



Concise History of Western Music

5th edition

Barbara Russano Hanning

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Chapter

9

Sacred Music in the Era of the Reformation



Prelude

- Reformation began as theological dispute
 - Martin Luther, 1517
 - Protestant leaders:
 - Luther: Germany
 - Jean Calvin: France, the Low Countries, and Switzerland
 - Henry VIII: England
 - theology and circumstance determined musical choices



Prelude (cont'd)

■ Music of the Reformation in Germany

- at first remained close to Catholic traditions
- musical sources:
 - music retained original Latin texts
 - works used German translations
 - new German texts fitted to old melodies: contrafactum
- strophic hymn: Choral or Kirchenlied, chorale
 - intended for congregational singing in unison
 - repertory of chorales became foundational treasury for Lutheran church music



Prelude (cont'd)

- Reformation church music outside Germany
 - Calvin opposed certain elements of Catholic ceremony more strongly
 - only biblical texts, especially psalms, sung in church
 - psalters: rhymed metrical translations of Book of Psalms
 - England: Anglican church's separation from Rome in 1534
 - political reasons
 - music less affected; remained closer to Catholic traditions
 - English replaced Latin in the liturgy



Prelude (cont'd)

■ Catholic Church internal reform

- Catholic Reformation
 - liturgical reforms; reaffirmed power of music
- Counter-Reformation
 - recapture loyalty of people
 - appeal to their senses, ceremonial music



The Music of the Reformation in Germany

■ Martin Luther

- professor of biblical theology, University of Wittenberg
 - influenced by humanist education
 - salvation through faith alone
- views contradicted Catholic doctrine
 - religious authority derived from Scripture alone
 - challenged authority of the church



The Music of the Reformation in Germany (cont'd)

■ Lutheran Church music

- Luther admired Franco-Flemish polyphony, especially Josquin
- believed in educational and ethical power of music
 - experience faith through direct contact with Scripture
 - believed in congregational singing
- retained much of Catholic liturgy
 - some in translation, some in Latin



The Music of the Reformation in Germany (cont'd)

■ German Mass

- various compromises between Roman usage and new practices
- smaller churches adopted German Mass (*Deutsche Messe*)
 - published by Luther, 1526
 - followed main outline of Roman Mass
 - replaced most elements of Proper and Ordinary with German hymns



The Music of the Reformation in Germany (cont'd)

■ Chorale

- Lutheran church music grew out of the chorale
 - chorale: text and tune
 - simple, metrical tunes and rhyming verses
- new compositions
 - Luther wrote poems and melodies himself
 - *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* (A mighty fortress is our God, 1529, NAWM 46c)
 - Luther's best-known chorale
 - anthem of the Reformation



The Music of the Reformation in Germany (cont'd)

■ Chorale (cont'd)

- adaptations of secular and devotional songs or Latin chants
 - *Christ lag in Todesbanden* (Christ lay in the bonds of death), based on Easter sequence *Victimae paschali laudes* (NAWM 5)
- contrafactum: well-known secular tunes given new words
 - *O Welt, ich muss dich lassen* (O world, I must leave you) based on Lied *Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen* (NAWM 41)



The Music of the Reformation in Germany (cont'd)

■ Polyphonic chorale settings

- Lied technique
 - unaltered chorale tune in long notes in tenor
 - three or more free-flowing parts surround tenor
 - example: setting by Luther's collaborator Johann Walter (1496–1570; NAWM 46d)
- chorale motets
 - techniques from Franco-Flemish motet
- chordal homophony
 - tune in soprano, accompanied by block chords



Ex09-01

Ein' fe - ste Burg ist un - ser Gott, ein gu - te Wehr und Waf - fen.
Er hilft uns frei aus al - ler Not, die uns jetzt hat be - trof - fen.

Der alt bö - se Feind, mit Ernst ers jetzt meint; gross Macht und

viel List sein grau - sam Rü - stung ist; auf Erd ist nicht seins Gle - chen.



The Music of the Reformation in Germany (cont'd)

■ Chorale performance

- choir alternated chorale stanzas with congregation
 - sometimes doubled by instruments
 - choir sang in four parts
 - congregation sang in unison
- after 1600 accompaniment played by organ, congregation sang melody
- more elaborate treatments (e.g., organ solo or trained choir)



The Music of the Reformation in Germany (cont'd)

- Chorale performance (cont'd)
 - end of sixteenth century, chorale motets or free polyphonic compositions
 - chorales elaborated in organ improvisations



Reformation Church Music outside Germany

■ Jean Calvin

- led largest branch of Protestantism outside of Germany
- rejected papal authority; justification through faith alone
- believed people predestined for salvation or damnation
- lives of constant piety, uprightness, and work



Reformation Church Music outside Germany (cont'd)

■ Jean Calvin (cont'd)

- centered in Geneva, missionaries spread Calvinism across Switzerland
 - established Dutch Reformed Church in the Netherlands
 - Presbyterian Church in Scotland
 - Puritans in England
 - Huguenots in France



Reformation Church Music outside Germany (cont'd)

■ Calvin and music

- stripped churches of distractions; musical instruments, elaborate polyphony
- singing of psalms to monophonic tunes, only music in service
 - published in collections, psalters
- principal French psalter published 1562
 - 150 psalms translated into strophic, rhyming, and metrical verse
 - simple stepwise melodies (NAWM 47b), “Old Hundredth”



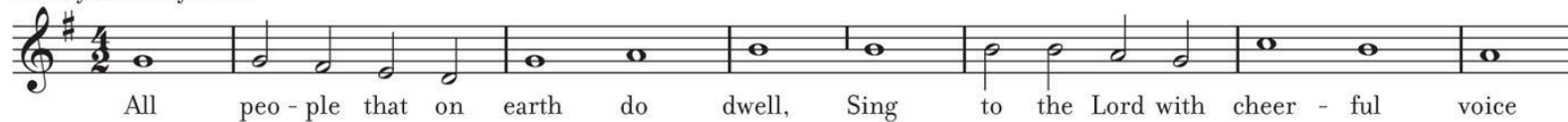
Ex09-02

Psalm 134



Arise, you servants of the Lord, you who by night in his honor . . .

Presbyterian hymnal





Reformation Church Music outside Germany (cont'd)

■ Calvin and music (cont'd)

- sung in unaccompanied unison
- devotional use at home: four or more parts
 - simple chordal style, tune in tenor or soprano
- Dutch, English, and Scottish psalters
 - translations of French psalter: Germany, Holland, England, Scotland
 - Germany: psalter melodies adapted as chorales
 - English psalter of the sixteenth century
 - psalter brought by Pilgrims to New England, 1620



Reformation Church Music outside Germany (cont'd)

- Church of England: third major branch of Protestantism
 - Henry VIII (r. 1509–47) married to Catherine of Aragon
 - pope refused annulment
 - 1543 Parliament separated from Rome; Henry named head of Church of England
 - Church of England
 - Catholic in doctrine under Henry
 - Edward VI (r. 1547–1553) adopted Protestant doctrines



Reformation Church Music outside Germany (cont'd)

- Church of England: third major branch of Protestantism (cont'd)
 - 1549 *Book of Common Prayer*, English replaced Latin in the service
 - Mary (r. 1553–1558) restored Catholicism
 - Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603) brought back reforms made by Edward
 - sought to steer a middle course
 - Anglican Church: blend of Catholic and Protestant elements
 - Catholics conducted services in private



Reformation Church Music outside Germany (cont'd)

- New forms created for services in English
 - Latin motets and masses composed under Henry, Mary, and Elizabeth
 - Latin used in Elizabeth's royal chapel, served political needs
 - composers worked in relative isolation
 - gradually adopted international style of imitative counterpoint
 - many works illustrate English style: full textures, long melismas



F09-01





F09-02





Reformation Church Music outside Germany (cont'd)

- New forms created for services in English (cont'd)
 - Thomas Tallis (ca. 1505–1585)
 - career reflects religious upheavals, influences English church music
 - Henry VIII: Latin masses and motets
 - Edward VI: Anglican service music and motets to English texts
 - (*If ye love me*, ca. 1546–1549, NAWM 48)



Reformation Church Music outside Germany (cont'd)

- New forms created for services in English (cont'd)
 - Catholic Queen Mary: Latin hymns, 7-voice mass *Puer nobis*
 - Queen Elizabeth: music to both Latin and English words
 - natural inflection of speech and vocal quality of melodies



Reformation Church Music outside Germany (cont'd)

■ Anglican Church music

- anthem (from Latin “antiphon”)
- Service
 - music for Morning and Evening Prayer, and Holy Communion
 - Great Service: contrapuntal and melismatic setting
 - Short Service: same texts, syllabic, chordal style



The Counter-Reformation

■ Reform in the Catholic Church

- Council of Trent (1545 to 1563)
 - church Council met at Trent, northern Italy
 - passed measures to purge abuses and laxities
 - music subject of serious complaints:
 - music profaned by use of secular cantus firmi or chansons
 - complicated polyphony made words incomprehensible
 - musicians used instruments inappropriately, careless in their duties, irreverent attitudes
 - pronouncements extremely general
 - banished “lascivious or impure”
 - local bishops regulate music in the services



The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

- Reform in the Catholic Church (cont'd)
 - music changed relatively little in countries that remained Catholic
 - Adrian Willaert (ca. 1490–1562)
 - one of the best-known Flemish composers
 - long career in Italy; thirty-five years at Saint Mark's in Venice
 - most affected by humanist movement
 - molded music to pronunciation of words
 - long notes to accented syllables
 - never allowed a rest to interrupt a word or thought within a vocal line
 - strong cadences only at significant breaks in text
 - insisted syllables be printed precisely under their notes



F09-03





The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

- Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525/6–1594)
 - Premier Italian composer of church music in the sixteenth century, “the Prince of Music”
 - born in Palestrina, small town near Rome
 - choirboy and musical education in Rome
 - briefly sang in Sistine Chapel choir (1555)
 - forty years in Rome
 - Julian Chapel at St. Peter’s (1551–55 and 1571–94)
 - Saint John Lateran (1555–60), Santa Maria Maggiore (1561–66)



F09-04





The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

■ Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525/6–1594) (cont'd)

- after Council of Trent, commissioned to revise official chant books
 - published in 1614, remained in use until early twentieth century
- published his own music
- major works: 104 masses, over 300 motets, thirty-five Magnificats, many other liturgical compositions, ninety-four secular madrigals
- “Palestrina style” standard for later centuries of polyphonic church music



The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

■ Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525/6–1594) (cont'd)

- Palestrina style
 - legend: *Missa Pape Marcelli* (Pope Marcellus Mass, NAWM 51) saved polyphony
 - first style in history of Western music to be consciously preserved and imitated
 - studied works of Franco-Flemish composers, mastered craft
 - masses: variety of techniques, including cantus firmus, parody, paraphrase, and free composition



The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

■ Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525/6–1594) (cont'd)

- melodies
 - share qualities with plainchant
 - *Pope Marcellus Mass* (NAWM 51b), *Agnus Dei*
 - long, gracefully shaped phrases
 - easily singable lines, within range of a 9th
 - voices move by step, few repeated notes
 - rhythmically varied, contrasts of motion
- form
 - compositions unified by musical means



F09-05





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The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

- Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525/6–1594)
(cont'd)
 - connection between motives
 - systematic repetition of phrases, carefully placed cadences
- text declamation
 - *Pope Marcellus Mass* (NAWM 51a), Credo
 - voices pronounce phrase simultaneously
 - 6-voice choir divided into various smaller groups
 - full six voices: climaxes, major cadences, significant words



Ex09-04

The musical score for Ex09-04 consists of three staves: a top treble staff, a middle treble staff, and a bottom bass staff. The top staff begins with a measure number '8' and contains notes with various articulations including accents (↑), breath marks (↓), and dynamic markings (P). It concludes with a measure number '15'. The middle staff also begins with a measure number '8' and includes fingerings (2, 3, 3), a slur, and dynamic markings (P). The bottom staff begins with a measure number '8' and includes a fingering 'S 4 3' and dynamic markings (P). The score is written in a common time signature and includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs.



The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

■ Palestrina's contemporaries

- most illustrious composers of sacred music at end of sixteenth century:
 - Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611), Orlande de Lassus (1532–1594), Englishman William Byrd (ca. 1540–1623)
- Victoria
 - spent two decades in Rome
 - may have studied with Palestrina
 - composed sacred music exclusively



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The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

■ Palestrina's contemporaries (cont'd)

- greater expressive intensity, more notes outside diatonic modes
 - *O magnum mysterium* (NAWM 52b)
- Victoria's imitation mass
 - imitation masses based on his own motets
 - *O magnum mysterium* (Kyrie in NAWM 52a)
 - same melodic and rhythmic smoothness as Palestrina
 - opening motive: more dramatic gesture

• Lassus

- most international: career and compositions
- served Italian patrons in Mantua, Sicily, Rome
- 1556 service of Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria



The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

■ Palestrina's contemporaries (cont'd)

- maestro di cappella ducal chapel in Munich
- four decades in one post, traveled frequently
- age twenty-four, published books of madrigals, chansons, and motets
- one of the greatest composers of sacred music in the late sixteenth century
- influential as advocate of text expression

• Lassus motet

- rhetorical, pictorial, and dramatic interpretation of text determines form and details



The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

■ Palestrina's contemporaries (cont'd)

- example: *Cum essem parvulus* (NAWM 53) (1579), 6-voice motet
 - “When I was a child,” duet between two highest voices
 - “mirror in riddles,” nonimitative counterpoint, suspensions, brief mirror figure
 - “face to face,” moment of revelation, only full homophonic passage
- versatile composer, no “Lassus style”
 - synthesized achievements of an epoch
 - master of Flemish, French, Italian, and German styles in every genre
 - motets influenced later German Protestant composers



F09-06





The Counter-Reformation (cont'd)

■ Palestrina's contemporaries (cont'd)

- William Byrd
 - most important English composer since Dunstable
 - absorbed Continental imitative techniques
 - *Sing joyfully unto God* (NAWM 49), full anthem
 - six voices, points of imitation succeed one another
 - occasionally homophonic declamation
 - imitation handled freely
 - 1590s wrote for Catholics celebrating Mass in secret



F09-07





Postlude

- Renaissance, Reformation, Counter-Reformation
 - different aspects of sixteenth-century musical styles
 - meanings overlap
 - musical characteristics persisted into next century
 - Palestrina revered as “absolute perfection”
 - *stile antico* (old style): Palestrina, Victoria, Lassus, Byrd, Josquin, Willaert referred to by seventeenth-century theorists and composers



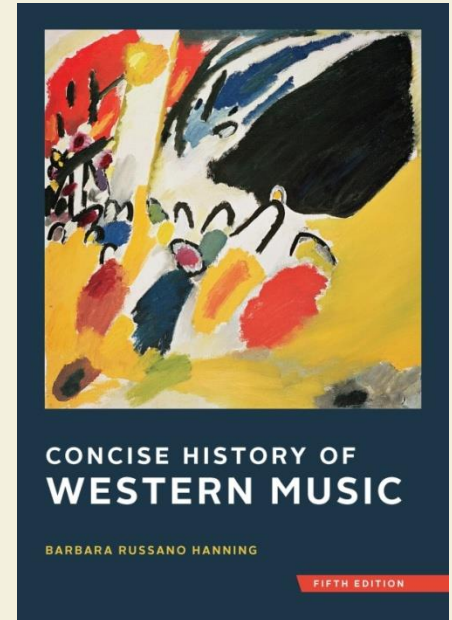
Postlude (cont'd)

- Renaissance, Reformation, Counter-Reformation (cont'd)
 - far-reaching consequences of the chorale
 - Bach cantatas, chorale harmonizations
 - Counter-Reformation attitude: manipulate senses and emotions
 - influenced new Baroque musical aesthetic



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This concludes the Lecture Slide Set
for Chapter 9

by

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