

The Performance Practice of the Cappella Sistina as Reflected in Liszt's Church Music*

Zsuzsanna DOMOKOS

Liszt Ferenc Memorial Museum and Research Centre
Budapest

The renaissance of Palestrina's music, which in the 19th century was of particular interest to musicians and music-lovers in Italy and abroad, was largely influenced by the performance practice given to it by the Cappella Sistina, the depositary of this heritage.

Liszt's understanding of Palestrina owes much to this interpretation. During his first stay in Rome, in 1839, the Palestrina-reception in Rome must have left a deep impression on him. Referring to such an experience, 11 years later, while composing his Mass for male voices¹ he writes:

While composing, Rome and Palestrina have come back to my mind.²

Note that during the intervening lapse of time, he had also had the opportunity to listen to the performances of Palestrina's music in Germany. Many letters, written about 1862, prove that after settling in Rome towards the end of October 1861, Liszt was intensely interested in the tradition and performances of the Cappella Sistina. On January 26 he reports thus from Rome to Prince Constantine Hohenzollern-Hechingen:³

*This paper is based on research work done in Rome with assistance from an Eötvös Hungarian State Scholarship from the Ministry of Education in 1999. This paper was presented on 25 August at the Intercongressional Symposium "*The Past in the Present*" organised by the International Musicological Society and the Liszt Ferenc Music Academy in Budapest (23–28 August, 2000). The author thanks the kind help of Professor Renzo Cilia (Rome) and Professor Ettore Borri (Milan), and the librarians and research workers of the Vatican Library, Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra, Conservatorio di Santa Cecilia, and Istituto Germanico in Rome, as well as for the continuous help of the director of the Liszt Research Centre in Budapest, Mária Eckhardt, and Klára Somogyi, chief librarian of the Liszt Ferenc Research Library in Budapest.

¹ Missa quattuor vocum ad aequales concinente organo. R 485, 181.

² "En l'écrivant, Rome et Palestrina me sont revenus en mémoire." Letter to Joseph d'Ortigue, 24 April 1850, Weimar. In: *Franz Liszt's Briefe. Gesammelt und herausgegeben von La Mara*. Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel 1905. VIII, 62 (further: Br. VIII, and so on).

³ "Jusqu'à présent je n'ai rien entendu qui m'ait donné le désir de l'écouter plus attentivement – à l'exception pourtant des Messes de Palestrina et de son école dont le caractère de sublime permanence se manifeste dans son entier à la chapelle du Vatican." Letter to Friedrich Wilhelm Costantin, prince de Hohenzollern-Hechingen, Rome, 26 January 1862. *Franz Liszt Correspondance*. Lettres choisies, présentées et annotées par Pierre-Antoine Huré et Claude Knepper. 1987, Éditions Jean-Claude Lattès. 448. (Translations by the author.)

Up till now, I haven't heard anything that made me want to listen more attentively with the exception, however, of the Masses of Palestrina and his school, whose sublime and enduring qualities are revealed completely in the Vatican Chapel.

Examining the writings on Palestrina of many 19th century scholars and composers of the Roman school, we can arrive at a general idea of what was intended by "Palestrinian style" at the time. Normally, Palestrina's works were defined as "a cappella music". However this terminology was limited not only to Palestrina's music, but was also applied to "genres" other than church music, still referring to Palestrina himself, so great was his influence. Concerning Palestrina's celebrity in the 19th century, the maestros Bassili and Ricci declared:

The celebrity of Palestrina and of his style that has survived throughout the centuries was such that even in melodramatic circles 'a cappella' and 'diatonic' compositions as well as fugato movements have always been defined as 'musica alla Palestrina'.⁴

From a letter by Luigi Rossi, Secretary of the 'Congregazione di Santa Cecilia' written in 1844 it becomes evident, that the term 'diatonic' in the above quotation is synonymous with the term 'a cappella':

This style of music called 'a cappella' or 'diatonico' was later commonly known only as 'alla Palestrina'.⁵

However, when 19th century Italian writers speak of Palestrina, they do not lay much emphasis on the polyphonic or technical aspect of his music, but rather on the intelligibility and understanding of the text. Giuseppe Baini, probably the most influential authority on Church Music in the 19th century, himself director of the Sistine, wrote an extensive treatise on Palestrina. We know that Liszt had a copy of this treatise in his Budapest library in an abridged version published in German. Several remarks by Liszt demonstrate that this work was for him an important reference for his interpretation of Palestrina.⁶

⁴ "La celebrità, duratura nei secoli, di Palestrina e del suo stile ha fatto sì che anche negli ambienti melodrammatici i brani 'a cappella' quelli in 'stile diatonico' e i procedimenti fugati siano sempre stati definiti 'musica alla Palestrina'." Quoted by Giancarlo Rostirolla: "Busti ottocenteschi di Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina nei 'templi' romani dell'arte e della musica". *Musica senza aggettivi. Studi per Fedele D'Amico*, a cura di Agostino Ziino. 2 vols. Firenze, Olschki 1991, 445.

⁵ "Questo genere di musica che dicevasi 'a cappella' o 'diatonico' fu poi volgarmente indicato col solo nome 'alla Palestrina'." Quoted by G. Rostirolla op.cit. 458.

⁶ Franz Sales Kandler: *Ueber das Leben und die Werke des G. Pierluigi da Palestrina. Nach den Memorie storico-critiche des Abbate Giuseppe Baini, ... verfasst und mit historisch-kritischen Zusätzen begleitet von —. Nachgelassenes Werk hrsg. mit einem Vorworte und mit gelegentlichen Anmerkungen von R.G. Kiesewetter.* Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel 1834. LH 85.

In his work Bainsi classifies Palestrina's music into ten different stylistic groups. In the first group he includes the early works, which were still influenced by the Flemish school, and which he judged rather artificial and forced. In addition, he says that the monochromatic effect of such works did not help to make clear to the listeners the meaning of the text.⁷ It is quite understandable thereby why Liszt considered polyphonic writing contrary to the style suitable for church music and why he also agrees with Bainsi in opposing such a monochromatic style to a more varied dramatic one which emphasises more efficiently the meaning of the text. In his essay on *Dornröschen* by Joachim Raff, dated 1856, Liszt wrote:⁸

When past Italian and Flemish masters, like Palestrina and Lassus, and the German Bach or other outstanding composers of contrapuntal music, combined together eight, sixteen or even more voices to sound simultaneously in a fugue or any other form of music, they all observe the rules of an architectural structure subjected to the totality and did not intend to give to any separate voice a particular characteristic shade or the possibility of a definite expression. Contrary to the style of Church music, they aimed much more to create the general atmosphere emanating from the contents of the text rather than to express, through the melody itself, the dramatic contents of the words in the text.

Pietro Alfieri, a contemporary of Bainsi, and one of the pioneers of the Caecilian movement in Italy, was the person who first published works by Palestrina, Victoria, Allegri and other composers of polyphonic music in a series of 7 volumes entitled *Raccolta di Musica Sacra* (1841–46). This collection preceded that of an eminent representative of the German Caecilian movement, Carl Proske, entitled *Musica Sacra* whose publication started in 1853.⁹ Alfieri in his article on the reform of Church music, rejects contrapuntal writing as deleterial to the understanding of the text. Commenting on what would be the result of a Kyrie written in such style, he says:

⁷ "Dieser (Stil) ist sehr künstlich, voll Studium, voll sichtbarer Anstrengung ... Von Zeit zu Zeit sieht man Josquin's Manier, die Wiederholung derselben Form in verschiedenen Tönen, vernünftig nachgeahmt. Das Ganze ist vorzugsweise harmonisch, aber immer von einerlei Farbe, wobei denn auch die Worte, sowie ihr Sinn, selten dem Zuhörer vernehmlich werden." In: Kandler op. cit. 167.

⁸ "Wenn die alten italienischen und niederländischen Meister – ein *Palestrina*, ein *Lassus* –, wenn der deutsche *Bach* oder andere berühmte Kontrapunktisten acht, sechzehn und mehr verschiedene Stimmen in einer Fuge oder in Stücken anderer Art zusammenfügten und zusammengehen liessen, so folgten sie hierbei dem Prinzip der architektonischen Struktur des Ganzen und forderten von der Einzelstimme weder nuancirte Charakteristic noch die Fähigkeit einen bestimmten Ausdruck, den gewollten und keinen andern, zu geben. Sie sahen, besonders gegenüber dem Kirchenstil, viel mehr darauf, dem Ganzen eine mit dem allgemeinen Inhalt des Textes übereinstimmende Haltung zu sichern, als die Worte durch an sich ausdrucksvolle Melodien zu dramatisiren." : *Dornröschen. Genast's Gedicht und Raff's Musik gleichen Namens. 1856*. In: *Gesammelte Schriften von Franz Liszt*. Hrsg. von L. Ramann. Fünfter Band. Streifzüge. Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel 1882, 169.

⁹ Several volumes of this latter collection form part of Liszt's library in Budapest.

The fugue is a wonderful artifice, but it is not suitable for such a moment when the Church is asking for mercy. Otherwise one would have to compose a long piece of music on just a few words: One would have to repeat unceasingly the same words. If the text is short, the music that has to adorn it cannot be too prolific.¹⁰

If for the 19th century composers and admirers of Palestrina, the contrapuntal technique was not the style to be followed in Church music, what was then the characteristic quality in his music which made them refer to Palestrina's works as a model for the reform? The emphasis on the clear understanding of the text was not an end in itself. The text needed to be comprehensible because it had to carry a meaning. And this could be further heightened and rendered more meaningful by means other than simple words. Alfieri, in the preface to his first edition of Palestrina's works, proffers words of praise for the style, for the natural and sensitive melodies and for the solemn tempos of Palestrina's music, adding that harmonic contrasts do in no way obscure the meaning of the text, except for very short insignificant moments. Baini defines the *Missa Papae Marcelli*, the most popular Palestrina mass during the 19th century, with the following words:¹¹

The Kyrie is devout, the Gloria lively, the Credo majestic, the Sanctus angelic, the Agnus imploring. In brief, it is a Mass which is always a unity, always noble, lively, well-structured, full of sentiment, always grows and tends higher. It is impossible not to listen to its words. Its melodies intensify devotion, its harmonies touch the spirit. It gives pleasure without distraction, it gives nourishment without solicitation. It is beautiful with that beauty which belongs to the Sanctuary.

Baini, who was critical of Palestrina's first stylistic group of compositions, exalts his harmonic variety, the naturalness, the transparency and the novelty of his modulations, the passionate and expressive character of his works. In the *Missa Papae Marcelli*, which by itself represents the 7th stylistic group, and in the works classified as the 8th group, Baini asserts:¹²

¹⁰ "...la fuga è un bell'artificio, ma non può adattarsi a quel luogo, ove la chiesa dimanda misericordia. Altri con poche parole vuol tessere un lungo pezzo di musica, e quindi gli conviene ripetere senza fine le parole. Ma se poche son le parole, la musica che dee adornarle non può essere prolissa." Pietro Alfieri: *Ristabilimento del canto e della musica ecclesiastica. Considerazioni*. Roma, Tipografia delle Belle Arti 1843, 120.

¹¹ "Li Kyrie sono devoti, il Gloria vivace, il Credo maestoso, il Sanctus angelico, l'Agnus supplichevole. In na parola una Messa sempre eguale sempre nobile, sempre viva, sempre ragionata, sempre sentimentale, e che sempre cresce e s'innalza, le cui parole non possono non udirsi, le cui melodie riconcentrano alla divozione, le cui armonie toccano il cuore: diletta e non distrae, pasce e non solletica, è bella della bellezza del Santuario." Giuseppe Baini: *Memorie-storico critiche della vita e delle opere di Palestrina* (p. 228) quoted by Guerrino Amelli: *Missa Papae Marcelli. Sex vocibus...* Auctore Joanne Petraloyisio Praenestino. Mediolani, Musica Sacra, 1878. Prefazione. Milano, 22. Novembre 1878.

¹² "Mit den beiden letztgenannten Schreibarten vervollkommnete Pierluigi den grossartigen und überragenden Stil dergestalt, dass er geeignet war, die edelsten und höchsten Gefühle in der Seele des Zuhörers zu wecken." Kandler op. cit. 171.

Pierluigi brought his sublime and amazing style to perfection, able to evoke the noblest and highest sentiments in the souls of the listeners.

Besides textual clarity, Palestrina's music emanated that kind of purity and elevation of the soul and mind, which converted his music into prayer. Liszt did experience such sentiments of piety and devotion. They were evoked in him on beholding the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel and on listening to the performances of the choir. He writes:

The voices, at the most 24 to 30, produce a very impressive effect. It is incense in sound, bearing prayers upon clouds of azure and gold.¹³

This sentiment he tried then to transmit through his own works. Paul Merrick who analysed the writings of Liszt from 1834 onwards, traces Liszt's efforts to realise this "mission" in his sacred music. He quotes Liszt:

The best part of my religious compositions is the emotion evoked by them in a few fine souls.¹⁴

Palestrina's music was an inspiration but never an impediment for Liszt in the development of his personality. In 1852 he writes to Peter Cornelius:

You have only to assimilate Palestrina and Bach, and then let your own heart speak.¹⁵

Such an aspiration, insisting on the emotional piety of Church music, was typical of the times. Carl Dahlhaus puts it in this way:

In the 19th century, bourgeois religiosity was an interior form of spirituality. Music destined for the Church was to be 'serene' and 'interior'. The renaissance of Palestrina's music and the enthusiasm for a 'seraphic' tone in Church music are closely bound to the ideals of 'noble simplicity' and 'moral refinement' characteristic of the Enlightenment period.¹⁶

The performance practice of Palestrina's music given by the Sistine Chapel choir went beyond the current general reception of Palestrina's music and it was this peculiarity that was so important for Liszt himself.

¹³ "le Choeur ... que ces 24 ou 30 voix au plus produisent un effet très imposant. C'est un encens sonore qui porte la prière sur ses nuages d'or et d'azur!" Letter to prince de Hohenzollern-Hechingen, see footnote 3.

¹⁴ Liszt to Marie Sayn-Wittgeinstein, quoted by Paul Merrick: *Revolution and Religion in the music of Liszt*. Cambridge–London–New York, Cambridge University Press 1987, 87.

¹⁵ "Vous n'avez qu'à vous bien assimiler Palestrina et Bach – ensuite laissez parler votre coeur,..." Liszt's letter to Peter Cornelius, Weimar, 4 September 1852. Br. I, 111.

¹⁶ "Bürgerliche Religiosität war im 19. Jahrhundert eine Religiosität des seelischen Interieurs: und so musste Musik, um sich als Kirchenmusik zu bewähren, 'beruhigt und in sich gekehrt' sein. ... Denn die Palestrina-Renaissance, der Enthusiasmus für den 'seraphischen Ton' in der Kirchenmusik, hängt mit den Idealen der 'edlen Simplizität' und der 'Erbaulichkeit', die historischer Klassifikationseifer der Aufklärung zuordnet, eng zusammen." Carl Dahlhaus: *Die Musik des 19. Jahrhunderts*. Neues Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft. Band 6. Wiesbaden, Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion 1980, 150.

In this paper, I would like to show now only one aspect of the Sistine's influence on Liszt: that of its performance practice, which was mainly described by other foreign composers taking part in the Papal ceremonies.

One of these, Carl Proske, had lived for several years in Rome and had also been a student of Bainsi himself. In one of his writings he describes how he was struck by the strong impact on the listeners of the *Missa brevis* by Palestrina in 1834 as directed by Bainsi. For him such a performance was characterised by the profoundest simplicity and the greatest intensity. He even reports that the choir itself seemed electrified by Bainsi's looks and movement of the hands. The expressive effects of such performances were produced by crescendos and diminuendos, by the undulating dynamics created by the dialogue resulting between choir and soloists, and by the augmentation and diminution of the number of singers, as also by the flexibility of the tempo.¹⁷ Otto Nicolai confirms this when he writes:

The director, following the meaning of the text, his own emotions and tradition, often modifies the tempo and proposes *rallentandos* and *stringendos*, *crescendos* and *diminuendos*.¹⁸

The performance practice of the Cappella Sistina was mainly characterised by this differentiation based on expressiveness and emotional richness.

We can experience this type of interpretation even now. For example, we can compare the performance of Palestrina's *Improperia (Popule meus)* in the German tradition as sung by the Regensburger Domchor,¹⁹ the sanctuary of German Palestrinian Renaissance, with that given by the "Palestrinae Voces", directed by Maestro Renzo Cilia, for twenty years assistant director of the Sistine, who founded this amateur choir with the aim of preserving and transmitting the Sistine's interpretation. While the Regensburg interpretation precisely follows the note values as written in the German Complete

¹⁷ "Unvergesslich bleibt mir die Aufführung der *Missa Brevis* von Palestrina in der Sixtinischen Kapelle am Allerheiligenfest 1834, von Bainsi mit höchster Einfachkeit und mit solcher Geistesspannung geleitet, dass jeder Blick und die leiseste Fingerbewegung den ganzen Chor elektrisirte" quoted in Leopold M. Kantner, Angela Pachovsky: *La Cappella Musicale Pontificia nell'Ottocento*. Storia della Cappella Musicale Pontificia 6. L'Ottocento. Fondazione Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina a cura di Giancarlo Rostirolla. Hortus Musicus, Roma, 1998. 59. "La dinamica dell'esecuzione si attua soprattutto attraverso l'alternanza del coro e dei solisti. Particolarmente ammirati dai contemporanei erano gli effetti di crescendo e di diminuendo, che i cantori sistini ottenevano non già mediante un aumento o una diminuzione del volume sonoro, bensì tramite l'aggiunta o la soppressione di voci. Il risultato era decisamente impressionante." Op. cit. 68.

¹⁸ "Der Direktor wechselt oft dem Sinn der Worte, eigener Empfindung und der überkommenen Tradition gemäss das Tempo, und lässt *rallentando* und *stringendo* und *crescendo* und *diminuendo* machen" quoted by Leopold M. Kantner, Angela Pachovsky op. cit. 72.

¹⁹ *Palestrina Masses and Motets*. Regensburger Domchor, Theobald und Hans Schrems, Choir of the Westminster Abbey, Simon Preston, Pro Cantione Antiqua, Bruno Turner. Archiv Production. Anniversary 1594–1994. LC 0113, Stereo 439961–2.

Edition of Palestrina's Works, the Italian interpretation²⁰ contains much more declamation following the meaning of the text. Listening to the first bars of the *Stabat Mater Speciosa* from Liszt's oratorio *Christus* after having heard Palestrina's *Popule meus*, we can notice the dramatic interpretation, characteristic of the Sistina choir, especially in the performance by the Hungarian Radio Chorus directed by Antal Doráti.²¹

The refined nuances of the Sistina's singing style are also illustrated in the motet *Peccavimus* by Palestrina revised in 1878 by Domenico Mustafà, one time director of the Cappella (*Example 1*). (I would like to note that the appoggiaturas seen on the score and improvised by the Sistina singers were unacceptable to most of the foreign composers, Liszt included.) Two other revised editions of Palestrina's works, known and appreciated by Liszt, show similar dynamic indications to those in the *Peccavimus* motet. The first work is Palestrina's *Stabat Mater*, revised by Wagner in 1848 for the Court Chapel Choir in Dresden (*Example 2*). Elmar Seidel presumes that Wagner used Burney's 1771 edition containing the music sung by the Sistina during Holy Week as source for his revision.²²

Liszt, admiring the precise indications in the score, enthusiastically proposes this version to the editor Kahnt:

Presented with the well-known editions of the works of Palestrina and Lassus, most choir directors do not know how to tackle the music because all indications of tempo and dynamics are absent. But these are the most necessary if one does not want to remain on the level of a dilettante craftsman. 30 years ago, Richard Wagner has given an outstanding example of this in the revision of Palestrina's *Stabat Mater* indicating the precise distribution of the verses between choir, half-choir and soloists, as well as the correct indication of the nuances, crescendos-diminuendos etc. May this example be accepted and followed in the future by editors and leading composers of Church music.²³

²⁰ The interpretation of the *Palestrinae Voces I* obtained from a live recording. For further information contact Renzo Cilia, Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra, Rome.

²¹ Liszt Ferenc: *Christus*. Sándor Sólyom-Nagy, Veronika Kincses, Klára Takács, János B. Nagy, László Polgár, Hungarian Radio and Television Chorus and Hungarian State Orchestra, conducted by Antal Doráti. HCD 12831–33.

²² Elmar Seidel: "Über die Wirkung der Musik Palestrinas auf das Werk Liszts und Wagners" in: *Liszt-Studien 3. Kongressbericht Eisenstadt 1983*. Hrsg. von Serge Gut. München–Salzburg, Emil Katzbichler 1986, 162.

²³ "Mit den bekannten Editionen von Palestrina, Lassus, etc. wissen die meisten Dirigenten nichts anzufangen, weil alle Tempi- und Ausdrucks-Bezeichnungen fehlen. Diese aber sind nunmehr allenthalben nothwendig, wo man nicht bei dem handwerksmässigen Abhaspeln bleiben will. ... Vor 30 Jahren hat Richard Wagner auch in diesem Bezug ein eminentes Beispiel gegeben, indem er für die Dresdner Hofkirche das *Stabat Mater* Palestrina's einrichtete, mit genauer Vertheilung zwischen Chor, Halbchor, Soli und treffender Angabe der Nüancen, *crescendo*, *diminuendo*, etc. Möge hinfort dieses Beispiel von den Herausgebern der kirchenväterlichen Componisten beherzigt und befolgt werden!" Letter to C. F. Kahnt, Weimar, 30. May 1878. In: Br. VIII. 329.

The image displays a musical score for four vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenore, and Basso. The score is divided into two systems, with measures 5-10 and 10-15. The tempo is marked 'Lento moderato' and the dynamics are 'Soli' and 'p'. The lyrics are in Latin, and the score includes musical notation with notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

System 1 (Measures 5-10):

- Measures 5-10:** The vocal parts sing 'Sta - bat ma - ter do - lo - ro - sa'. The lyrics are: 'Sta - bat ma - ter do - lo - ro - sa' (Soprano, Alto, Tenore, Basso). The dynamics are 'p'.
- Measures 10-15:** The vocal parts sing 'Fi - li - us. con - la - cry - mo - sa'. The lyrics are: 'Fi - li - us. con - la - cry - mo - sa' (Soprano, Alto, Tenore, Basso). The dynamics are 'p'.

System 2 (Measures 10-15):

- Measures 10-15:** The vocal parts sing 'Cu - jus. con - tri - stan - tem et do - len - tem do -'. The lyrics are: 'Cu - jus. con - tri - stan - tem et do - len - tem do -' (Soprano, Alto, Tenore, Basso). The dynamics are 'p'.
- Measures 15-20:** The vocal parts sing 'a - ni - mam ge - men - tem. con - tri - stan - tem et do - len -'. The lyrics are: 'a - ni - mam ge - men - tem. con - tri - stan - tem et do - len -' (Soprano, Alto, Tenore, Basso). The dynamics are 'p'.
- Measures 20-25:** The vocal parts sing 'a - ni - mam ge - men - tem. con - tri - stan - tem et do - len -'. The lyrics are: 'a - ni - mam ge - men - tem. con - tri - stan - tem et do - len -' (Soprano, Alto, Tenore, Basso). The dynamics are 'p'.

Example 2: Palestrina's *Stabat Mater* in Wagner's edition (Wiener Philharmonischer Verlag)

It would not be far from the truth if we presume that such nuances recalled to Liszt his experience in the Sistina, years before.

The second revised version is Guerrino Amelli's edition of the *Missa Papae Marcelli* published in 1878 in *Musica Sacra* (Milan) (*Example 3*).

In this case Liszt expresses himself thus:

Very Reverend Father, may I thank you for sending me your praiseworthy edition of the *Missa Papae Marcelli*. By including the indications necessary for its performance, crescendos-diminuendos, forte-pianissimo, etc. respiration signs and even metronome tempos, you have rendered an excellent service for the intelligent realisation of this Art.²⁴

This interpretation of Palestrina's music, resulting from the aforementioned editions, aimed at the clear expression of the text. A similar trend can be seen in the music written by composers of the Cappella Sistina in the 19th century. We may examine such works as *O Salutaris* by Domenico Mustafà, *Dies Irae* by Giuseppe Bainsi and the *Benedictus* by Domenico Constantini, compositions belonging to the current repertoire of the Cappella at the time (*Examples 4–6*). This way of interpretation can also be seen in Liszt's *Missa Choralis* which, we should remember, was intended to be performed by the Cappella Sistina (*Example 7*). Precise dynamic indications (*pp*, *p*, *f*, *sf*, *crescendo*, *decrescendo*), also appear in Liszt's homophonic motets, composed in the form of declamatory prayer (*Examples 8–9*).

Another aspect which Liszt must have discovered in the Sistina's tradition, is the so-called "contrappunto alla mente". In a work by Bainsi dated 1806 we find the rules of such practice which went back to the late 17th century: a cantus firmus is sung in equal values by bass and contraltos alike, simultaneously accompanied by the tenors and sopranos singing a similar melody a third above. The last part of the phrase was generally resolved in a cadence.²⁵

Liszt takes up this practice but he places the melody in the upper voices which is then doubled a third below. We find an example in the *Stabat Mater* melody from *Via Crucis* (*Example 10*). But he goes even further, and alternates unison singing with singing in thirds as can be seen in certain verses of the *Te Deum* like "Tu ad liberandum", "Tu devicto" and "Tu ad dexteram

²⁴ "Très révérend Abbé, Agréez mes respectueux remerciements pour l'envoi de votre très louable édition de la *Missa Papae Marcelli*. En ajoutant les signes relatifs à l'exécution: crescendo-diminuendo, forte, pianissimo, etc., et aussi les signes indiquant les respirations, et de plus, les numéros du métronome, vous avez rendu un excellent service à la pratique intelligente de l'art." Letter to Don Guerrino Amelli, Rome, 31. December 1878. in: Br. VIII. 339.

²⁵ Quoted by Leopold M. Kantner, Angela Pachovsky op. cit. 67.

Handwritten musical score for 'Dies irae' by Giuseppe Baini. The score consists of six staves. The top two staves are vocal parts with Latin lyrics: 'Tu ba mi rum / spm genf / sanam / per re pulchra / ragio nam / cogit / omnes / omnes / an te thro ='. The bottom four staves are instrumental parts, likely for strings or woodwinds, with rhythmic markings above them. The lyrics are repeated across the staves.

Example 5: Giuseppe Baini (1775–1844): *Dies irae*. Ms. (Capp. Sist. 483)

Handwritten musical score for 'Benedictus' by Domenico Costantini. The score consists of ten staves. The top two staves are vocal parts with Latin lyrics: 'ctus qui ve --- mit' and 'qui ve --- mit'. The bottom eight staves are instrumental parts, likely for strings or woodwinds, with various musical notations and dynamics. The lyrics are repeated across the staves.

Example 6: Domenico Costantini: *Benedictus*
Ms. (Sede della Cappella Musicale Pontificia)

The image displays two musical examples from Liszt's church music, arranged in two columns. Each column contains vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and organ/pedal parts.

Example 7: Liszt: Missa Choralis, 1865 (R. 486, S. 10) Agnus Dei (GA V/3)

Example 8: Liszt: Pater noster, 1869 (R. 521/a, S. 41/1) (GA V/6)

The score includes the following parts and lyrics:

- Soprano:** Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um.
- Alto:** Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um.
- Tenor:** Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um.
- Bass:** Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um; Pa - ter no - ster, qui es in cae - lis, San - cti - fi - ce - tur no - men tu - um.
- Organ:** Ad - ve - ni - at re - gnum tu - um; Ad - ve - ni - at re - gnum tu - um; Ad - ve - ni - at re - gnum tu - um; Ad - ve - ni - at re - gnum tu - um.
- Pedal:** Ad - ve - ni - at re - gnum tu - um; Ad - ve - ni - at re - gnum tu - um; Ad - ve - ni - at re - gnum tu - um; Ad - ve - ni - at re - gnum tu - um.

Example 7: Liszt: Missa Choralis, 1865 (R. 486, S. 10) Agnus Dei (GA V/3)

Example 8: Liszt: Pater noster, 1869 (R. 521/a, S. 41/1) (GA V/6)

Dei” (Example 11). Another example would be the Credo of the *Coronation Mass* composed to the melody of the *Messe Royale* written in gregorian notation by Henry du Mont. It is interesting to note how Liszt gave a rhythm to the gregorian melody, bringing out more evidently the tonic accentuation of the Latin text, whilst reserving longer time-values for texts with important theological contents (Examples 12–13).

per quem ómni-a fácta sunt. Qui propter nos hómines, et
 propter nóstram salú-tem, descéndit de caé- lis. Et incar-
 ná-tus est de Spí-ri-tu Sáncto, ex Ma-rí-a Vírgine : Et hó-
 mo fáctus est. Cruci-fíxus ét-i-am pro nóbis sub Pónti-o Pi-

Example 12: Henry du Mont: *Messe Royale*. Credo
 (Société S. Jean l’Evangéliste. Deslée & Cie, Tournai)

Examples from the “Recordare” and “Benedictus” from his *Requiem* for organ, demonstrate further still that in Liszt such a practice was even extended to melodies which are not of gregorian derivation (Ex. 14).

Recalling Carl Proske’s insistence on the qualities which characterised Bainsi’s interpretation of Palestrina, and recalling Liszt’s continuous reference to his Roman experience, we cannot but admit that the extreme simplicity and the suggestive expressiveness which we find in Liszt’s later style, in one respect are truly the result of the influence which the performance practice of the Cappella Sistina had on his works.

S. A. *P* qui prop-ter nos ho-mi-nes et prop-ter nos-tram sa-lu-tem de-scen-dit de cae-lis

T. B. *P* qui prop-ter nos ho-mi-nes et prop-ter nos-tram sa-lu-tem de-scen-dit de cae-lis

50

(C)

S. A. *pp* Et in-car-na-tus est de Spi-ri-tu San-cto ex Ma-ri-a Vir-gi-ne

T. B. *pp* Et in-car-na-tus est de Spi-ri-tu San-cto ex Ma-ri-a Vir-gi-ne

60 (C)

S. A. et ho-mo fa-ctus est

T. B. et ho-mo fa-ctus est

68

(D)

S. A. Cru-ci-fi-xus e-ti-am pro no-bis sub Pon-ti-o Pi-la-to

T. B. Cru-ci-fi-xus e-ti-am pro no-bis sub Pon-ti-o Pi-la-to

74 (D)

Example 13: Liszt: *Missa Coronationalis*, 1867 (R. 487, S. 11). Credo (Editio Musica, Budapest 1968)

a)

Lento assai $\text{♩} = 50$
Corno anglaise 8'

mp molto espressivo

65

71

77

b)

Lento $\text{♩} = 40$

pp dolcissimo

8'

(Pedal tacet)

6

r.H.

$\text{♩} = 52$

sempre p e legato

Example 14: Liszt: *Requiem für die Orgel*, 1883 (R. 385, S. 266)

a) Recordare; b) Benedictus

(Sämtliche Orgelwerke Bd. V. Hrsg. Martin Haselböck, Universal Edition, Wien 1984)