is really beyond the scope of this introduction, but I can easily envisage a situation for Gloria no. 38 where a master or succentor singing a lower part had charge of perhaps two of three of his best pupils singing the Superius part above him. The distribution of chant settings by liturgical assignment is also important: there is much music for Easter feasts in <u>Trent 91</u>, the Ordinaries in this selection are usable on different festive occasions, the Dedication Propers are of course re-usable as are various *Salve Regina* and Magnificat settings in the manuscript, and the amount of music given for feasts around Christmas suggest that the original ensemble using this music was rather hard-worked at that time of year. I think that few choirs nowadays, for example, would be enthusiastic about performing the *Missus ab arce* trope (no. 47) in its liturgical context at Matins on the Nativity.

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