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PREFACE

The author aims in this thesis to show by examples the various ways in which the Five Great Sequences of the Church are used by composers as cantus firmi or thematic material in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Since this cannot be fully appreciated unless one has a clear understanding of the historical background of the origin of the sequence, and especially the distinguishing characteristics of the five in question, some space will be allotted to these discussions. Most of this paper will, of course, deal principally with the nineteenth and twentieth centuries since it is this era which has seen a renewed interest in modal materials. It is a well-known fact that a diligent study of the achievements of the past has afforded many composers the necessary inspiration in forming their own styles.

The Five Great Sequences--namely, the Victimae Paschali, the Veni Sancte Spiritus, the Lauda Sion, the Stabat Mater, and the Dies Irae, are gems of Catholic liturgy which have come down to us from the Ages of Faith, the zenith of Latin hymn-writing. The latter part of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries have given us the most precious Latin hymns of all times.

In the sixteenth century the Council of Trent prescribed that only four of all the sequences then extant were to be retained in the Roman missal. The Stabat Mater was not added until the eighteenth century. Therefore the term, The Five Great Sequences, is used in this thesis.

These sequences may also be termed great because of the fact that they have withstood the test of time, certainly an indication of the worth of any masterpiece of art, music, or literature.

In regard to the instrumental compositions used as examples, it has not been possible in every case to obtain the musical score necessary for a work of this kind. In such cases the information has been gleaned from other sources, such as books, magazine articles, program notes, etc.

Organ compositions, although coming under the term, "instrumental music", have been eliminated because of the large number available in this field.

The writer feels after a year of research that she has by no means exhausted the number of instrumental compositions in which composers of the past have used one or more of the Five Great Sequences as a favorite means of expression.

CHAPTER I

SEQUENCES IN GENERAL

A few preliminary remarks will be necessary when one considers the origin of the sequence, which seems to date back to the early ninth, or possibly the late eighth century.

Melodies and hymns have been intimately associated with prayers offered to God from the earliest ages of man. The thoughts and sentiments of man must have a common or universal medium of expression and this medium has ever been song. Although the thoughts of the mind may be expressed in speech, it is only through music that the deep feelings of the heart are manifested in garments worthy of the Divine Majesty.

In the Old Testament the Jews accompanied their various religious acts with melodious prayers which consisted chiefly in the singing of the Psalms. This was continued by the early Christians and later amalgamated in the Mass, where the two chants, the Gradual and the Alleluia, coupled with the verse of a psalm, appear between the Epistle and Gospel. The long intricate vocal flourish on the last vowel of the Alleluia, called the jubilus, and which is Gregorian, has been beautifully described by St. Augustine when he gives the mystical meaning of this jubilation in these lines:

> He who sings the jubilus does not express himself by words; he gives forth a joyous sound not put into words. Transported by joy he does not make use of expressions which are powerless to express his sentiments; he breaks

> out into song without using words. His song makes known his joy too great for words to express.[1]

St. Jerome, too, writes to the same effect:

> We sing the jubilus because we cannot put into words or syllables of letters how much we ought to praise God.[2]

During the early period of the Church, because of the great scarcity of manuscripts, the choir was expected to know from memory great portions of the musical text. In the case of the Alleluia jubilus this proved to be particularly difficult; therefore, an artificial device was invented to obviate this difficulty. During the ninth century the Benedictine monastery of St. Gall in Switzerland came into possession of this device which was obtained from a monk fleeing from his monastery of Jumièges, in Normandy, which had been sacked by the Northmen(862). He brought with him an antiphonary, in which versicles--versus ad sequentias--were set to parts of the Alleluia jubilus. The verses seemed crude, unrhythmical, and unsatisfactory, and therefore from all appearances used only as a help to the memory. Notker Balbulus, (the stammerer), a monk of the famous cloister of St. Gall in Germany, set to work writing other verses and after many experiments completed an entire collection of sequences, one for every feast of the year. Because of this fact, Notker has generally been regarded as the first writer of sequences; however, serious historical research has proven that the sequence had its origin in France. In contrast with the earlier French school, Notker may be regarded as the founder of the German school of sequence composition. The Notkerian Sequences marked the high point of the German School and were far in advance of the

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1. Jungers, Sister Mary Bernice, O.S.F., The Five Great Sequences. P. 9.

2. Ibid., p. 9.

contemporary French "prose" as the French called the sequence. The latter reached its zenith only in the twelfth century with Adam of St. Victor. Before long, his style had many imitators and he and his school became known as the exponents of form and the classical masters of rhythmical verse.

In comparing the French with the German school we find that both generally follow the normal rule that the strophes should be repeated; however, there are many exceptions. Sequences with no repetition are perhaps the earliest; then those with amplified repetition or elaboration; and lastly, and by far the greater number, those which have some strophes which are not repeated, particularly the first and last, the former being an introduction, the latter serving as a coda. These poems of length written in free style may be represented by the pattern a, bb, cc, dd, - - - ii, k. The principle of syllabic chant is a feature common to both schools. While the monk from Jumièges did not always apply one syllable of the text to each note, yet Notker and his imitators probably did more harm to the original rhythmical construction of the melody for he often kept the beginning and the end of the Alleluia melody, while the portion between became entirely his own composition, both text and melody, or adapted from other sources. The French School had a custom not found in the German, that of singing the word Alleluia; consequently, the text of the sequence does not begin till the second strophe of the melody. In the German school the first strophe of the melody opened with the words of the text. Since both schools agree upon the first strophe of the melody being sung only once, the opening of their sequences differed, the German beginning with a single line, the French with a pair of lines written to the second melodic strophe. Another connection which the French school had with the Alleluia was the

fact that they concluded each division with a word ending on the vowel "a", while no sign of this close relation of the text of the final of the Alleluia is found in the Notkerian sequence.

It seems to have become a practice during this age to allow a variety of literary matter, in the nature of a commentary, to introduce itself into the text of the liturgy. This practice of mediaeval farcing was known as troping.

> In a wide sense, therefore, the sequence belongs to the category of tropes--one, moreover, which far outshone and outlasted all other tropes, and alone won a permanent place for itself in the domain of the liturgy proper. However, it is not advisable to class the sequence as a trope, since, while both are based on the principal of extension, it is the essence of a trope to be bound to a liturgical text, the meaning of which it either completes or expands by way of commentary, and thus, instead of following on, as the sequence, it is inserted between two words or phrases of a liturgical text, so as to form a complete whole. The sequence, on the other hand, acquired an independence and entity of its own.[3]

Although a considerable number of the Latin hymns used in the Western Church are classed under the general title of Sequences, Father Clemens Blume makes a clear distinction between the hymn and the sequence in these words: "The Sequence is the liturgical hymn of the Mass, in which it occurs on festivals between the Gradual and the Gospel, while the hymn, properly so called, belongs to the Breviary."[4] Hymns had been used exclusively in the liturgical prayer of praise known as the Divine Office before the creation of the sequence. The hymn and sequence differ also in melody, structure and metre.[5]

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3. Roff, Rev. J., Mus.D., "The Sequence: Its Origin and Development," Caecilia. Vol. 79, No. 3 (March-April, 1952), p. 123.

4. Catholic Encyclopedia. Vol. XII, p. 481.

5. It is necessary to add here that after the golden era of the sequence in the twelfth century, it approached the hymn form so closely as to be barely distinguishable from it.

Mr. Howard Frere, in his introduction to the "Winchester Troper," concludes a scholarly study on the early sequences with the following relevant remarks:

> 1) "In the sequence we see the earliest indication of a sense of key-relationship and balance of tonality. Halfway through the melody, in many cases, a change takes place which is very analogous to a modern modulation into the dominant.
>
> 2) The sequence also gives us the earliest indication of musical form; here, free from words -- for words were at first adapted to existing melodies --, the composer was able to deal with absolute music, and as a result his melody falls, almost of necessity, into some "form". In some sequences it is very marked; not only is the division into strophes itself significant, but the similarity of their endings, the amplification of some strophes and the balance between different strophes -- all show a very real growth and a considerable grasp of what musical form means."[6]

The syllabic style of chant used in the sequences rendered them the most folklike of all the various types of chant, and therefore, offered suitable ground on which to build religious folk songs in the future.

In the sequence, the style of the melodies differs from the older Gregorian chants because of the extended compass and the occurrence of wide intervals, probably more suitable to boys' than men's voices. Repetition of a melody at the fifth above, repetition of phrases, presumably by alternate sides of the choir are all features foreign to the older liturgical chants of the Latin Church. It may be of interest to note here that Dom Anselm Hughes, who has been quoted by Gustave Reese in his outstanding work, Music in the Middle Ages, uses these facts to explain the origin of polyphony in its first manifestation, the "organum".

That much more could be said, and that much more has been written concerning the appearance and value of the sequence in the history of mediaeval hymnody cannot be contradicted; however, since this is not a

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6. Roff, Rev. J., Mus.D., op. cit., Vol. 79, No. 4 (May-June, 1952), p. 161.

thesis merely on the sequence but on its influence in instrumental music, the writer feels that enough information has been given in the foregoing pages to further a clear understanding of the remainder of this work.

CHAPTER II

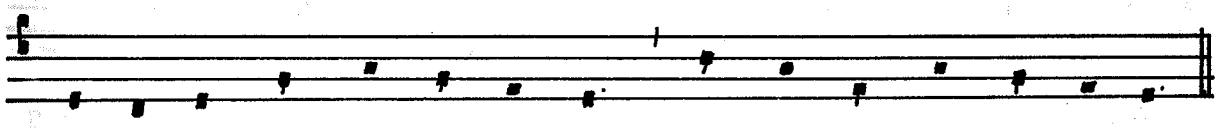
VICTIMAE PASCHALI LAUDES

The jubilation of the Alleluia of the Easter Mass continues to resound in the beautiful sequence, Victimae Paschali Laudes, in which the poet sings the praises of the risen Christ.

This sequence, imbued with the spirit of triumphal joy, is an excellent example of the transitional form. It is a traditional type of the eleventh century in which an occasional rhyme occurs. In other words, it bridges the gap between the rhythmical, irregular, unrhymed Notkerian sequence to the regular stanzaic sequence of Adam of St. Victor. The original pattern was a, bb, cc, dd; but the sequence was revised at the Council of Trent at which time the sixth strophe was left out, the Alleluia and the Amen added.

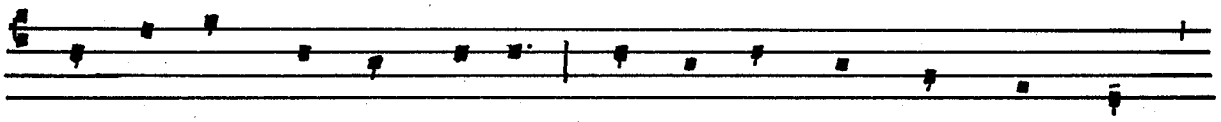
Although this sequence has been ascribed to Notker, Robert II of France, Herman Contractus, Adam of St. Victor, and to Wipo, after a number of conclusive arguments all doubts and questions have been settled and the authorship attributed to Wipo. This Burgundian or Swabian priest (d.1048) was chaplain to the emperors Conrad II and his son, Henry III. Wipo's biographer described his style as being simple and fluent, and his language well chosen. These three outstanding characteristics are to be found in the Victimae Paschali Laudes. An example of his simplicity is certainly brought forth in the Agnus, redemit oves (The Lamb hath redeemed the sheep) where in three brief words he brings out the great mystery of our redemption.

The Victimae Paschali Laudes is of great interest hymnologically since it is the only quasi-Notkerian form retained in the Missal. This type of sequence is known to have two lines for the opening stanza, such as we find in this Easter Sequence.



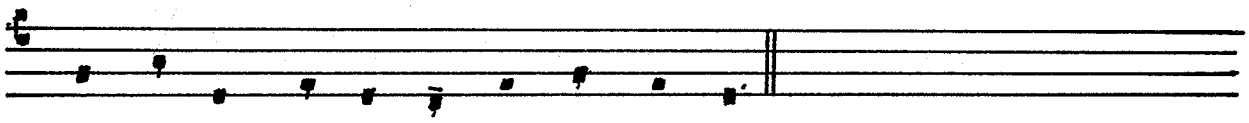
Victimae pascha-li laudes im--mo--lent Chris-ti---a--ni.
To the Victim of Easter praises be offered (by) Christians.

With a powerful motive the following two strophes then set in. The first two lines in the stanza have seven syllables each, the third has six, and the fourth has four. The chant melody is the same for these two stanzas.



Agnus re---de--mit oves: Christus in---no--cens Pat---ri
The Lamb hath redeemed the sheep: Christ (the) innocent to the Father

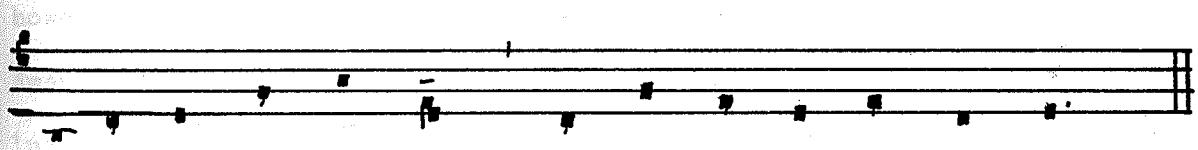
Mors et vita du---el-lo con fli--xe--re mi----ran---do
Death and life in a duel have contended wondrously



re--con--ci---li--a--vit pec--ca---to--res.
hath reconciled sinners.

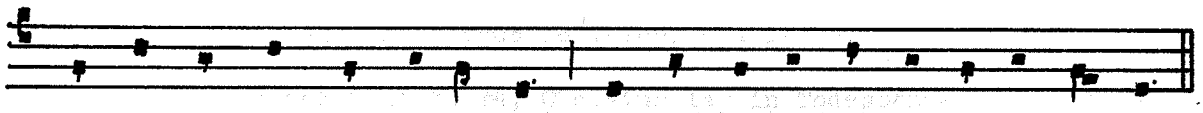
dux vitae mor-tu--us regnat vivus.
the leader of life (tho') dead reigns alive.

The four succeeding strophes are a dialogue between the choir and Mary Magdalen. The melody here becomes somewhat more calm with the motive beginning an octave lower than that of the foregoing.



Dic nobis Ma---ri---a quid vi--dis---ti in vi---a ?
Tell us Mary what thou sawest in (the) way?

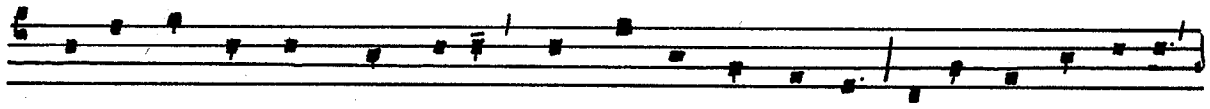
An--ge--li---cos tes--tes su--da---ri---um et ves-tes.
The angelic witnesses, the towel, and the linen cloths.



Se--pulcrum Chri-sti vi-ven-tis, et glo-ri-am vi--di re-sur-gen-tis:
(The) tomb of Christ living, and the glory I saw of His arising:

Sur-rex-it Chris-tus spes me-a: prae-ce-det su-os in Ga-li---lae-am.
Risen is Christ hope of mine: He will go before His own into Galilee.

In the sixth stanza which is really seven of the original, motive two resounds again in all its jubilation. It springs from exultant, unshakable conviction. 1



Scimus Chri-stum surrex--isse a mor-tu--is ve-re: tu nobis victor Rex,
We know (that)Christ hath risen from (the)dead truly: do Thou on us, O victor King



mi--se----re--re. A---men. Al-le-lu--ia.
have mercy. Amen. Alleluia.

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1. Johner, Dom Dominic, The Chants of the Vatican Gradual, p. 182.

This stanza has a melody all its own with the exception of the first words Scimus Christum surrexisse which is the same as the opening line of stanzas two and three. The melody is full of power as far as Victor Rex; however, a softer coloring follows with a confident miserere. A hearty Amen, Alleluia brings this marvelous song to a close. No doubt the Alleluia was added to heighten the joy of this Feast of Feasts since in our language it means: All Hail to Him Who Is.

This most popular sequence has served as a model for numerous imitations. The vivid picture of the conflict between Death and Life in the third stanza of this sequence held a special attraction for Martin Luther, who always appreciated religious folk-song and its effect on the congregation. Bach's Church Cantata #4, Christus lag in Todesbanden (Christ lay in death's dark prison), also contains this stanza. The fourth and fifth stanzas of the famous hymn Christ ist erstanden originated in the Victimae Paschali Laudes.

The early liturgical dramas and Miracle Plays of the Middle Ages used the second part of the sequence which could very well be adapted to their needs because of the dialogue found therein. Archbishop Trench simply calls the Victimae a "thoroughly dramatic sequence on the Resurrection."[2]

Liszt incorporated the theme into the third part of his oratorio titled Christus. Gounod also used the theme in the second part of the Redemption. Handel wove the theme into the most marvelous portion of his Messiah.

That present day composers have not ceased to use the Easter Sequence in their works is proven by the following examples.

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2. Trench, R., Sacred Latin Poetry. P. 160.

Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936) clearly sets forth a pure modal idiom in the introduction to his violin concerto, Concerto Gregoriano; however, the second movement emphasizes this idiom to a much greater extent because of his employment of the liturgical chant. In pure Dorian the violin sings the Victimae Paschali Laudes. The composer sought to imbue his music with the sobriety and purity of form peculiar to the religious music of the Middle Ages. Many have been lead to wonder just why he chose the form of a violin concerto to fulfill his desires. Upon careful study of the composition in question one perceives that it contains few of the traits which one usually finds in an instrumental concerto. An anonymous program annotator provides the following information:

> The connection between the solo instrument and the orchestra has in this case quite a different significance; the solo violin plays, so to speak, the role of cantor in the old religious service, while the orchestra represents the choir of believers.[3]

3, Ewen, David, The Complete Book of 20th Century Music. P. 328.

Ex. 1 - Respighi's Concerto Gregoriano, second movement.[4]



4. Tovey, Donald, Essays in Musical Analysis. Vol. III, p.219.

Arising from this the composer gives us an impassioned free continuation which leads to a Dorian form of F minor, where the bass takes its turn to sing the Victimae Paschali Laudes. Simultaneously above this passage we hear profoundly agitated figures and rhythms. With a cessation of the chant in the bass the figures are developed more quietly, but with an intensity of emotion and a variety of beautiful coloring. We see the next appearance of the sequence in the chords. The solo violin sings the theme in D sharp minor, accompanied by high muted strings, celesta, and solemn chords for violoncellos and basses. After another episode the composer leads us once more to a calm setting of the chant. The low clarinets take their turn now in gradually developing the chant theme, bringing it to a close in D major. The movement is then brought to a close with a dialogue between the solo violin and the horn, oboe, and bass clarinet.

During the summer of 1925 Respighi gave us his Quartetto Dorico, so called because the opening theme is in the Dorian mode of the Gregorian chant. Although it is in one movement, the work can easily be divided into the four sections common to the quartet form: Energico - Scherzo - Adagio - Finale. In the unison exposition of the principal theme with which the Quartet opens the composer uses the first phrase of the Victimae Paschali Laudes with an extension of six notes (indicated with asterisks). This initial theme is carried through the entire composition in various ways.

Ex. 2 - Respighi's Quartetto Dorico, principal theme.



Toward the end of the first movement the principal theme recurs, now in the guise of an embellished chorale. In the second movement the main theme shows itself in scherzo form without a Trio, closing with a fugato. A new theme of a religious character appears in the third movement which leads to a recapitulation of the initial theme, developed in strict contrapuntal form in the fourth. With an ostinato bass, the violins playing in unison, we have here a Passacaglia form. The theme recurs in the second violins, accompanied by a tremolo in the viola, in the character of a Gregorian melisma. This broadens into a closing song form of full harmonies with a gradual return in vigorous unison, closing the Quartet in the manner of its opening. It should be noted that Respighi makes considerable use of ascending and descending fourths in this composition; this interval is frequently used in the Easter Sequence.

Eugene Bozza (b.1905) uses the Victimae Paschali Laudes in his violin concerto, En Forét. As in the Respighi example the sequence also makes its appearance in the second movement, with this difference: Bozza's composition utilizes the Gregorian idiom only in the second movement; the other sections have no modal characteristic whatsoever.

Ex. 3 - En Foret - Eugene Bozza, second movement.[5]



5. Green, Sister Lucy Marie, C.D.P., The Influence of the Gregorian Modes on the Music of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. P. 85.

Many of Bozza's compositions were especially commissioned as examination music for the Paris Conservatory, and therefore he has spent much of his career in Paris. That he was interested in the Gregorian Chant would seem probable since his Variations on a Free Theme, an exceptionally difficult and brilliant work for woodwind quintet, also contains a solemn movement reminiscent of archaic Church music.

Although Charles Martin Loeffler (1861-1935) later evolved a definite personal style displaying brilliant technique and a unique mystical quality, nevertheless he was greatly influenced by the subtleties of French post-romanticism and impressionism. That he had a profound knowledge of Gregorian music and a thorough understanding of the mediaeval idiom is evidenced in a number of his compositions. Perhaps the most outstanding is his Music for Four Stringed Instruments, written in memory of Victor Chapman, an aviator, who was killed in World War I. (Although Loeffler was born at Mulhouse in Alsace, he spent the greater portion of his life in the United States, coming to New York in 1881.) Again we find the Victimae Paschali Laudes in the second movement just as in the Respighi and Bozza examples. This movement, entitled Easter Sunday, gives evidence of a beautiful adaptation of pure modal usage. Loeffler does not hesitate to use the entire sequence note for note in this second movement. Its first appearance is seen in the second violin part but after using the music for the first strophe of the Victimae Paschali Laudes the first violin repeats the theme.

Ex. 4 - Charles Martin Loeffler's Music for Four Stringed Instruments.



After an interruption of sixteen measures the first violin continues with the tune of the Sequence, giving out the music for the second strophe, Agnus Redemit Oves, etc. Then follows an interlude of five measures after which the second violin and 'cello combine, an octave apart, in beginning the dialogue portion of the Sequence, Dic nobis Maria quid vidisti in via?

Ex. 5a - Charles Martin Loeffler's Music for Four Stringed Instruments.



This foregoing question is answered by the first violin which instrument continues with the melody until the close of the Victimae Paschali Laudes.

Ex. 5b - Charles Martin Loeffler's Music for Four Stringed Instruments.



Carl Engel in his enlightening article on Charles Martin Loeffler says the following:

> Is there anyone so hardened to whom the second movement of the "Music for Four Stringed Instruments" does not speak in undertones of hope and solace? If Loeffler's music has passed through the alembic of intellectual refining, the distillation of the spirit was made possible only by the boiling over of blood. The result is like no other music.[6]

Paul Creston (b.1906) was commissioned to write his Third Symphony by the Worcester Music Festival to honor the memory of Aldus C. Higgins. July 1950 saw its completion and the Symphony was introduced in Worcester, Massachusetts by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy in October of the same year. The Symphony was inspired by the three Mysteries, the Nativity, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. Each movement has all or part of a Gregorian melody as its first and second themes, sometimes merely hinted at, at other times used in tiny sections or longer portions. (The composer utilizes a longer section of a Gregorian melody as a cantus firmus against smaller portions of another one, in counterpoint. Then again, little Gregorian patches are used as motifs and developed.) In regard to rhythm, Creston has at times tried to preserve exactly the traditional vocal rhythms but more often brings them into instrumental metrical forms. Seventh and ninth chords abound, often following each other chromatically among the actual Gregorian melodies.

> A program note says: 'The ever-increasing intensity of the mood leads to a violently climatic outburst.' This gives a clue to the approach; Gregorian melody served up with romantic passion sometimes with impressionistic instrumentation, with twentieth century dissonance and rhythm; now and again atonal implications are found, cheek-by-jowl, with the ecclesiastical modes.[7]

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6. Engel, Carl, "Charles Martin Loeffler", The Musical Quarterly. Vol. XI, No. 3 (July, 1925), pp. 320 and 321.

7. Cowell, Henry, "Current Chronicle on Paul Creston's Third Symphony", Musical Quarterly. Vol. XXXVII, No. 1 (January, 1951), p. 79.

As one would most likely expect the Easter Sequence is used by Creston in the third movement, The Resurrection. The melody does not appear in its entirety in the very beginning but there is a gradual development of the motive. As stated above, here too, the composer uses tiny sections of the melody. First is heard the melody of the two words, Victimae Paschali; later another fragment of the melody is sung by the horns and thus the composer continues until finally he merges into the entire Sequence at the Allegro ma calmo.

Ex. 6 - Paul Creston's Third Symphony, third movement, The Resurrection.



Throughout the clarinet sings the major portion of the melody but at times alternates with the strings. At their entrance the first and second violins and violas sing the melody each an octave apart.

Ex. 7a - Paul Creston's Third Symphony, third movement, The Resurrection.



After this portion, the viola and 'cello begin the dialogue part of the sequence, singing the first seven notes of Dic nobis Maria, after which the clarinet resumes with Qui vidisti in via, etc. and completes the strophe. The same instrumentation is carried out in the next strophe, number 5, after which violins I and II with viola introduce the last strophe, singing the first eight notes; again the clarinet resumes its task and finishes the sequence. Following this, other instruments are given the theme with slight alterations. First we hear the oboe, then the horns and finally the piccolo.

Ex. 7b - Paul Creston's Third Symphony, third movement, The Resurrection.



Later the violin again sings the theme, this time with slight changes such as major thirds instead of minor, whole steps instead of half, etc. We hear too at this point a distorted version of the theme by the bass clarinet. One cannot but marvel at the treatment given Gregorian Chant in this non-liturgical composition; it is done without offending the listener and at the same time it is in modern style.

CHAPTER III

VENI SANCTE SPIRITUS

The Veni Sancte Spiritus has for its theme the Holy Spirit, the Comforter; therefore it is closely connected with the feast of Pentecost, or Whitsunday, when the Church celebrates the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles--the birthday of the Catholic Church. The Jewish Pentecost was celebrated fifty days after the Pasch at which time was commemorated the giving of the Ten Commandments amid storm, thunder and lightning.

The Veni Sancte Spiritus forms a small part of the sublime ceremony of the Pentecost Mass, being used as the sequence on Whitsunday and during the octave.

> In Medieval times it was the custom in some churches to have a shower of red rose-leaves from the rafters during the singing of the Veni Sancte Spiritus while a dove fluttered over the heads of the congregation. Hence the name of "Rose Easter" by which Whitsunday was known in the thirteenth century. Sometimes also, to add to the dramatic effect, trumpets were blown during the sequence, to recall the trumpet sounded on Sinai, or the sound as of a mighty wind that accompanied the Descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles.[1]

It seems scholars cannot agree upon the authorship of this Pentecost sequence; the choice probably lies between Pope Innocent III (d.1216) and Archbishop Stephen Langton of Canterbury (d.1228). Whoever the author may have been, he seems to have combined in the text four earlier compositions: Sancti Spiritus adsit gratis (The Holy Spirit's Grace Be With Us),

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1. LeFebvre, Rev. D. G., Daily Missal. P. 956.

Ignis Spiritus Paracliti (O Fire of the Paraclete), Veni Creator Spiritus (Come Holy Ghost, Fill the Hearts of Thy Faithful) and the Veni Sancte Spiritus: Reple (Come, Holy Ghost, Fill the Hearts of Thy Faithful). In view of the above, this sequence cannot lay claim to an absolute originality of ideas; however, "The matchless beauty of its verse and the sublime unction of its melody have justly merited for it the title of 'golden sequence'."[2]

Julian evaluates the worth of this sequence as follows:

> It combines a stately grace, a perfect rhythmic melody, and a faculty of saying just the right thing in just the fitting words, in such a measure as to disarm criticism, and at once to defy comparison with any other hymn in any other language, and to make it almost impossible to present an adequate translation.[3]

Most hymnologists speak of this sequence as having five six-line stanzas. Its pattern, therefore, is aa, bb, cc, dd, ee with unpaired introduction and conclusion. The melodic material of the second Alleluia for Whitsunday, c d e f e d c d, is used in the first verse. In melodic continuation, as well as in content, the Veni Sancte Spiritus is a further development of the second Alleluia's fervent supplication. In the second verse the motive rises and is heard at the interval of a fourth higher portraying our lowliness in the sight of the Creator. In the third verse there is a change of interval, thus presenting the form a a^1 a^2. The melody of this first double strophe is tranquil in character, while the text speaks to us of the Holy Spirit as the source of light and of the soul's riches.

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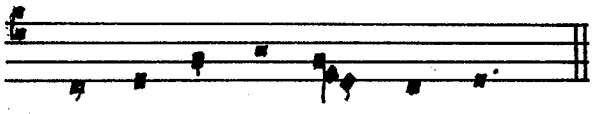
2. Roff, Rev. Joseph, Mus.D., op. cit., Vol. 79, No. 5 (July-August, 1952), p. 175.

3. Julian, Rev. Dr. J., Dictionary of Hymnology. P. 1212.



Ve--ni Sanc-te Spi--ri--tus Et e--mit---te cae---li--tus
Come Holy Spirit And send out from heaven

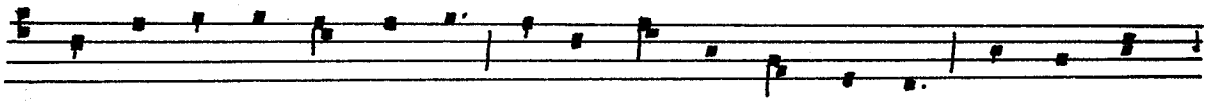
Ve--ni pa-ter pau--per-um, Ve---ni da---tor mu----ne--rum,
Come Father of the poor, Come giver of gifts



Lu-cis tu-ae ra---di--um.
Of light of Thine a ray.

Ve-ni lu-men cor---di-num.
Come light of hearts.

The melody of the second pair of strophes becomes more forceful and sets in with a joyful note of confidence; this is brought out in the music as it begins on the dominant and rises an octave above the tonic. The leap of a sixth between the second and third verses is a rarity in Gregorian Chant. The text continues this time in words of praise to the Holy Spirit as the source of comfort in sufferings and trials.



Con-so--la--tor op--ti--me, Dulcis hospes a nimae, Dulce re-
Comforter the best, Sweet guest of the soul Sweet

In la--bo--re re--qui-es, In aes--tu tem--pe---ri-es, In fle--tu
In toil (our) rest, In heat coolness, In weeping

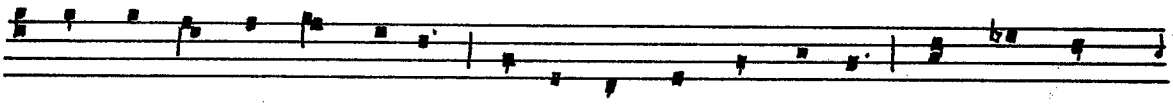


fri--ge---ri-um.
refreshment.

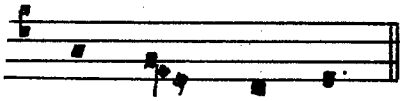
so---la---ti--um.
consolation

The octave leap found between the second and third pair of strophes is a practice scarcely used before the eleventh century. The beginning

notes, d d c b c d c, seem to be derived from a preceding passage (in la)-bore requies. The b flat a g f corresponds to d c b a of the first verse.

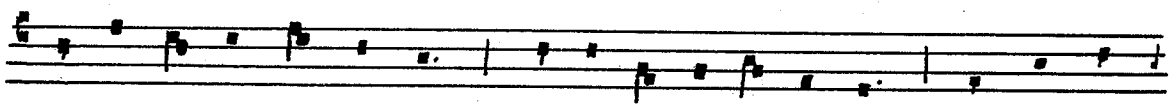


O lux be--a--tis-si-ma, Rep-le cor-dis in--ti-ma Tu---o---rum
O light most blessed, Fill (the) heart's interior of Thy
Si-ne tu--o nu--mi-ne, Nihil est in ho--mi-ne Ni--hil est
Without thy divine power, Nothing is in man, Nothing is



fi---de----li--um.
faithful.
in---no----xi--um.
harmless.

In the following set of strophes the melody approaches a curve and becomes more tender in character. There is a similarity in the third verse between this sequence and the first verse of the Lauda Sion. The closing note differs in this strophe from any other in that it closes on the tenor.



La-va quod est sordi-dum, Ri-ga quod est a-ridum, Sa--na quod
Wash what is unclean Water what is dry, Heal what

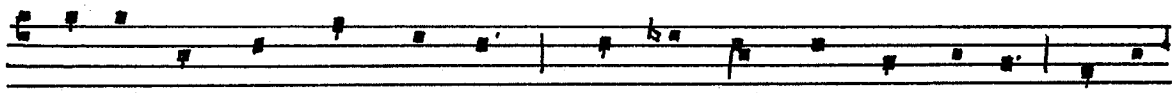
Flecte quod est rigi--dum, Fove quod est frigidum, Re--ge quod
Bend what is stiff, Warm what is cold, Straighten what



est sau--ci--um.
is hurt.

est de--vi--um.
is crooked.

The final strophe begins on the octave and descending fifths are used at the beginnings and endings. The first and last verse of this strophe returns to the former joyfulness of the sequence bringing on even stronger liveliness reminding one of the fiery flashing of the tongues and the fire and wind of Pentecost. It is interesting to note that in the first strophe one consistently prays VENI (four times) while in the last pair the word DA (give) is sung four times.



Da vir-tu---tis me---ri--tum Da sa--lu---tis ex--i-tum, Da pe-
Give (us) virtue's reward, Give salvation's goal, Give



re-ne gau--di--um. A-men. Al-le-lu--ia.
perennial joy. Amen. Alleluia.

Dom Johner says:

> The composer of this song was a veritable harp of God, on which the Holy Ghost Himself played. Its tones will continue as long as mankind looks up in heartfelt prayer to the "Father of the Poor."[4]

This Paracletic theme has been used countless times by artists, poets, and musicians. It inspired the pen of a Dante and guided the brush of a Raphael. It is a well-known fact that Palestrina earned for himself the title of being the "Musician of the Holy Ghost." The third verse of Luther's Whitsuntide hymn was derived from the Veni Sancte Spiritus. Bach's Whitsuntide Cantata uses the theme and also his Motet Der Geist helft unser Schwacheit auf.

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4. Johner, Dom Dominic, O.S.B., op. cit., p. 224.

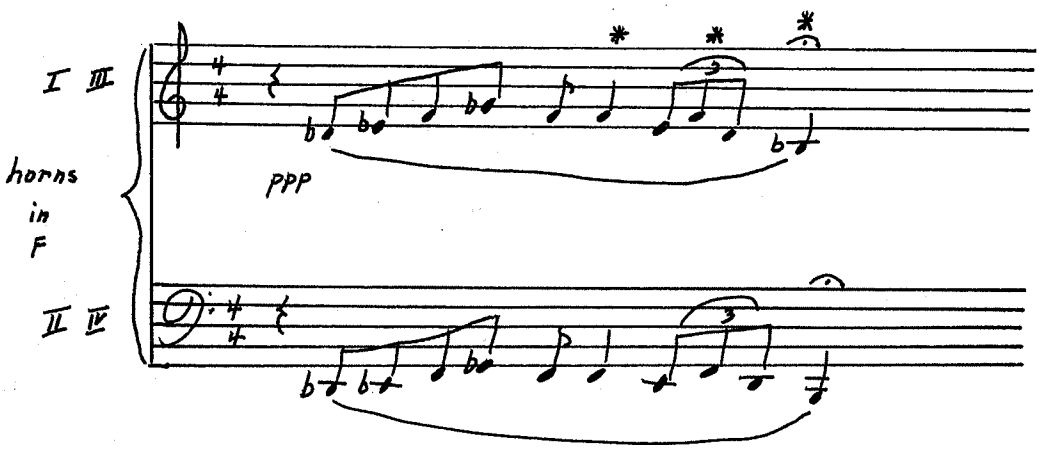
Mendelssohn in his Elijah, Gounod in The Redemption and Elgar in The Kingdom are composers of sacred drama who have not hesitated to use the Pentecostal Theme in their works.

However, the Veni Sancte Spiritus, musically speaking, does not seem to have the same attraction to composers of instrumental music. True, composers have used the Veni Creator Spiritus as thematic material in their compositions, such as Gustav Mahler in his Eighth Symphony, but the Veni Sancte Spiritus seems not to have been used to any great extent except in organ compositions. Although the latter do not come within the scope of this thesis it may not be out of place to mention a few outstanding arrangements for that instrument: Veni Sancte Spiritus by M. Plum, OSM, included in his Twenty Offertoires; Veni Sancte Spiritus by Jeanne Demessieux from the Sept Meditations sur le Saint Esprit; Veni Sancte Spiritus by Jaap Vranken from Toccata en fuga.

As in the Victimae Paschali Laudes we turn again to Ottorino Respighi for a possible example of the use of the Veni Sancte Spiritus in instrumental music, this time in his outstanding symphonic poem, The Pines of Rome. Although this entire work is played without a break, it is divided into four sections, the second of which is called The Pines Near a Catacomb. It is in this movement that Respighi would appear to use several fragments of the Veni Sancte Spiritus as the main theme. Critics and historians seem to picture this movement as shadows of pine trees overlooking the entrance of the catacomb from whose depths rises a chant which re-echoes in a solemn manner, hymn-like in character; and then is mysteriously silenced.

The theme at its entrance is heard in the four horns. With the exception of two additional F's and the end note of the first phrase the composer uses note for note the first verse of the sequence. A point of interest here is that the last four notes are an exact repetition of the first four, second verse, of the Lauda Sion.

Ex. 8 - Ottorino Respighi's Pines of Rome, second movement, The Pines Near a Catacomb.



Later the clarinets are heard in a phrase which is to be found in the third verse of the first strophe, Lucis tuae radium, the last six notes

Ex. 9 - Ottorino Respighi's Pines of Rome, second movement, The Pines Near a Catacomb.



The two previous phrases are then joined in the following horn passage.

Ex. 10 - Ottorino Respighi's Pines of Rome, second movement, The Pines Near a Catacomb.



The first five notes of the last verse of strophe three, Tuorum fidelium, have been utilized in a theme sung by the flute; they are also heard in the bassoons, first violins and violoncello.

Ex. 11 - Ottorino Respighi's Pines of Rome, second movement, The Pines Near a Catacomb.



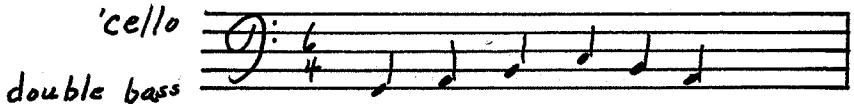
A pattern of four notes used several times at the close of verses in the sequence has been used by the first violins in the following manner.

Ex. 12 - Ottorino Respighi's Pines of Rome, second movement, The Pines Near a Catacomb.

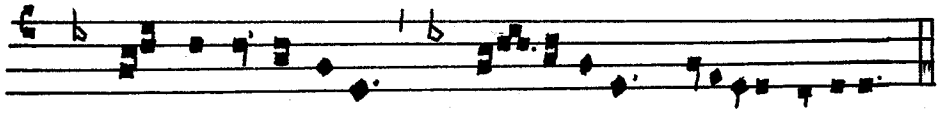


The first six notes of the sequence are now employed by the piano, organ, violoncello and double bass.

Ex. 13 - Ottorino Respighi's Pines of Rome, second movement, The Pines Near a Catacomb.



In spite of the above evidence, however, it is almost certain that Respighi employed the "ad libitum" Kyrie "Clemens Rector" in the movement under discussion, rather than the Veni Sancte Spiritus. This is readily apparent, as the following quotation (the first phrase) from this Kyrie will show:



Regardless of the resemblances between the two plainchants involved, the Respighi examples are undoubtedly derived from the Kyrie. Hence the author can offer no certain evidence of the use of the sequence Veni Sancte Spiritus in instrumental music of the nineteenth or twentieth centuries.

CHAPTER IV

LAUDA SION

When Pope Urban IV instituted the Feast of Corpus Christi throughout the Catholic Church he was desirous of having a Mass and Office composed especially for it. St. Thomas Aquinas (1225?-1274) was appointed to fulfill this task. That the Lauda Sion came from his pen is not disputed by present-day authorities on hymnology. Although he had written volumes on many theological and philosophical subjects, he is the poet of only one subject, that of the Eucharist. Father Roff says of this sequence that it is a "Wonderful statement of scholastic theology and poetic mysticism."[1] Three of the five hymns composed by St. Thomas form part of the Office for the Feast of Corpus Christi: the Pange Lingua Gloriosi, the Sacris Solemnis, and the Verbum Supernum Prodiens. The Lauda Sion is the longest Eucharistic hymn of St. Thomas--twenty-four strophes--with unpaired introduction and conclusion. It is used as the sequence for the Mass of Corpus Christi and during the octave. Gustave Reese makes the following statement:

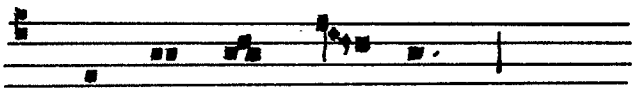
> . . .in the Corpus Christi sequence Lauda Sion, written by St. Thomas Aquinas (d.1274) with a melody that had been used to several texts by Adam de St. Victor, we find the regularity of construction, the rhyming of both text and music, and the strict observance of the rule of polystrophic formation characteristic of the proses of Adam.[2]

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1. Roff, Rev. Joseph, op. cit., p. 175.

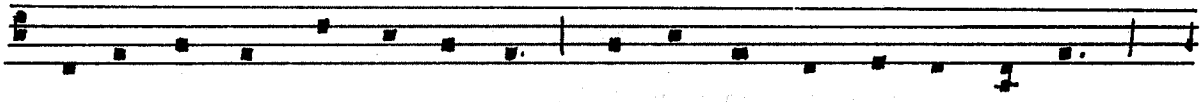
2. Reese, Gustave, Music of the Middle Ages. P. 191.

It is generally agreed that St. Thomas used the Laudes Crucis Attollamus of Adam of St. Victor as his model for the Lauda Sion. In its original form it was a hymn to the cross, dating probably from the twelfth century, wherein the initial motive is supplied by the Alleluia Dulce Lignum.



Al--le---lu---------ia.

Dul--ce---li--------gnum.



Lau-da Si--on Sal--va-tor--em, Lau-da du--cem et pas--torem.
Praise, O Sion, Praise thy Savior, Shepherd, Prince, with glad behavior,

Quantum potes, tantum ad-de: Qui-a ma--jor om--ne lau-di,
Sing His glory without measure, For the merit of your treasure,



In hym-nis in can--ti--cis.
Praise in hymn and canticle.

Nec lauda---re suf--fi--cis.[3]
Never shall your praises fill.

The same motive but a fourth higher is seen in the double strophe Dogma datur and Quod non capis (e g a g c b a g--d c d c f e d c). Most of the strophes close with the formula ag fg g, and all of them close on the tonic. A closing on the dominant or on c is used for the individual verses. Toward the end of the sequence the closings on the dominant become more common.

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3. See Liber Usualis, Editione Vaticana, No. 801, pp. 945, 6, 7, 8, 9 for the melodies of the remaining stanzas which have been omitted because of the great length of this sequence.

The modes chosen for this outstanding melody are the Mixolydian and the Hypomixolydian modes. The Mixolydian mode has often been termed the "Angelic" mode--herein words and melody are certainly both celestial. Since it is believed that every mode reflects a certain "mood" according to the sentiment it arouses in the minds of the listeners we have here the varying beauties of both modes. Majesty, hopefulness, sonority and boldness are all reflected in this masterpiece of musical art. This sequence may be regarded as one having artistic value and charm; and as a chant melody it is classed among the best.

This poem consists of nine six-line stanzas, two of eight lines and one of ten. The eight- and ten-line stanzas are found near the close of the poem. The poetic form of the sequence is known as troachaic dimeter. An easy and natural rhythmic flow is felt throughout the entire poem.

Later composers have also used the Lauda Sion in their works. Among others we may here cite Palestrina who made two outstanding polyphonic settings of this sequence. Mendelssohn's Lauda Sion Cantata is considered his most beautiful. In 1846 this celebrated cantata was performed at Liège for the Feast of Corpus Christi; Mendelssohn himself was present. Karg-Elerts' six organ pieces, entitled Cathedral Windows, are based on fragments of Gregorian melodies set in a modern idiom. Number six of this set is the Lauda Sion.

An orchestral example of the use of the Lauda Sion, and one deserving of mention because of its musical value, is the so-called Symphony, Mathis der Maler, of Paul Hindemith (b.1895). For this composition, Hindemith took three predominantly orchestral passages from his opera of the same name. The three movements of the score are named after details of the Isenheim Altar painted by Mathias Grünewald (1460-1528), a German religious painter, whose real name was Mathis Gothart Nithart.

> The composer has woven into his score old folksongs, Gregorian Chants and Reformation lines, but he has fused these elements in a strongly personal way. The flavor is not merely antique; it is strong and modern, intense and full-blooded. The orchestration is masterly.[4]

In Mathis der Maler, as well as in some of the later compositions of Hindemith, a change of style is brought forward, his idiom grows softer, and there appears a clearly marked subjectivity and objectivity.[5]

Hindemith has chosen the key of D flat for both the first and third movements. Since the old melodies lie well within the range of that particular key, this may have been his reason for choosing it. The Gregorian melodies used in the first and third movements determine the melodic and harmonic tissue, thereby constituting the true germ cell of the music. It is in the third movement that the composer uses the Lauda Sion. This movement is entitled Temptation of Saint Anthony and is executed in a broad and bold manner. Toward the end of the movement the woodwinds sing the Lauda Sion theme, and then, fortissimo in the brass, the Hallelujah leads to a resplendent and triumphant close in D flat major.

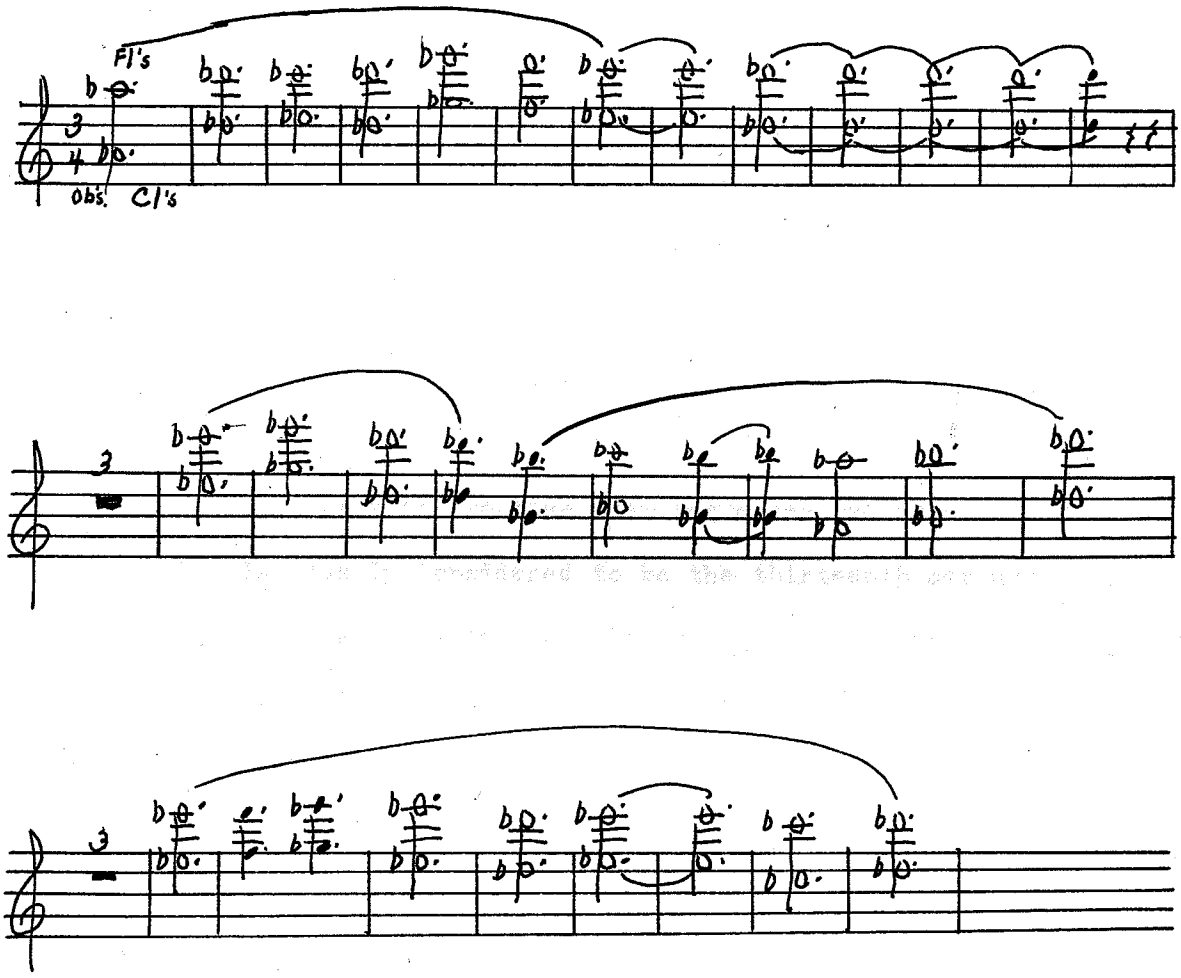
Hindemith uses the music of the entire first strophe of the Gregorian Lauda Sion with a few slight variations. The very first interval in the sequence is a minor third while the composer introduces his statement with a perfect fourth. The second verse remains intact but in the third Hindemith brings in two changes, inserting a G flat after the second note and a tied E flat after the fourth note of the verse.

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4. Victor Album - M. 854, Philadelphia Orchestra.

5. Demuth, Norman, Musical Trends in the Twentieth Century. P. 198.

Ex. 14 - Paul Hindemith's Mathis der Maler, third movement, Temptation of Saint Anthony.



CHAPTER V

STABAT MATER

The Stabat Mater, a beautiful poem in honor of the Sorrowful Mother, portrays a touching lyricism while at the same time the words and phrases are enveloped in love, peace, and simplicity which makes of them a wonderful elegy. The style of this tender poem is that of a well developed sequence and dates back to the time when sequences had attained their zenith, which is usually considered to be the thirteenth century. Although the poem uses extremely simple verse it is a poignant hymn which sings of the soul's purification when it shares in the sufferings of Our Lady. The mood of this magnificent sequence is portrayed in the following lines from the pen of Cardinal Marini.

> Poem of love, but of love which suffers and is not agitated, which grieves and is not despondent, which experiences guilt yet clings firmly to a loved one, which ought to be mute because of its immeasurable grief and which in prayer begins to sing; a love which in the mind reasons and in the heart sighs; a love which in the middle of sorrow rejoices; the supernatural joy of a sorrow divinized by the cross of the Godman.[1]

The Stabat Mater was most probably written by Blessed Brother Jacopone de Todi, Friar Minor (d.1302), a memorable man with a remarkable history, known as the greatest Franciscan poet of the thirteenth century. All writers seem to agree that the author was undoubtedly a Franciscan because the subject gives the key to all Franciscan literature; however, there are some because

1. Marini, Cardinal, L'Esthétique du Stabat. P. 152.

of cogent reasons, who point to St. Bonaventure (d.1274) as the probable author.

It seems to be the thought of most hymnologists that the Stabat Mater was originally written as a rhymed prayer for private devotions, and found favor with the populace as early as 1399. In our day the sequence has a two-fold purpose, having been officially sanctioned for general use in the Roman Breviary in 1727. As a hymn it may be used at various services, both in the Latin and the vernacular, and is appropriately used in most Catholic Churches during the devotion known as the Way of the Cross. When used as the liturgical hymn of the Office, the Stabat Mater is divided into three parts. The first ten stanzas comprise the hymn for Vespers; the hymn for Matins begins with the line Sancta Mater istud agas; and the hymn for Lauds continues with the verse Virgo virginum praeclara.

One could hardly begin to mention all the musical settings of this splendid poem, which fact seems to be a living testimony of its greatness. Although there are four well-known Gregorian settings of the hymn, in this thesis the authentic form found in the Liber Usualis, p.1634, will be used. Writers all seem to agree that the composer of this melody is Dom Jaussion (d.1870), monk of Solesmes, but there are different opinions as to its artistic worth. Dom Ludovic Baron, O.S.B. states that, "It is worthy of the text; calm, slightly shaded with sadness, all in half-tones, with the splendid accents of compassionate tenderness and fervent prayer, yet simple as a plaint."[2] In contrast to the above we have the following from Dom Dominic Johner, O.S.B.

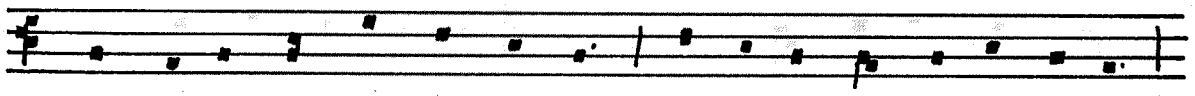
> It possesses a beauty all its own, but does not attain the artistic height of the text, the communicative warmth of its feelings, the delicate swelling and contraction of its mood,

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2. Baron, Dom Ludovic, O.S.B., L'Expression du chant grégorien, Vol. III, p. 222, 223.

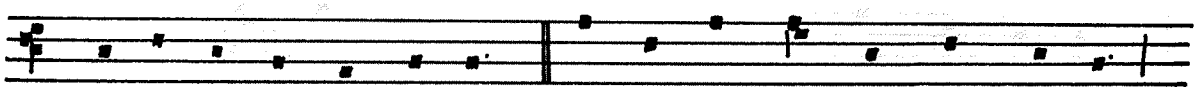
> and the pleasantness of its rhythm. The melody no doubt would have been enhanced had it followed the text more faithfully. The strophes show too little individualism, even though they avoid lengthy repetitions. [3]

Melodically the first major division, which covers the first four double strophes, surpasses that of the second. The fact that the text is divided into two major divisions and a short conclusion seems to have had no influence on the formation of the melody. As the melody proceeds in the first division there is an increase in the intervals (fifth, sixth, seventh, octave). Some of the intervals in this first division bring on a rather happy mood; the fifth, found at the beginning of the second double strophe, has this effect; likewise the c b flat a in the third double strophe.



Sta--bat Ma--ter do--lo--ro---sa, Jux-ta cru-cem la--cri-mo-sa,
There stood (the) Mother sorrowful, Beside (the) cross in tears,

Cu---jus a---ni--mam ge--men-tem, Con-tris-ta-tam et do-len-tem,
Whose soul sighing, Saddened and grieving,



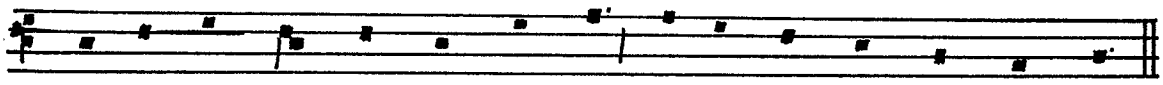
Dum pen-de-bat Fi--li-us. O quam tris-tis et af-flic-ta
While hanging (on it)was her Son. O how sad and afflicted [4]

Per tran-si-vit gla--di-us. Quae mae-re-bat et do--le-bat,
Was pierced (by the) sword. She was sorrowful and grieving,

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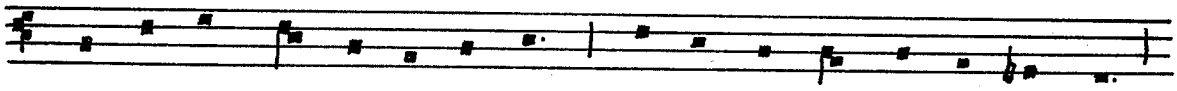
3. Baron, Dom Ludovic, O.S.B., op. cit., p. 439.

4. Literal translation of the Latin is here given as found in Chants of the Church by Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles E. Spence, p. 140. The same source has been used for all the sequences.



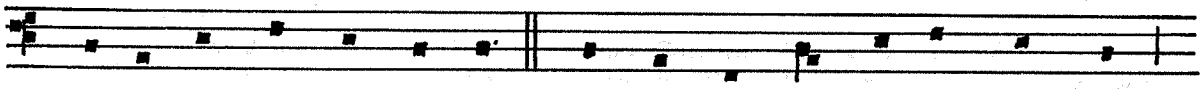
Fu--it il---la be--ne---dic-ta Ma--ter U---ni----ge---ni---ti.
Was that blessed Mother of the only begotten.

Pi--a Ma---ter, dum vi---de--bat Na--ti poe--nas in--cly----ti.
(The) tender Mother, while she saw Her Son's pains, (her) noble (Son).



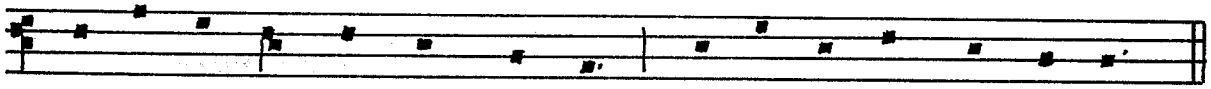
Quis est ho--mo qui non fleret, Matrem Christi si vi--de--ret
Who is (the) man who would not weep, (The) Mother of Christ if he saw

Quis non pos-set contris-ta--ri, Christi Ma--trem con-tem-pla---ri
Who (would) not be able to grieve with her, Christ's mother to contemplate



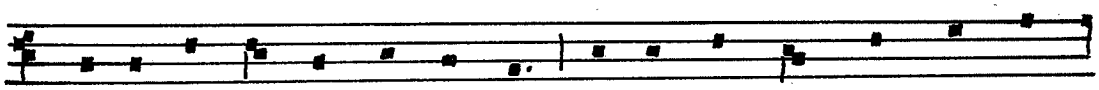
In tanto sup--pli--ci--o? Pro pec-ca--tis su-ae gen--tis
In such suffering? For (the) sins of His own nation

Do--len--tem cum Fi--li---o? Vi--dit su---um dul-cem na---tum
(As she was) grieving for her Son? She saw her own dear Child



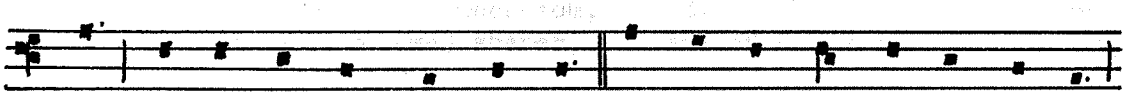
Vi--dit Je-sum in tor---men-tis, Et fla--gel-lis sub-di--tum.
She saw Jesus in torments, And by scourges beaten down.

Mo--ri--en-do de---so----la--tum, Dum e--mi--sit spi--ri--tum.
Dying and forsaken, While he breathed forth (His) Spirit.



E--ia Ma-ter, fons a-mo--ris, Me sen--ti--re vim do---lo-
Ah! (dear) Mother, fount of love, (Let) me feel (the) weight of sorrow

Fac ut ar--de at cor me--um In am--an---do Christum De-
Grant that fervent be (the) heart of me In loving Christ (my) God



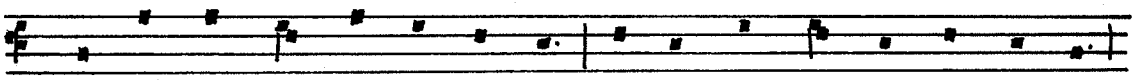
ris Fac, ut tecum lu---ge--am. Sancta Ma-ter, istud a-gas,
Grant that with thee I may weep. Holy Mother thid do (for me),

um, Ut si--bi com--pla--ce--am. Tui--i na---ti vulner--a---ti,
That to Him I may be pleasing. Of thy Son (so) wounded,



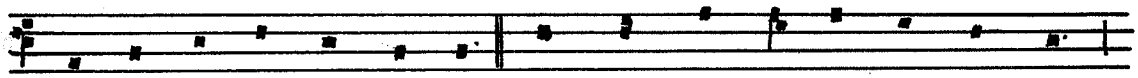
Cru--ci-fi-xi fi--ge pla-gas Cor-di--me---o va--li--de.
of the Crucified fix deep (the) wounds In the heart of me indelibly.

Tam digna--ti pro me pa--ti, Poe-nas me---cum di---vi--de.
So gracious (as) for me to suffer, His pains with me do thou divide.



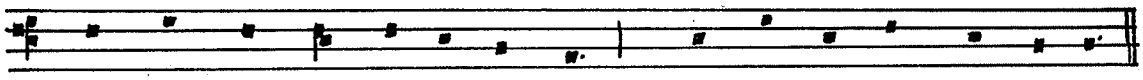
Fac me te--cum pi--e--fle--re, Cruci---fi--xo con-do--le--re,
Make me with thee lovingly to weep, With the Crucified to sympathize,

Jux-ta cru--cem te--cum stare, Et me ti--bi so---ci--a--re
Beside the cross with thee to stand, And myself with thee to join



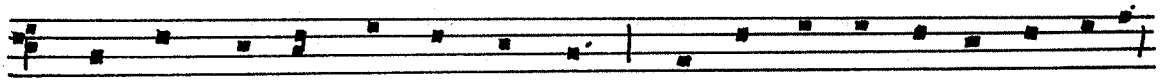
Do--nec e---go vi--xe--ro Vir--go vir--gi-num prae-cla--ra,
As long as I shall live. Virgin of virgins, noble Lady,

In planctu de--si--de--ro. Fac ut por--tem Christi mor-tem,
In sorrow I desire. Grant that I may bear Christ's death,



Mi---hi jam non sis a--ma--ra: Fac me te--cum plan--ge-re.
To me now (do) not be bitter: Make me with thee to mourn.

Pas--si---on--is fac consor-tem, Et pla-gas re---co--le-re.
Of His passion make (me) sharer, And of His wounds (a) worshipper.



Fac me pla-gis vul-ne--ra---ri, Fac me cru-ce i-ne--bri-a-ri,
Make me with His wounds to be wounded, Make me of His cross to be enamored,

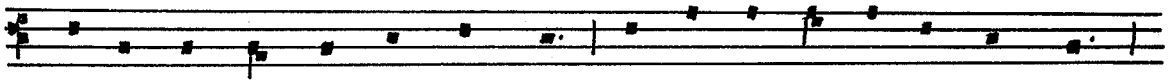
Flammis ne u--rar suc--cen-sus, Per te Vir-go, sim de-fensus
With flames lest I burn consumed, By thee, O Virgin, may I be defended



Et cru--o----re Fi---li---i.
And of the blood of thy Son.

In di---e ju---di---ci----i.
In (the) day of judgment.

The following two strophes may be considered the coda of the sequence. The largest interval used in this portion of the melody is the third.



Christe cum sit hinc ex--i----re, Da per Matrem me ve--ni---re
Christ, when it is time hence to depart, Grant (that) through (Thy) Mother I may come

Quando corpus mo--ri---e----tur, Fac ut a--ni---mae do-ne---tur
When (my) body shall die, Grant that to my soul be given



Ad pal-mam vic-to---ri--ae.
To (the) palm of victory.

Pa--ra--di-si glo--ri-a. A---men. Al-le---lu--ia.
Of Paradise (the) glory. Amen. Alleluia.

That this sequence is written in the second mode seems very fitting when one considers Adam of Fuld's poem on the modes, "The second so tender to grief," while Dominic Johner maintains that Mode II, "Forms melodies that are exceedingly agreeable."[5]

In the fifteenth century Josquin des Prés made the first elaborate setting of the Stabat Mater. Most worthy of mention is the polyphonic Stabat Mater of Palestrina which is still performed annually in the Sistine Chapel, and which was later arranged by Wagner for double chorus. Who could forget the admirable work of Pergolesi? It was after the latter's style that Haydn composed his Stabat Mater reflecting in it his own character traits of joy and hope. Among the eighteenth and nineteenth century church music is Rossini's distinguished setting of the sequence

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5. Klarmann, Rev. Andrew F., Gregorian Chant. P. 85.

which opens with an elaborate orchestral prelude; Verdi's composition which is more religious in character than Rossini's; later, Antonin Dvorak's religious setting of the poem, considered by some to be the greatest. César Franck also introduces the theme of the sequence in his masterwork, The Beatitudes. A significant contribution to contemporary music is the Stabat Mater of Szymanowski which is arranged for solos, mixed chorus and orchestra.

For an example of twentieth century instrumental music we turn again to Paul Creston's Third Symphony, this time to the second movement, The Crucifixion, in which the composer uses the authentic Gregorian sequence. This movement opens with a Gregorian melody, played adagio, on solo 'cello against a brass accompaniment. This melody is transformed into a theme for the 'cellos, passacaglia-like in character, against which is set the fragments of the Stabat Mater. Shortly hereafter the English horn introduces the first verse of the sequence, ending its phrase, however, with two additional notes.

Ex. 15 - Paul Creston's Third Symphony, second movement, The Crucifixion.



The following example shows the theme in the first, second and third horns in F with a repetition of the second phrase of this particular passage.

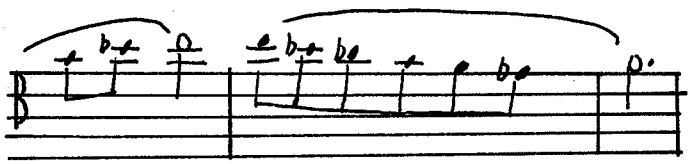
Ex. 16 - Paul Creston's Third Symphony, second movement, The Crucifixion.



After this portion of the movement, which is calm and spiritual in character, follows a brief section of great agitation, but very soon there is a restatement of the two subjects. At the return of the slow tempo the bassoon gives out the music for the first and second double strophes in its entirety, with no change whatsoever, except in its rhythmic setting.

Ex. 17 - Paul Creston's Third Symphony, second movement, The Crucifixion.





In another portion of the movement the first violins have the thematic material. Here is heard the first verse of the strophe again, however, this time the composer sees fit to have the instrument play it four times in succession.

Ex. 18 - Paul Creston's Third Symphony, second movement, The Crucifixion.



This spiritual and impressive movement comes to a close with two solo violins, muted, playing again the opening theme of the sequence and completed by using the music found in the last verse of the double strophe.

Ex. 19 - Paul Creston's Third Symphony, second movement, The Crucifixion.



That Paul Creston chose the Stabat Mater as a theme for the second movement of his symphony, The Crucifixion, seems most pertinent, since one can hardly picture the crucifixion of the Son without bringing to mind the Mother standing beneath, sharing in the pain of her Child.

The following words from the composer himself may give us the answer as to why he uses the Gregorian Melodies.

> There is no such thing as an innovator in music--in any of the arts for that matter. The things that we create today are built upon the beginnings of many yesterdays. The work of Bach himself evolved from patterns that men before him had set down. In short, I believe in evolution--not revolution.[6]

> Vincent d'Indy in commenting on the study of these medieval melodies, says that 'they will have a beneficial effect on a composer; it will enrich him with a melodic freedom which he could not otherwise acquire.'[7]

The writer would like to close this chapter with a quotation received from the composer in a personal letter of June 7, 1955.

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6. Goss, Madeleine, Modern Music Maker. P. 377.

7. Cecile, Sister Marie, Art Forms. P. 14.

I have used the two sequences (Stabat Mater and Victimae Paschali Laudes) only in my Third Symphony. My Chant of 1942 has no reference to Plain Chant, and I have not used any Gregorian themes in my Threnody. This last merely contains sections with a chantlike feeling.

I have used Gregorian themes in other works, but they are not sequences; for example, Adoro te devote in my Mass of the same title, and, of course, as you know, I have used at least two Gregorian themes in each movement of my Third Symphony.[8]

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8. Creston, Paul, Letter, June 7, 1955.

CHAPTER VI

DIES IRAE

The "DIES IRAE" (the day of wrath) has been termed the most majestic of all sequences and an outstanding masterpiece of Latin sacred poetry. Considered as the greatest judgment hymn ever written, its leading motif has been used and abused by innumerable composers. It would seem that no hymn or poem has ever been the subject of so much comment and praise as the Dies Irae. "Among poetic gems," Dr. Coles says, "it is the diamond."[1] The following lines portray the theme used in this sublime poem:

> The day of wrath, that dreadful day
> When heaven and earth shall pass away.[2]

Various authors have been credited with the writing of this excellent sequence. Father Clemens Blume, in his colossal work on hymnology, mentions not less than ten possible authors. However, today after much research most scholars agree that the Dies Irae was written by St. Thomas of Celano (d.1256) the friend and biographer of St. Francis of Assisi.

As early as 1285, the Dies Irae was used as a sequence of the Requiem Mass. We may safely conclude that the sequence in question was not originally intended to be a sequence because these were originally written to be sung after the Alleluia in the Mass. Father Blume expresses the opinion

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1. Jungers, Sister Mary Bernice, O.S.F., op. cit., p. 78.
2. Johner, Dom Dominic, op. cit., p. 477.

that the Dies Irae, like the Stabat Mater, was originally written as a rhymed prayer for private devotions.[3] The power and beauty of this judgment hymn seems to have led the Church to find a place for it as a sequence without necessarily following the Alleluia. Duffield says that "The Dies Irae was not written to fill a place, but when written it made a place for itself."[4]

Of the three known texts of the Dies Irae--the Missal text, the Mantuan text, and the Haemmerlein text--the first is the authentic form of St. Thomas of Celano. This consists of seventeen triple rhymed stanzas. The meter of this lyric is trochaic dimeter, creating a feeling of dignity and grandeur. This stateliness of effect is increased by the predominance of long rolling vowels and the ternary rhyme. In each of the first three parts we note that the double strophes have the same melody but in each instance the text will give the cue for the rendition. No sharp contrasts, however, are to be introduced.

The melody of the Dies Irae is in a mixed mode - the Dorian and Hypodorian - and its compass extends over practically the whole range of the combined scale of these modes, from A to the tenth above, C. The eight notes that make up the melody for the first four words occur no less than twelve times throughout the sequence. In the versicle of the "Libera" (Responsory sung after the Mass) we find the exact pattern of this short figure, Dies Illa, Dies Irae, which is considerably older than the Dies Irae. That this portion of the melody found in the sequence is derived directly from the Libera is affirmed by commentators. The text and the melody of the Dies Irae and the Libera are inseparably united in thought; there also "judicare" finds an echo in "tuba mirum spargens."

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3. Analecta Hymnica, Vol. 54, p. 274.

4. Duffield, S. W., Latin Hymn-Writers and Their Hymns. P. 274

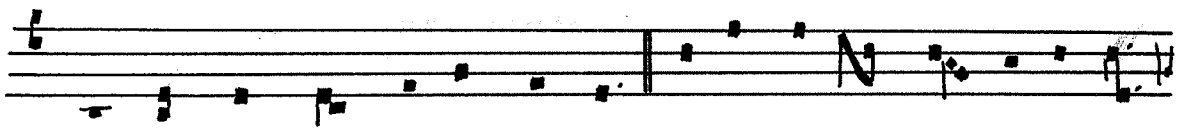
Before the Dies Irae was made a formal element in the Requiem Mass it was sung after the Mass for the Dead, serving as a trope to the Libera, as the procession made its way from the church to the cemetery; then it became a sequence. The melody in the Vatican Gradual can be traced back to the end of the tenth century. In some places it was sung in Advent as a preparation for the coming of the universal Judge.

In the first part of the Dies Irae, strophes 1-6, the poet gives a striking picture of the last judgment. This vivid portrayal of the end of the world grips one's very being.

> "With those solemn words Dies Irae, dies illa, the poet, as it were, draws aside the curtain revealing for many the most tragic and for all the most awe-inspiring scene within the limits of human experience. It is the last and final scene--the climax--in the great drama of life. How appalling to all! Yet--what to those who failed to play well their parts and who now realize too late that their lines cannot again be spoken."[5]



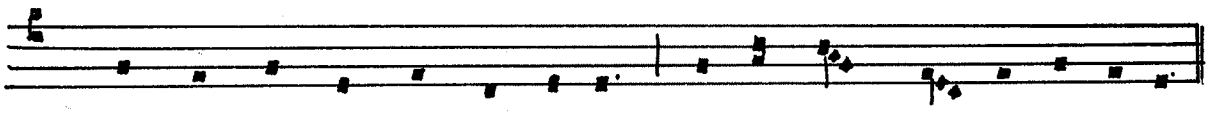
Di---es i--rae, di---es il--la, Sol-vet sae--clum in fa-vil-la:
(The) day of wrath, (the) day renowned, Shall destroy (the) earth in ashes
Quan-tus tremor est fu--tu-rus, Quando ju--dex est ven-tu--rus,
What trembling (there) is going to be, When (the) judge is about-to-come.



Tes--te Da--vid cum Si--byl-la. Tu-ba mi-rum spar-gens so-num
(So) testified David with (the) Sibyl. (The) trumpet wondrously spreading (its) sound
Cunc-ta stric-te dis-cus--surus! Mors stupebit et natu--ra,
All things strictly to examine! Death will be stunned and nature (too),

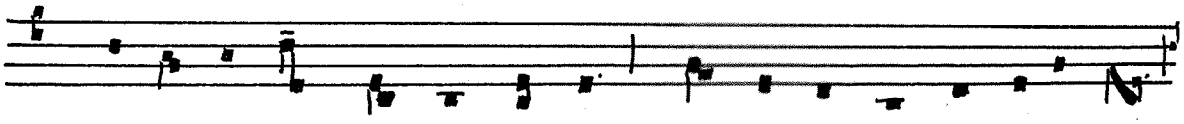
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5. Jungers, Sister Mary Bernice, O.S.F., op. cit., p. 14.



Per se--pul--cra re---gi--o-num, Co-get om---nes an--te thronum.
Through (the) tombs of earth Shall gather all before (the) throne.

Cum re--sur-get cre--a--tu-ra, Ju--di-can-----ti re-sponsu--ra.
When arises (all) creation, To the Judge to make answer.



Li-ber scrip-tus pro--fe---re--tur, In quo to--tum con-ti-ne-tur,
(The) book written (by Him) will be brought forth In which every thing is contained,

Ju-dex er--go cum se---de--bit, Quid-quid la-tet ap--pe--re-bit:
(The) Judge therefore when He is seated, Whatever is hidden shall make clear:

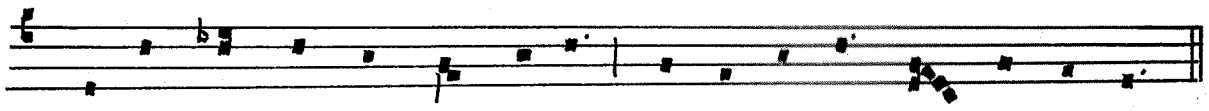


Un--de mun-dus ju---di ce-tur.
By which (the) world is to be judged.

Nil in ul--tum re--man---e-bit.
Nothing unpunished shall remain.

A consciousness of guilt rises before the mind after one considers the terrific drama enacted at the end of the world. So in the second and third parts (strophes 7-17) the soul turns to prayer, hoping to receive pardon through the redemption of Christ. In the third part the fact that even a Mary Magdalene and a thief on the cross were pardoned brings consolation to the repentent soul. Thereupon a suppliant prayer "Oro supplex et acclinis," ascends on high begging to be among the number of those who will stand at the right hand of the Judge. The melodies in parts two and three are a repetition of those found in part one, consequently there is no need of inserting them here.

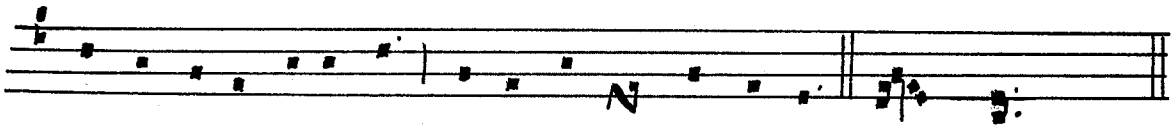
In the fourth part the verse structure and the melody change. These six lines were added after the Church made the Dies Irae a formal element in its Requiem Mass, which occurred as early as 1285. The second half of the first and second verses has the same melody. A marvelous effect is produced at the "Judicandus." The subsequent "huic ergo" when sung more softly gives added effect. Then follows the "Pie Jesu" which, when sung with utmost devotion, makes a fitting close to this outstanding sequence.



Lac-ri--mo---sa di--es il-la, Qua re--sur-get ex fa--vil-la
Full of tear (that) day (so) dread, When there shall arise from ashes



Ju--di---can--dus ho---mo re-us: Hu--ic er-go par--ce De-us.
To the judgment man (the) guilty: Him therefore spare O God.



Pi---e Je-su Do-mi-ni, do-na e--is re-quiem. A-----men.
Tender Jesus (Our)Lord, grant to them (Thy) rest. Amen.

The Sacred Congregation of Rites by a General Decree issued new regulations, on March 23, 1955, concerning the recitation of the Divine Office and the use of the Roman Missal for the purpose of simplifying the great complexity of the rubrics. In this Decree we find the following regulations in regard to the use of the Dies Irae.

> The "Dies Irae" can be omitted always except in the Mass on the day of death or the funeral Mass when the body is present or when there is a reasonable cause for the absence of the corpse, and on All Souls' Day. On All Souls' Day the sequence, "Dies Irae" should be said only once and that in the principal Mass or otherwise in the first Mass.[6]

It can readily be seen from the number of examples herewith quoted that of all the five sequences, the melody of the Dies Irae has been the most frequently borrowed. As stated in the beginning of this chapter this melody has been used and abused; composers have utilized it in different ways. In the first place, it is normally an integral part of their settings of the Requiem Mass. It has been very difficult for composers of orchestral settings of this sequence not to accept the invitation for dramatic effect extended by the text, and so we see among many others, Mozart's trombone obbligato of the "Tuba mirum"; Berlioz' four brass bands; Verdi's

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6. Schmitz, Walter J., "The New Regulations Concerning Divine Office and Holy Mass," Emmanuel, Vol. LXI, No. 6 (June, 1955), p. 247.

trumpets off stage answering those in the orchestra; Pizzetti, who keeps the plainsong and adds "Oh" vocalized. It may be pertinent to insert here the following quotation:

> These Masses for the dead like the Masses of Haydn, Mozart, Bach, Beethoven, Weber, Cherubini, and Gounod are specimens of musical art, but thoroughly lacking the qualities of good church music. It is evident that sacred music of this type can be used for concert purposes and thus serve as the most elevated form of entertainment. In regard to church music it is important to remember that something more than a sacred text is required. Beethoven once said: "To compose true church music we must consult the old chants of the monasteries."[7]

Examples of all Requiem Masses have been eliminated in this thesis because it is generally understood that the Dies Irae is included in such compositions.

Secondly, the Dies Irae has been used by composers, especially those of the nineteenth century, when an element of the supernatural, the fantastic and the macabre was sought for in their music. It is a rare occurrence to find a work written during the Romantic Period in which the composer used the Dies Irae to enhance the solemnity of the occasion. Instead of using the sequence in the light of hope and absolution it was more often used as an aspect of terror and dread.

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

As a secular and non-liturgical use of the theme of Dies Irae the Fantastic Symphony in C major of Hector Berlioz is perhaps the most outstanding. In the fifth movement of this work, entitled, The Dream of a Witches' Sabbath, the composer brings to the fore the Romanticists' idea of the fantastic, the weird, and the supernatural by using the Dies Irae theme. It is evident that Berlioz' aim was to effect a parody ("Parodie burlesque du Dies Irae," as he called it), and therefore, one could not expect to find here any traces of pure modal setting. His purpose

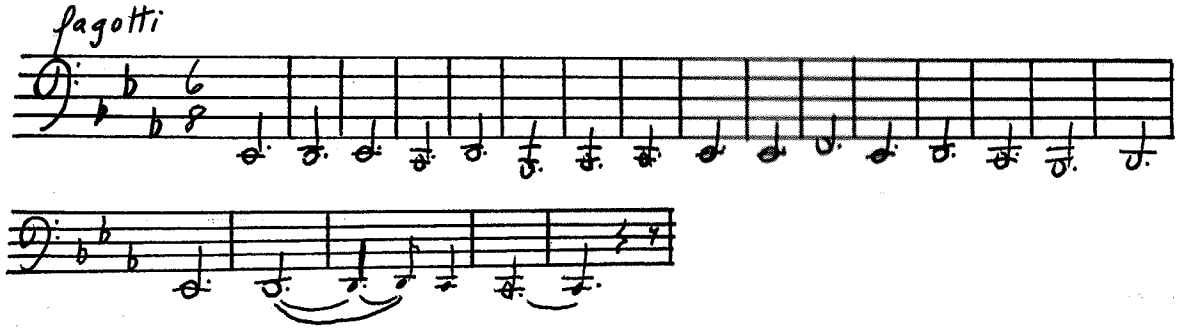
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7. Jungers, Sister Mary Bernice, O.S.F., op. cit., p. 91.

for using the melody was to heighten the drama and to bring forth his colorful musical ideas. Respect or feeling for the liturgy was not apparent in Berlioz simply because of his lack of understanding in regard to matters spiritual. While his Requiem Mass is certainly a work of genius he saw in it only a great opportunity for the creation of dramatic pictures. It is a composition entirely outside the bonds of Church Music.

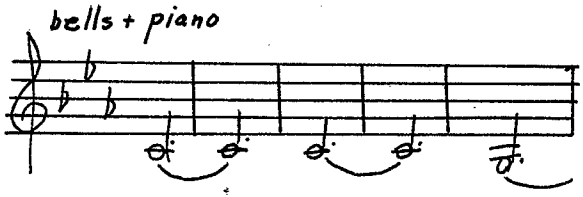
The fagotti and the trombones state the Dies Irae theme in The Dream of a Witches' Sabbath. The first two verses of the first strophe are used. Each note is augmented and placed in a 3/4 setting, but every note complies with the Gregorian model except the one note which the composer adds in the second to the last measure, probably in anticipation.

Ex. 20 - Hector Berlioz' Fantastic Symphony, fifth movement, The Dream of a Witches' Sabbath.



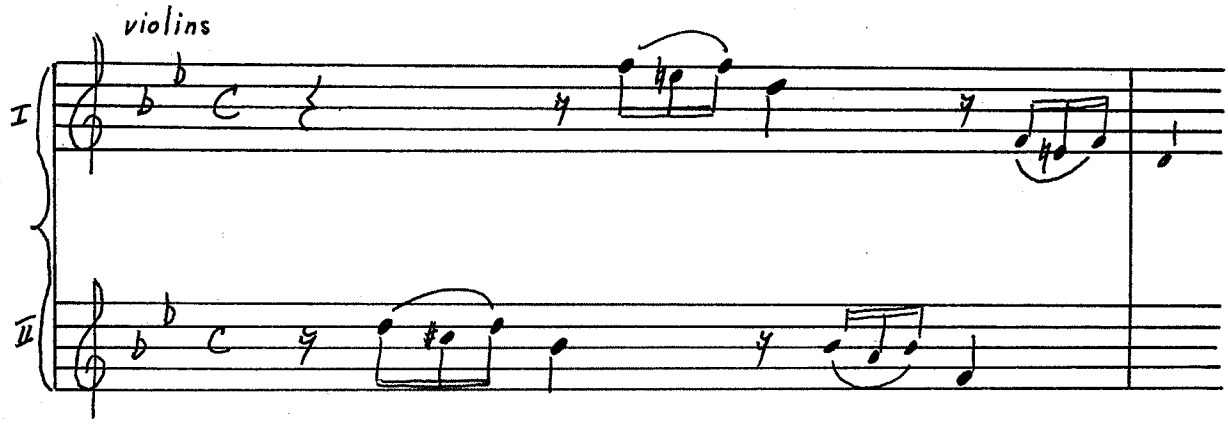
At the eighth measure of the cantus firmus the bells and pianoforte enter with a somewhat caricatured appearance, playing the two notes also used at the four-measure introduction to the cantus firmus.

Ex. 21 - Hector Berlioz' Fantastic Symphony, fifth movement, The Dream of a Witches' Sabbath.



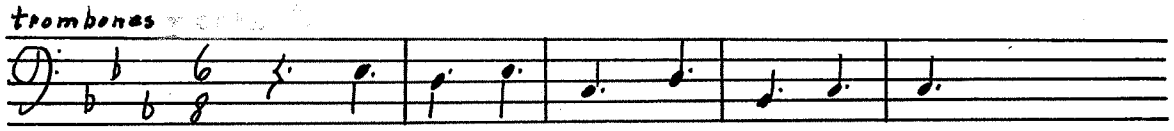
(In the March to the Scaffold, fourth movement, there is also a caricatured appearance of the Dies Irae.)

Ex. 22 - Hector Berlioz' Fantastic Symphony, fourth movement, March to the Scaffold.



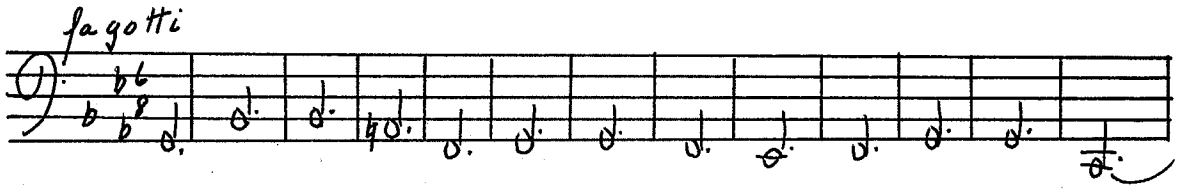
Played by the trombones and cornets the cantus firmus then assumes this rhythm in The Dream of a Witches' Sabbath.

Ex. 23 - Hector Berlioz' Fantastic Symphony, fifth movement, The Dream of a Witches' Sabbath.



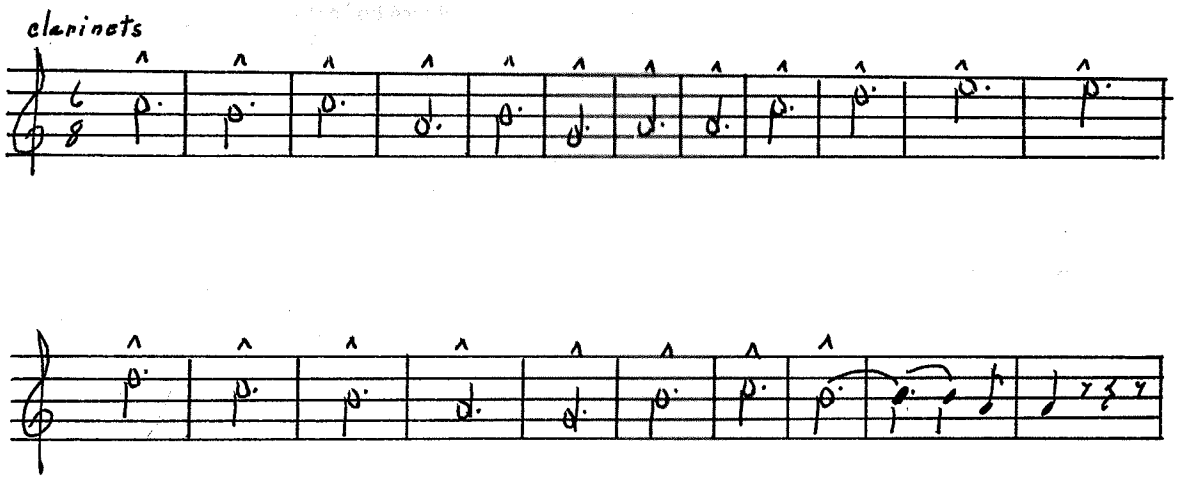
After several measures in which the theme is played by the violins and other instruments, another part of the liturgical melody, the "Tuba mirum spargens sonum," is played by the trombones and fagotti.

Ex. 24 - Hector Berlioz' Fantastic Symphony, fifth movement, The Dream of a Witches' Sabbath.



This section of the theme is played by various instrumental groups and then re-enters in the portion of the Symphony which Berlioz calls Ronde du Sabbat. Two other verses of the Gregorian melody (Per sepulcra regionum, Coget omnes ante thronum) are used here with a change of key. The melody is reinforced and assumes clamorous and bombastic proportions, further emphasized by fast runs in the violin section.

Ex. 25 - Hector Berlioz' Fantastic Symphony, fifth movement, The Dream of a Witches' Sabbath.



Worthy of the symphony is its finale. It was a notable achievement on the part of the composer to avoid an anti-climax after the power and drive of the fourth movement, but in its conception and the excellence of

its orchestration the fifth movement was big enough to surpass it. Paul Henry Lang has this to say concerning the last two movements:

> The "Witches' Sabbath" and the "March to the Gallows" in the Symphonie Fantastique, "Queen Mab" in Romeo et Juliette, and most of the Damnation of Faust present something really new, sonority; sonority for its own sake; sonority which engenders ideas. The violence of his mental experiences was such in these compositions that he was able to invest insignificant melodic inventions with breath-taking intensity, His orchestra seizes one with a color that is never static but always dynamic, bent on moving the listener and carrying him away.[8]

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

This composer's entire conception and philosophy of music was based on definite and firm ideas which were to make a particular effect on future composers in the field of harmony, orchestration, and construction. He was not educated in the German school of aesthetics; his art was a combination of the best qualities of the French school combined with his own extraordinary musicianship. That his association with Berlioz had a bearing on his style is not to be doubted. Their reactions, however, were different in many aspects although they were both affected by the religious movement of the Romantic period. Liszt created an ars sacra of an entirely modern and distinct stamp. These at times went beyond the sphere of liturgical expression due to his powerful emotional pressure; however, he is considered to be the first to revive the ancient practice of constructing religious works on chants of the liturgy. Liszt's interest in modal music, although it never became a major one, is of great significance in the development of the modal revival, even though composers of his day were very slow to follow this practice which had been obsolete since the sixteenth

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8. Láng, Paul Henry, Music in Western Civilization. P. 861.

century. A keen sense of Gregorian aesthetics is evident in Liszt's harmonizations. The first part of the oratorio, Christus, proves this point.

In using the Dies Irae theme as the basis for his Totentanz, a work inspired by the Triumph of Death fresco in the Campo Santo at Pisa, Liszt did not strive for the same effect that he obtained in his oratorios by the use of liturgical themes. He merely intended this theme to serve as a solid basis around which he would weave a technical network of variations. Throughout this set of variations for piano and orchestra the melody assumes the nature of a paraphrase on the first two verses of the first strophe of the sequence, serving as a cantus firmus. It will be noted in the example that Liszt sets the melody in a 4/4 rhythmic setting whilst that of Berlioz was in a 6/8 meter. In the beginning of the composition, the Andante, the clarinets in A, bassoons, tenor trombones and tubas plus violas, 'cellos, and double-basses sing the theme.

Ex. 26 - Liszt's Totentanz, Theme.



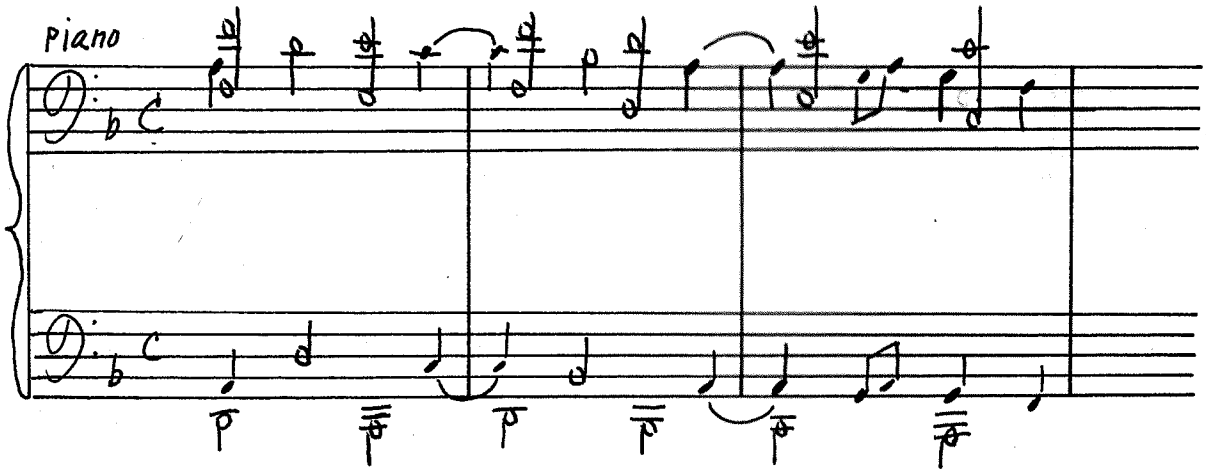
He also uses a portion of the melody which Berlioz did not use, although it is used far less frequently than the first portion. This melody, "Cuncta stricte discussurus", is heard for the first time in the bassoons, bass trombone, tubas and double-basses and later joined by the horns.

Ex. 27 - Liszt's Totentanz, Theme.



When the piano enters the melody is played thus:

Ex. 28 - Liszt's Totentanz, Variation I.

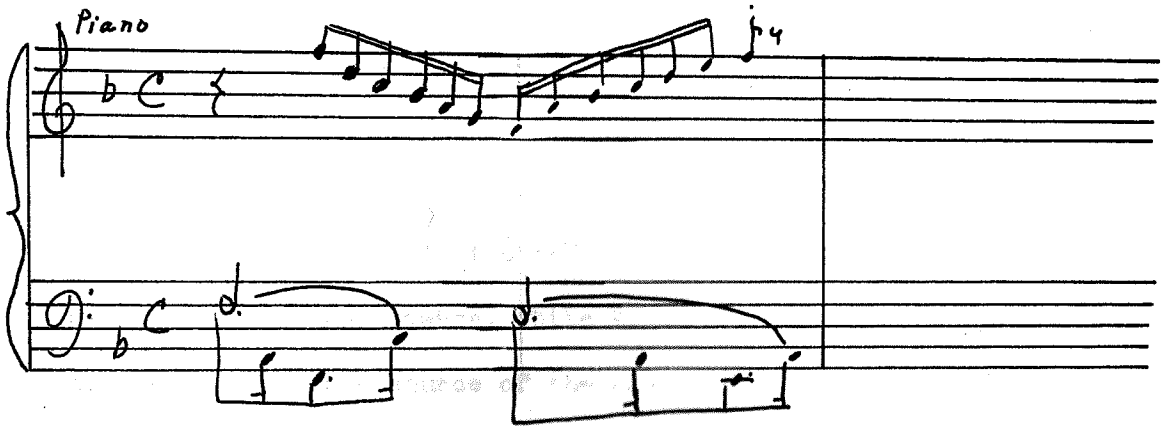


Here the harmonic background is very suitable to the Gregorian theme, but there soon follows a series of elaborate variations in which the piano

has the theme in the bass coupled with brilliant runs in the right hand. The effect is striking.

Note how the cantus firmus melody retains its rhythmic structure.

Ex. 29 - Liszt's Totentanz, Variation II.



Liszt rarely changes the rhythmic structure or meter of the theme. Here is a rare exception; it is played by the bassoons in short staccato notes which further emphasize its rhythmic peculiarity. The triple meter contributes to this peculiar effect.

Ex. 30 - Liszt's Totentanz, Variation II.



Note the quiet atmosphere of the following variation where the theme is treated in stretto imitation.

Ex. 31 - Liszt's Totentanz, Variation IV.



Variation V brings in the theme in fugato style; it is a rather savage affair ending with a cadenza, while Variation VI contains numerous cadenzas. Every macabre resource of the piano is exploited. Thus in these variations is found the utmost variety in thematic presentation. Here is found a brilliant representation of the diabolical aspect of Liszt's creativeness which is more prominent, on the whole, than the religious. It is this side of his personality which produced the Mephisto movement of the Faust Symphony and the Malediction for piano and string orchestra.

The Dante Symphony, Liszt's second, is composed of two movements with the titles Inferno and Purgatorio. This work was first performed in Dresden, November 7, 1857, and is dedicated to Richard Wagner. In the first movement the composer tends to create a whirling tumult by all sorts of horrible cries, tones of anger, high and hoarse voices. The trombones and tubas introduce a musical picture of the gates of Hell. To help suggest the violence of the picture the mood of the Dies Irae is brought to the fore. In contrast to his Totentanz, Liszt does not use the theme of the Dies Irae to any great extent. To the writer's knowledge only fragments of the sequence are used; in other words, it is merely hinted at. In the following example, which is found in the second violins, the auxiliary figure composed of the first three notes of the liturgical

composition is used. This same pattern is also found in the clarinets.

Ex. 32 - Liszt's Dante Symphony, first movement, Inferno.



Later the flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons have a similar passage.

Ex. 33 - Liszt's Dante Symphony, first movement, Inferno.



Falling minor thirds, so characteristic of the Dies Irae, are seen in the example played by the second violins, and an octave higher by the first violins.

Ex. 34 - Liszt's Dante Symphony, first movement, Inferno.



Again, Liszt seems to have no other reason in mind for the use of this liturgical melody than to induce a lugubrius mood, fittingly portraying the scenes in the Inferno as described by Dante.

Modeste Moussorgsky (1839-1881)

The influence of Liszt's Totentanz is seen in Modeste Moussorgsky's compositions, especially in his Trepak, one of the group of songs entitled Songs and Dances of Death. Here again the Dies Irae is never quoted in full but pervades the song and the orchestral accompaniment in the form of short motives and figures, obviously to create an atmosphere of foreboding and fear. The poet tells of a drunken peasant who has lost his way in a snowstorm. Death whirls him into a breathless Trepak until he sinks exhausted into his last sleep. Critics have pointed out that Moussorgsky's characteristic pattern is a succession of two falling thirds, and also, that the Dies Irae was one of his favorite melodies; therefore, it may not be out of place to conjecture that this pattern became a part of his unconscious thinking.

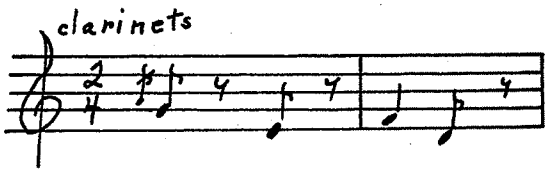
The violoncellos and the contrabasses sing out the first four notes of the Dies Irae at the very beginning of the composition in a sequential repetition.

Ex. 35 - Modeste Moussorgsky's Songs and Dances of Death.



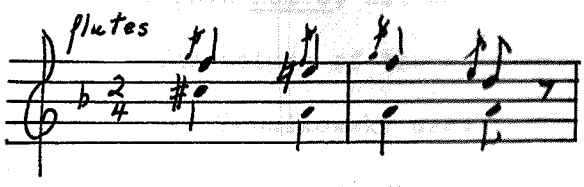
Note the broken thirds played by the clarinets in the example which follows:

Ex. 36 - Modeste Moussorgsky's Songs and Dances of Death.



In the poco meno mosso the flute takes its turn in producing the four notes of the Dies Irae.

Ex. 37 - Modeste Moussorgsky's Songs and Dances of Death.



Peter Ilyich Tschaikowsky (1840-1893)

Many critics consider this composer's music consistently melancholy. This statement is to be questioned since he expressed a great variety of emotions. Tschaikowsky was outstanding in his melodic writing, and he was also a master of orchestration. It is true, however, that he did make use of the Dies Irae in several of his works. It is seen hidden in the trumpets at the climax of one of his best, most popular and earliest works, The Romeo and Juliet Fantasie Overture. Balakireff, who headed the Russian Five, suggested that Tschaikowsky write this particular work. It was completed in 1869, but was later twice revised. The following short

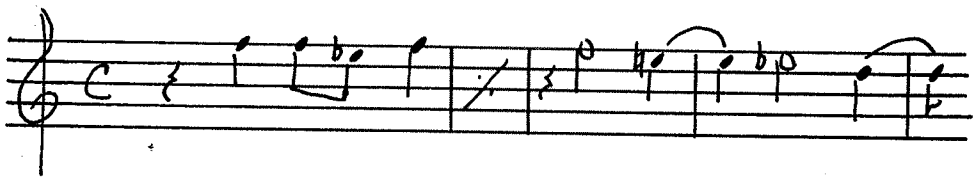
passage contains the first six notes of the "Day of Wrath", probably foreshadowing the death of the lovers.

Ex. 38 - Peter Ilyich Tschaikowsky's Romeo and Juliet Fantasie Overture.



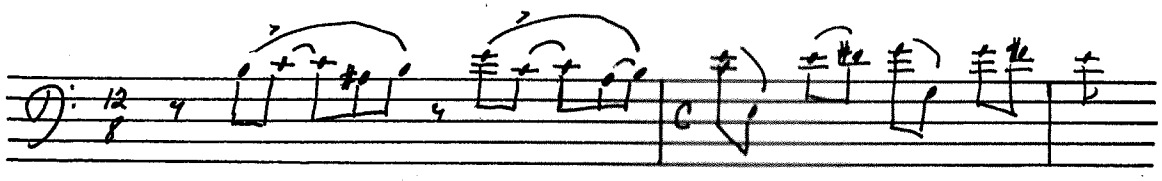
Tschaikowsky's tone poem, Francesca da Rimini, written in 1876 and sometimes called a symphonic fantasy, was inspired by Dante's Inferno. Critics are of the opinion that this fine piece of program music surpasses the above mentioned Romeo, not only in maturity of conception but also in imagination. The nature of the work has most likely had some bearing on the supposition that Tschaikowsky used the Dies Irae theme as the basis of some of the thematic material since the tone poem begins with a description of Hell and symbolizes Dante's coming into the second circle of the abyss. From this and the following examples it may be inferred that the sequence has an implied use. In the introduction, Andante lugubre, the first measure uses the three note pattern often heard in connection with the Dies Irae, although here we have a whole step instead of the authentic half step at the beginning of the liturgical melody.

Ex. 39 - Peter Ilyich Tschaikowsky's Francesca da Rimini, Introduction.



Earle V. Moore says of the second theme, "Short motives moving in semitones and crossing each other in contrary motion suggest the punishment of carnal sinners who are tossed about in the dark."[9]

Ex. 40 - Peter Ilyich Tschaikowsky's Francesca da Rimini, Introduction.



The following short extracts all portray the almost constant use of the semitone which is also a characteristic found in the sequence.

Ex. 41 - Peter Ilyich Tschaikowsky's Francesca da Rimini, Subordinate Theme.



It must be admitted that the last two examples are scarcely convincing proof of the use of the Dies Irae in this particular work.

The last movement of Tschaikowsky's Suite No. 3 in G (Op. 55) ends with a group of variations, in the fourth of which he again introduces the Dies Irae. Because of the beautiful music contained in this set of variations, they are often performed separately from the remainder of the Suite. The sequence makes its initial appearance in the following extract.

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9. Moore, Earle V., The Symphony and the Symphonic Poem, P. 234.

The three examples cited from Francesca da Rimini are from this same source.

Ex. 42 - Peter Ilyich Tschaikowsky's Suite in G, Finale, fourth variation.



Later the music covering the first two verses of the sequence ("Dies Irae, dies illa, solvet saeclum in favilla") is sung by the trombones. Robin Gregory has this to say concerning the above composition:

> Tschaikowsky, for example, in the fourth variation in the Finale of his Suite in G, interpolates a phrase as a strident interruption for brass, which is quite out of place in this innocuous and straightforward movement. The composer may have had some reason for the outburst, but none is apparent.[10]

Ex. 43 - Peter Ilyich Tschaikowsky's Suite in G, Finale, fourth variation.



That Tschaikowsky had the intervals of the Dies Irae in mind when writing this Suite in G may be implied by the following figures found in the other movements of the composition. In the first movement, Elegie, we see different instruments engaged in playing the familiar auxiliary figure formed by the first three notes of the Dies Irae.

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10. Gregory, Robin, "Dies Irae", Music and Letters, p. 135.

Ex. 44 - Peter Ilyich Tschaikowsky's Suite in G, first movement, Elegie.



In the second movement, Valse mélancolique, the accompaniment figure is composed of the auxiliary pattern and is used consistently by the composer for a considerable length of time, first in the lower register of the violoncello and later in the octave and back again.

Ex. 45 - Peter Ilyich Tschaikowsky's Suite in G, second movement, Valse mélancolique.



Historians and critics have referred to the choral melody played by the trombones in the Sixth Symphony of Tschaikowsky as being a fragment of the Russian Requiem, even by some as the Dies Irae. This may have come

about because of the likeness of the first three tones to the authentic Dies Irae of the Latin Rite. After considerable research and kind help from scholars and teachers in the field of Slavic languages, the following valuable and reliable information has been gleaned. The motive Tschaikowsky used in his Sixth Symphony is from the Russian Orthodox Requiem called Panakhida and the part chosen is the Sviatymi Upokoy, the lyric-elegiac part of the Panakhida which corresponds to the Latin text Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine, in contrast to the Dies Irae which is the most dramatic part of the Russian Requiem. A point in favor of the above, and which might be stated here, is that the composer is said to have practiced the Russian Orthodox Religion.

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Although Brahms was reluctant to admit during his life-time that he built the main theme of his sixth Intermezzo on the Dies Irae, it is referred to by many as the Dies Irae Intermezzo.

The theme quoted below pervades the entire composition which is known to be one of Brahms' most valued. A certain mysticism seems to pervade his last three piano works; among these are the Intermezzi, Op. 118. In these compositions the polyphonic style is carried to its limits, although great transparency and clearness of outline are preserved. One detects in all these later works the characteristics of this master; the wide spacing of parts, the rhythmic complexities, the use of chords formed from the octave and the sixth, and the customary lack of passage-work. Shortly after the introduction of the theme, it is heard again in the right hand, an octave lower; some time later the two hands have the theme simultaneously, pianissimo. The composition continues in this manner and is a most valuable and characteristic contribution to the literature of the piano.

Ex. 46 - Johannes Brahms' Intermezzi, Op. 118, No. 6.



Brahms is known as the defender of absolute music against the onslaught of the promoters of program music, Berlioz, Liszt and Wagner. His compositions afford us an example of the successful combination of the classic and the romantic elements in the work of one man. Brahms' music will live because it plumbs the depths of what is noble and enduring in human sentiment.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

The nineteenth century, with its fondness for the picturesque and the supernatural, was especially partial to the theme that Saint-Saëns handled so graphically in his celebrated tone poem, Danse Macabre. This composition, written in 1874, with its grotesque humor and morbid horror, is on a lower plane than any of the works so far mentioned; nevertheless, its vigorous rhythm and brilliant instrumental color have made it the most popular of the composer's tone poems. The work is in three sections: Midnight, Death tunes his violin -- the Dance of Death -- Daylight, cockcrow.

In the Dance of Death, measure 174, the Dies Irae is brought in by the woodwinds and harps in A major over a pedal point on E. At first it is heard in a distorted fashion, the composer having utilized such intervals as a whole step instead of a half, major third instead of minor, etc. At the third beat of the eighth measure the exact tune of the liturgical melody appears composed of the first fourteen notes of the sequence. Saint-Saëns may have had a special reason for introducing the melody in a distorted

manner just as in the beginning of this work where the grisly fiddler tunes his instrument -- off pitch. The flutes joined by oboes, clarinets, bassoons and harp announce this theme.

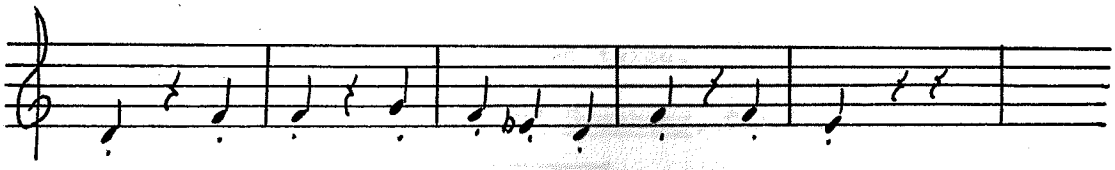
Ex. 47 - Camille Saint-Saëns' Danse Macabre, Dance of Death.



The composer repeats the Dies Irae theme with a pedal point on A and with the addition of the brass instruments. Trumpets, trombones and first violins have the melody in this instance.

Ex. 48 - Camille Saint-Saëns' Danse Macabre, Dance of Death.





A paragraph by Robin Gregory gives us his thoughts regarding Danse Macabre:

> The story, based on a poem by Jean Lahor, tells of Death playing in the churchyard at midnight for a dance of skeletons in their shrouds, and has called from the composer a tone-poem which, even with the aid of parodied "Dies Irae", a xylophone to represent the rattling bones, and a tuned-down violin for Death to play, does not induce in the listener any sense of the macabre. As so often with this composer, the writing is clever and the craftsmanship polished, but the total effect is fundamentally unconvincing. The choice of the waltz, that sensuous ballroom dance, for the revels of shrouded skeletons seems to be an error of judgment.[11]

Edward Burlingame Hill has a worthwhile statement on the tone poems of this French composer.

> . . .Saint-Saëns was the pioneer of the symphonic poem in France. If his four works in this form are unequal in merit, they none the less educated the public for other attempts by younger composers.[12]

In contrast to the above-mentioned composition there is that masterpiece in C minor, Op. 78, known as Number Three of Saint-Saëns Symphonies, and dedicated to the memory of Franz Liszt. The symphony is divided into two parts; nevertheless, it includes practically the traditional four sections; adagio, allegro moderato, poco adagio (first movement, and allegro moderato, presto, maestoso, and allegro (second movement). Following a

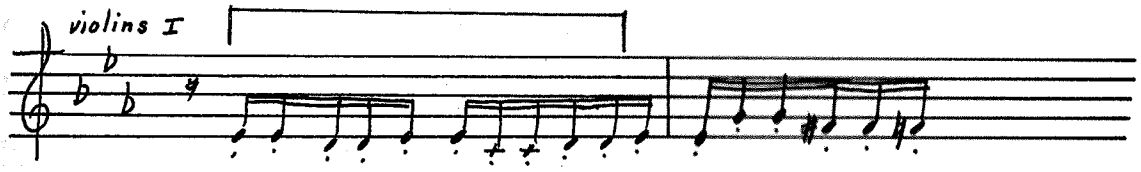
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11. Gregory, Robin, Op. Cit., p. 135.

12. Hill, Edward Burlingame, Modern French Music, P. 30.

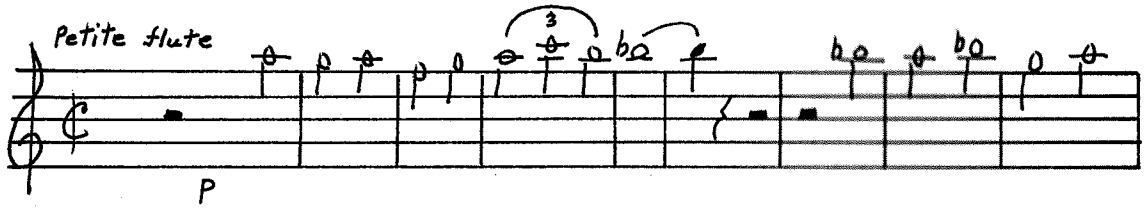
short, slow introduction the first theme is heard in the strings. The pattern of the first violins is likened to the first five notes of the Dies Irae, although each note is used twice.

Ex. 49 - Camille Saint-Saëns' Third Symphony, first movement.



The portion of the symphony usually referred to as having the Dies Irae melody is a chorale-like tune found in the second movement not too far distant from the end of the composition. All the instruments of the orchestra join in playing the following theme with the exception of the strings who are engaged in rhythmic accompaniment.

Ex. 50 - Camille Saint-Saëns' Third Symphony, second movement.



Edward Burlingame Hill after suggesting that Erik Satie had been followed by Debussy in using church modes continues:

> That neither Debussy nor Satie were pioneers in this particular is obvious. Saint-Saëns was tempted by the resemblance between the principal theme in his C minor symphony and the "Dies Irae" to quote the latter. Berlioz had done so before him in the last movement of the "Fantastic Symphony." In the finale of Saint-Saëns' symphony, a "cyclical" modification of the principal theme is harmonized modally with striking effect.[13]

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13. Hill, Edward Burlingame, Op. Cit., p. 203.

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

Gustave Mahler, an Austrian composer considered to be the last of the subjective romanticists, brought to his art nobility, greatness and devotion. Like Beethoven and Bruckner he composed nine symphonies, the second of which will be considered here. This symphony in C minor, written in 1895, is known as the Resurrection symphony. The first four notes of the Dies Irae appear in the fifth movement and it may be inferred that the composer's reason for employing them is because this movement deals with the Day of Judgment. Sigmund Spaeth describes it thus:

> This magnificent Finale has given to the whole symphony the name of Resurrection, with words taken from Klopstock's Ode of the same title. It has been described as 'a colossal musical fresco of the Day of Judgment.' 'The dead arise and march forward in endless procession.' At the close the organ and pealing bells join the orchestra in a jubilant climax.[14]

Note the whole step at the beginning of the pattern which appears shortly after the opening of the fifth movement of the symphony. Flutes, oboes and clarinets join in a pianissimo rendition.

Ex. 51 - Gustav Mahler's Resurrection Symphony, fifth movement.



14. Spaeth, Sigmund, A Guide to Great Orchestral Music, p. 249.

This symphony seems to have been planned by the composer as an allegory on the life of man: the first movement speaks of death; the second, youthful optimism; the third, life's vulgarities; the fourth, spiritual life; and the fifth, of the Judgment Day. The following extract will show the mind of a present-day writer in regard to this work of Mahler.

> His best known symphony is the Second in C minor (1895), which in its last movement gives an unforgettable picture of the twilight that descends upon the world before Doomsday, of the last bird, lonely, twittering in fright, and of the Great Reveille with the chorus 'Up, wake up!'[15]

Charles Martin Loeffler (1861-1935)

Since none of Loeffler's scores in which he used the Dies Irae have been available to the writer it is impossible to show examples of his use of the Dies Irae. It is known, however, that he used the sequence in his songs, in his orchestral works, and even in his Spanish opera. Probably his best known work in which he used the liturgical melody is his Divertimento in A minor for violin and orchestra. In January 1895 this composition was played by the Boston Symphony Orchestra with the composer as soloist. The following quotation from the Musical Quarterly will shed some light on this subject.

> Already in the violin and orchestra 'Divertimento' of 1895 the 'Dies Irae' served as theme for a set of variations. The solo part of this work, by the way, is among the most difficult things in the literature for the instrument. . . the composer himself had tossed them off brilliantly at Boston, in 1895. But 'the day of wrath' continued to obsess the composer's musical thoughts. He was ever torn between two idées fixes: beauty and death. They alone counted. Persistently he struggled to reconcile the two. And yet about the one, men disagree; while of the other, they know nothing.[16]

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15. Sachs, Curt, Our Musical Heritage, p. 358.

16. Engel, Carl, "Charles Martin Loeffler", Musical Quarterly, Vol II, No. 3 (July 1925), p. 325.

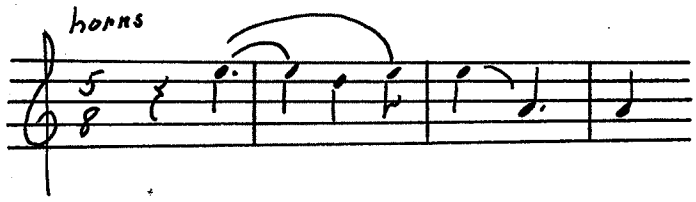
That Loeffler had a predilection for Gregorian melodies has already been seen in ChapterII of this thesis in which the composer uses the Victimae Paschali Laudes as the theme for his Music for Four Stringed Instruments. He has been looked upon by many as a mystic, a deep student of medieval thought and profoundly interested in Gregorian plainsong.

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

The Dies Irae theme seems to have had something of an obsession with Rachmaninoff for he used it in several of his compositions of which Die Toteninsel (The Isle of the Dead), Op. 29, composed in 1907, is perhaps the best known. The work was inspired by the Swiss painter Böcklin's picture known as Die Toteninsel. Rachmaninoff was not the only composer to be stimulated by this picture, putting into terms of music the gloomy impression given by Böcklin's portrayal of a boat, containing the coffin and shrouded figures, making its way towards a cypress-topped rocky island, shrouded in mystery. Contrary to so many of the foregoing composers, Rachmaninoff here uses the Dies Irae to enhance the solemnity of the picture rather than to create a mood of terror. The composer ends his composition as it began with a consciousness of peace and everlasting rest.

In a somewhat vague manner the Dies Irae theme appears first in the horns.

Ex. 52 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Die Toteninsel.



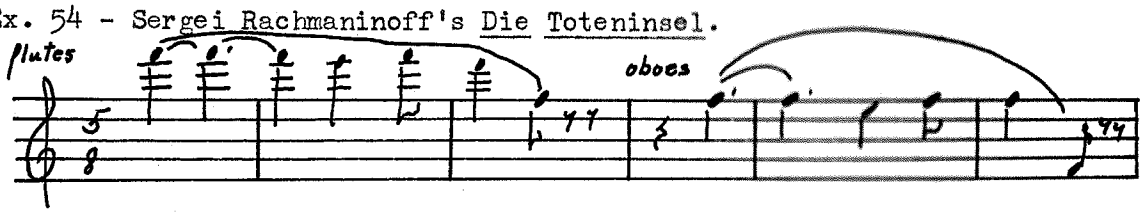
Some measures later the oboe sings the same pattern, this time with a change of interval. Here is seen the authentic half step at the beginning, and the drop of a minor third.

Ex. 53 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Die Toteninsel.



The flute, oboe and strings take their turns in singing the following pattern. Note the drop of the octave at the end instead of the minor third.

Ex. 54 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Die Toteninsel.



During the course of the work the different instruments have as their melody four-note fragments of the Dies Irae in various ways, sometimes with the drop of a seventh, sometimes with the fifth, in octaves as shown above, and again with the correct interval, the minor third. Example 55 shows the first main theme of The Isle of the Dead.

The upper portion of the melody again contains the four characteristic notes.

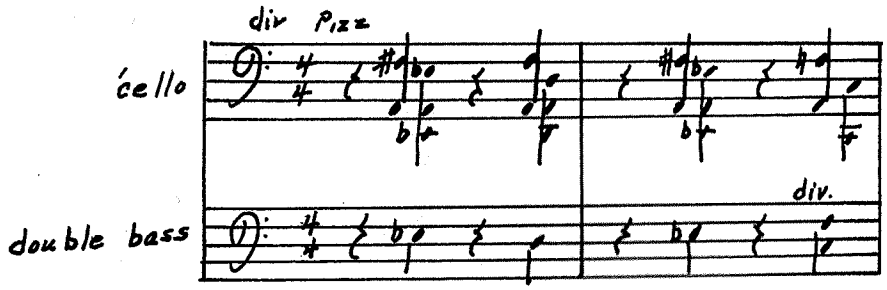
Ex. 55.- Sergei Rachmaninoff's Die Toteninsel.



The Dies Irae theme reappears rather strongly in the transitional material just before the turn to the principal song. Here it is reiterated with insistent monotony in the nebulous tremolo of the second violins against the pizzicati of the other strings giving a somewhat somber mood. Against this background the horns recall softly in echo-like manner the fragment of melody. Throughout the entire work, Rachmaninoff uses no more of the entire liturgical melody than the first four notes.

Ex. 56 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Die Toteninsel, Largo.





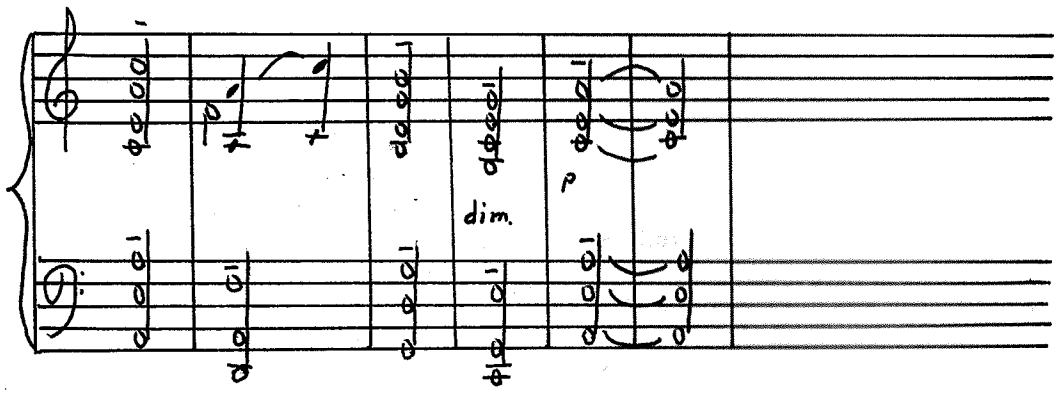
The Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 43, was composed by Rachmaninoff in 1934 for piano and orchestra. Like the Third Symphony it bears no dedication. The Paganini theme used here was chosen from the last of the master's twenty-four Caprices for Violin Solo, Op. 1, and Rachmaninoff writes twenty-four variations to this theme.

The Dies Irae melody appears in the seventh and tenth variations in the piano while the orchestra offers alterations of the Paganini theme as background. In the last variation the sequence melody returns fortissimo in bass and strings, this time to have the piano announce the Paganini theme in a forceful manner.

In variation VII the composer uses the first verse of the plain chant melody in the piano accompanied by strings and the fagotti, after which the phrase is repeated with slight variations in the second and fourth measures.

Ex. 57 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Variation VII.

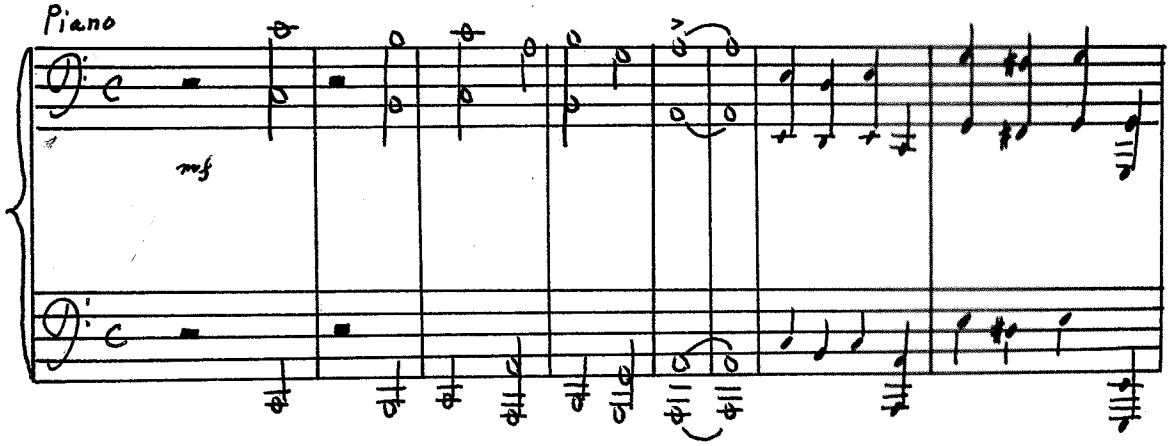




A distorted form of the sequence is used after the above examples, a third higher, and with whole instead of half-steps at the entrance.

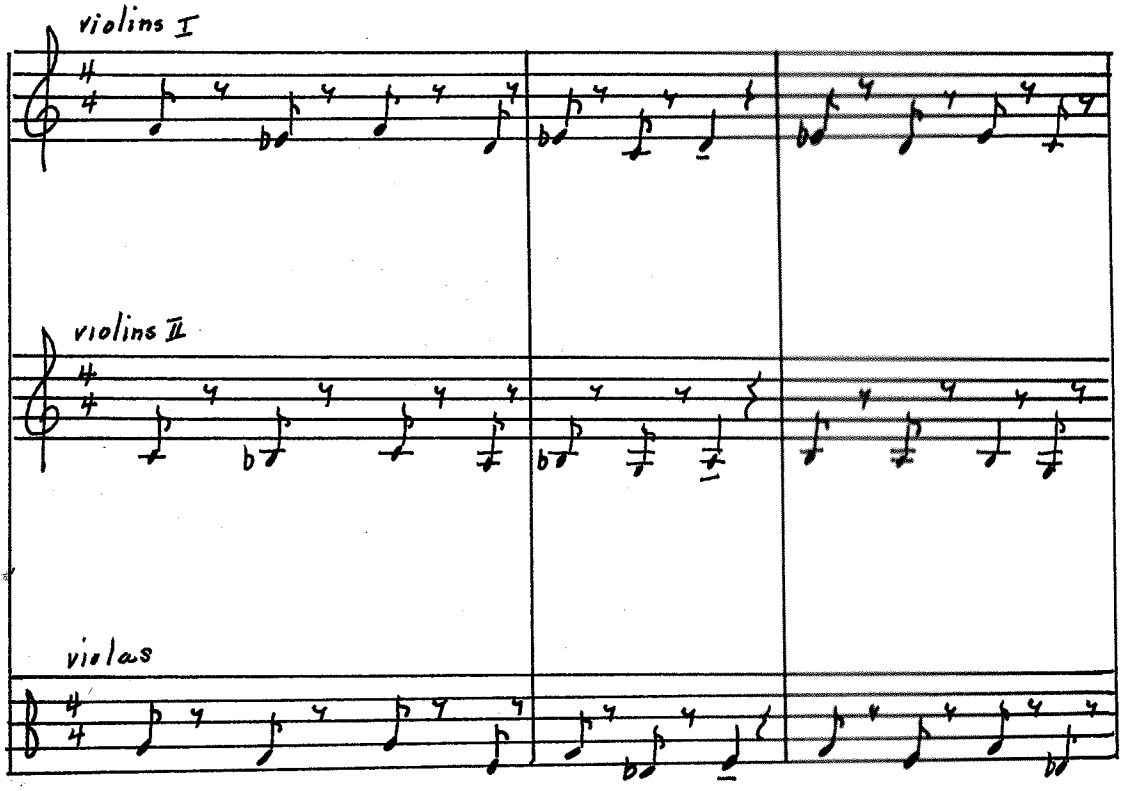
At the beginning of Variation X the piano takes the Dies Irae theme in a more active manner while the orchestra asserts against it a demoniac distortion of the Paganini theme, making this variation one of the more powerful in the set.

Ex. 58 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Variation X.



The trumpets, trombones and tuba now have the above melody in a 3/4 setting after which the strings, first and second violins and viola, this time in diminished note values (eighth notes), have the sequence melody.

Ex. 59 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Variation X.





The Dies Irae melody is recalled by the composer in the final variation with a forceful statement by four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, a tuba and full string ensemble. During this time the massed woodwinds are engaged in figuration while the piano busys itself with a motive from the Paganini theme.

This Rhapsody was performed in November of 1934 by the Philadelphia Orchestra in Baltimore at which time the composer himself played the piano part. In recent years it has been used as a musical background for the ballet, Paganini.

It is not always sure just what significance the Dies Irae theme had for Rachmaninoff but he himself seems to have explained that his Rhapsody was intended to revive the legend about Paganini, who sold his soul to an evil spirit in exchange for perfection in playing his violin. Here as so often before the liturgical melody is associated with something evil, although perhaps in not such an outstanding manner as in some of the previous examples cited in this thesis.

Usually Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony is the one referred to as having the Dies Irae theme; nevertheless, the intervals of this melody are apparent in his Second Symphony, Op. 27, in E minor, definitely the most popular of his symphonies. One may suppose that because of the composer's

frequent use of the liturgical melody it had become a part of his subconscious thinking. The auxiliary figure in the opening theme of the first movement is comparable to the first three notes of the sequence and is the figure Rachmaninoff seems to be so fond of using.

Ex. 60 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony, first movement, Introduction.



In the latter part of the first movement this motive is prominent:

Ex. 61 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony, first movement.



Broken thirds, another characteristic of the liturgical melody, are part of the chief theme of the Scherzo, introduced by horns and carried on by the violins.

Ex. 62 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony, second movement, Scherzo.



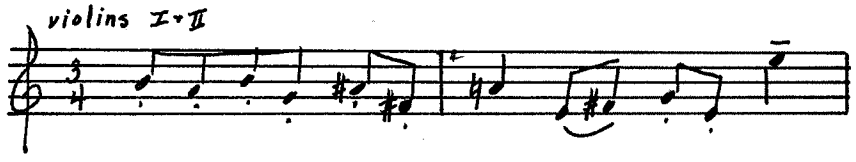
The chorale-like melody found towards the end of the second movement and played by the horns again utilizes the auxiliary figure.

Ex. 63 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony, second movement, Scherzo.



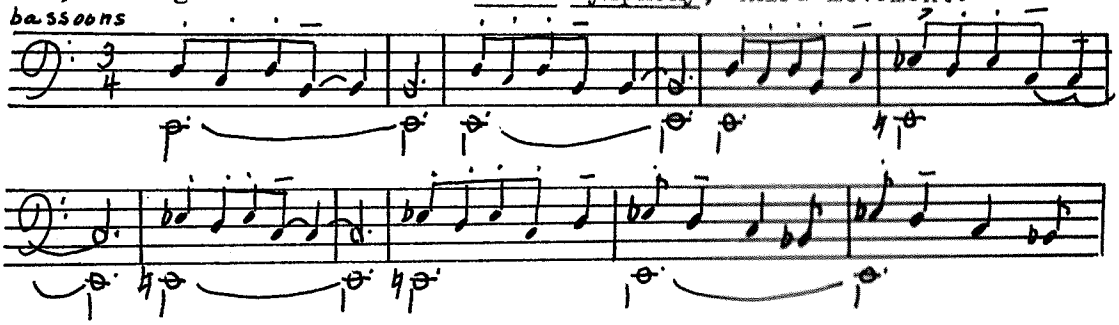
In the Third Symphony (Op. 44 in A minor) Rachmaninoff makes a more pronounced use of the Dies Irae theme. The symphony opens in a melancholy vein with the auxiliary figure so often used in the Second Symphony but it is not until much later (to be exact, on page 155 of the score), that the four-note theme becomes prominent. The upper strings play the pattern in unison.

Ex. 64 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony, third movement.



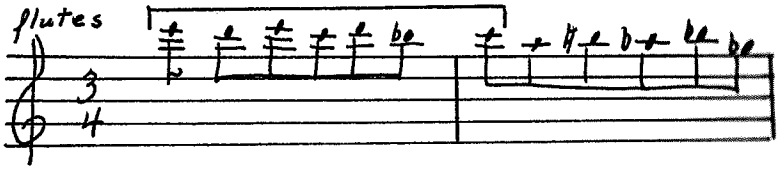
Some pages later (pp. 173-174), the bassoons come to the fore playing the four-note figure. After ten measures the pattern changes. It still consists of four notes but this time it is comparable to the melody of the word "saeculum" appearing toward the end of the second verse of the sequence.

Ex. 65 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony, third movement.



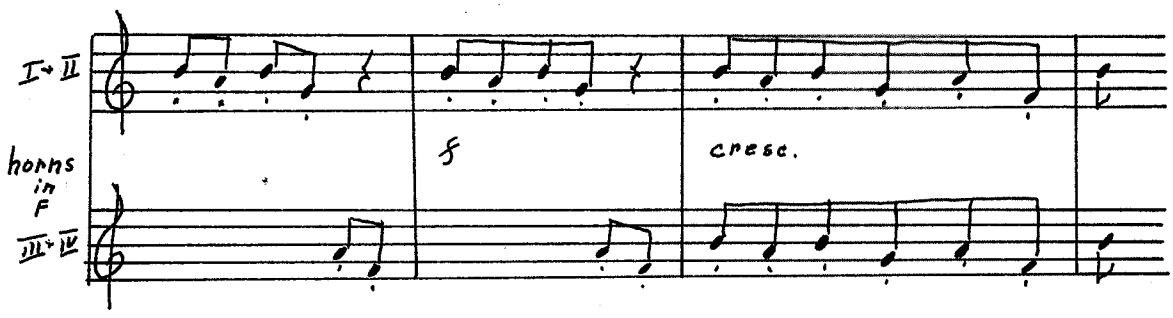
There is a still further extension of the liturgical melody in the piccolo and flute where the first seven notes are utilized.

Ex. 66.- Sergei Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony, third movement.



The loveliest melodies are those found in the horn sections of the symphony. They are here employed in playing a six-note pattern.

Ex. 67 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony, third movement.



Many other examples could be cited but the above furnish sufficient material to show that Rachmaninoff's use of the Dies Irae in this symphony is much more conspicuous and clearly defined than in his Second.

The last major work of Rachmaninoff was the Symphonic Dances for orchestra, Op. 45. This work was completed by the composer at Long Island in 1940 and performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra in the following January. This orchestral composition, consisting of three movements, was not intended to be dance music but music inspired by the dance. It is noted for its brilliant instrumental colors and rhythmic ingenuity. The waltz rhythm in the second, and the rhythms of popular music in the last movement bring in the dance flavor. It is, however, devoid of any program, and is essentially symphonic in character.

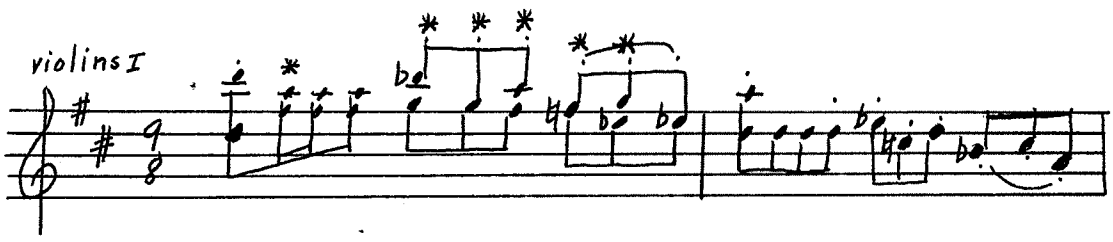
In the first movement the violins have a melody in which the first seven notes of the sequence for the Mass of the Dead have been borrowed.

Ex. 68 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances, first movement.



In the next example, which occurs in the third movement, six notes of the sequence are used, the first note having been omitted.

Ex. 69 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances, third movement.



The third example, and by far the best, occurs again in the last movement when flutes and piccolo, with the exception of three notes, have the first two verses of the plain song melody.

Ex. 70 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances, third movement.



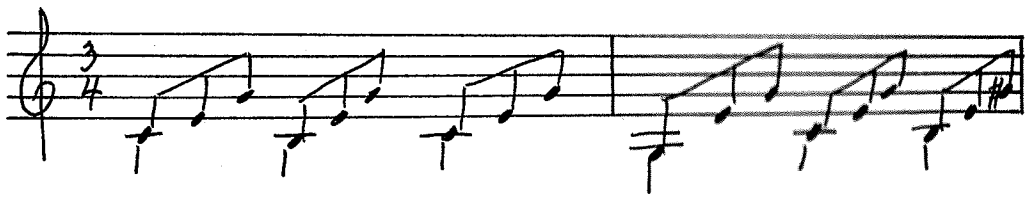
A further example of Rachmaninoff's use of the Dies Irae may be found in his Etude, Op. 39, No. 2, for piano. This is written in A minor and in a 3/4 setting, with the theme appearing in the two measures of introduction, left hand part. Again the characteristic four notes of the sequence are used.

Ex. 71 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Etudes tableaux, Op. 39, No. 2.



This pattern is used extensively throughout the work except that frequently the minor third is changed to another interval, sometimes a perfect fourth and again an octave.

Ex. 72 - Sergei Rachmaninoff's Etudes tableaux, Op. 39, No. 2.



It may be inferred from the above quoted compositions that Rachmaninoff was preoccupied with melancholy, and to a certain extent this is true, but it was never morbid or despairing. His is rather a thoughtful attitude apparently induced by a serious consideration of life. His melodies are of the solemnly introspective kind.

Max Reger (1873-1916)

Reger was an apostle of abstract, pure music; nevertheless, he produced several noteworthy examples of programmatic music during the last years of his life. The Four Tone Poems after Böcklin is considered to be the best of this group. This is a musical interpretation of four paintings by Arnold Böcklin. As was seen in another portion of this chapter, one of

these same paintings was the inspiration for Rachmaninoff's Isle of the Dead. Since the latter used the Dies Irae theme in his work one may be led to believe that Reger has done the same.

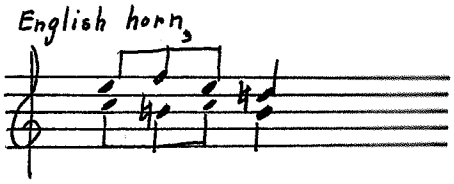
The following pattern found on page two of the score, and again on page five, shows the flute having the four first notes of the sequence.

Ex. 73 - Max Reger's Four Tone Poems after Böcklin, Der geigende Eremit.



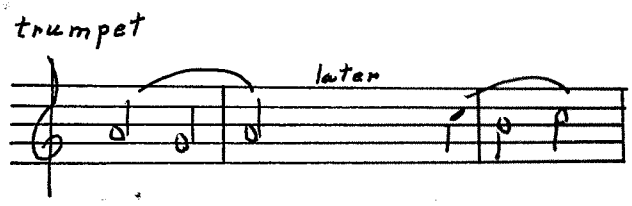
In the second part of the tone-poem, Im Spiel der Wellen, a small figure composed of the last four notes of the second verse of the sequence, "in favilla," are sung by the English horn.

Ex. 74 - Max Reger's Four Tone Poems after Böcklin, Im Spiel der Wellen.



In Die Toteninsel the trumpets come forth with the following motive:

Ex. 75 - Max Reger's Four Tone Poems after Böcklin, Die Toteninsel.



In the fourth part, Bacchanal, the auxiliary pattern is again utilized in the 'cello and string bass melodies.

In view of the above musical patterns, the frequent use of the minor third and the semitone, and the association with Death in this instance, one may conclude that the Dies Irae has been indirectly expressed in this work.

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Till Eulenspiegel, a symphonic poem by Richard Strauss describes the pranks of the jester Till, the subject of a sixteenth century popular German tale. Contrary to the disposition of Tschaikowsky and Rachmaninoff, Strauss is best in his art when he portrays his cheerful temperament, the sunshine of his life and his wit and humor. Therefore Till Eulenspiegel, in which the above is certainly brought to the fore, has been pointed to by many as his masterpiece. When the composer was asked to furnish an explanation of the story he replied: "It is impossible for me to furnish a program to Eulenspiegel; were I to put in words the thoughts its several incidents suggest to me, they would seldom suffice, and might give rise to offense."[17]

In this thesis we are especially interested in the portion just before the epilogue where the rogue is shaken with fear and where the tremolo in the strings helps intensify the feeling. For the purpose of establishing the mood of the moment, Strauss uses the first four notes of the Dies Irae at the point where the death sentence takes place. The oboes, trumpets and first violins enter with the figure, after which the first and second trumpets with the first violins sing it three times in succession. The horns and second violins have the same rhythmic pattern but a different tune--a succession of half-steps.

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17. Hale, Philip, Boston Symphony Programme Notes, P. 315.

Ex. 76 - Richard Strauss' Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks.



In this use of the Dies Irae we see that the master of the symphonic poem is again the successor of Berlioz and Liszt, for he tends here to create an appropriate atmosphere dealing with the supernatural in an aspect of terror and dread.

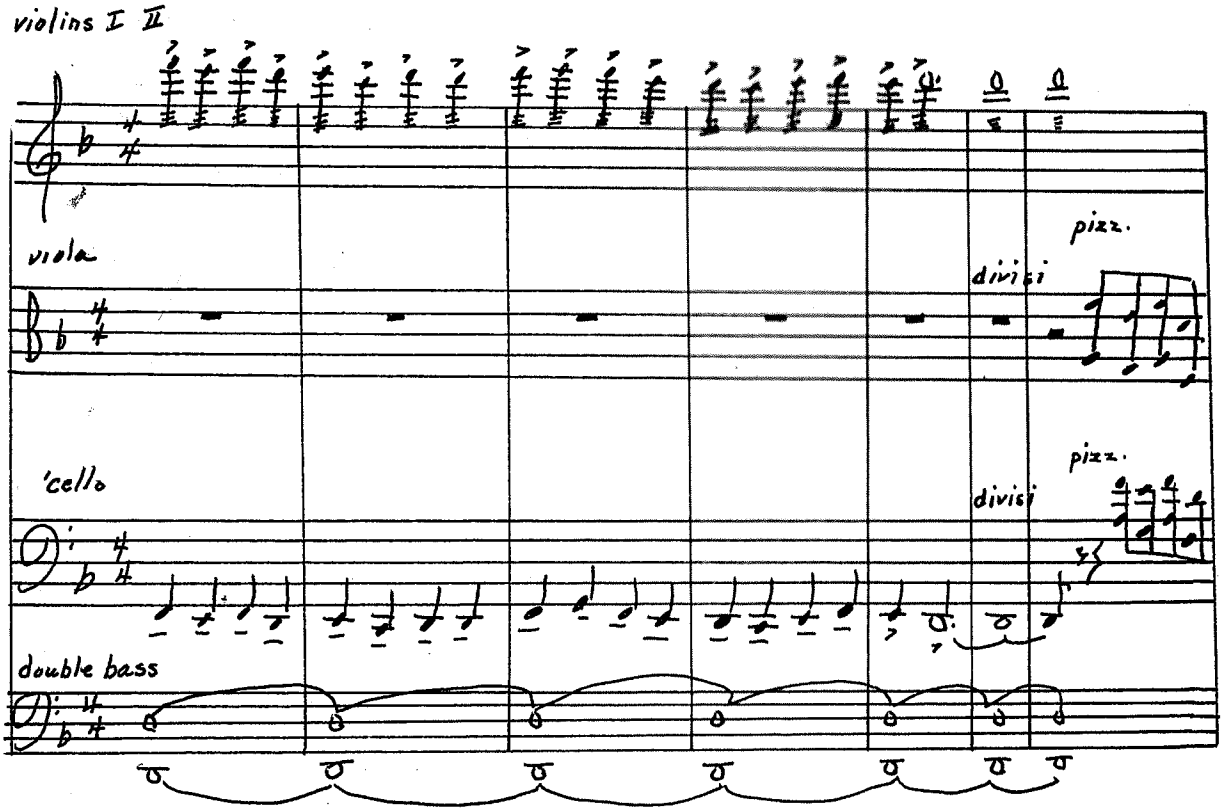
Numerous moods are portrayed in the music of this symphonic poem, gaiety and exuberance, ingratiating simplicity, sarcastic criticism, and dramatic pauses; the music is most descriptive of the scene of the moment.

Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)

In chapter two of this thesis it has been shown that Ottorino Respighi used the Victimae Paschali Laudes as thematic material in his orchestral compositions. In the Impressione Brasiliane for orchestra the composer uses the first two verses of the Dies Irae with the omission of the very first tone of the second verse. The melody appears at the end of the third movement called Butantan. This name applies to a garden near to São Paulo where innumerable poisonous serpents are collected; certainly a deadly snare in a picturesque landscape.

The liturgical melody is introduced in the first and second violins and 'cello with an immediate repetition by the violas and 'cellos, divisi.

Ex. 77 - Ottorino Respighi's Impressione Brasiliane, third movement.





Ernest Schelling (1876-1939)

Ernest Schelling is known as an American pianist, conductor and composer, and has the distinction of having been Paderewski's only pupil. From 1935 to 1937 he was conductor of the Baltimore Symphony orchestra. Both as

pianist and conductor he appeared with other orchestras, American and foreign.

Schelling's masterpiece is A Victory Ball which was composed in memory of an American soldier. It is a fantasy for orchestra after the poem of Alfred Noyes and describes orchestrally a dance on Armistice Day,

In a very accented manner the trumpets, trombones and organ ad libitum are given the first two verses of the Dies Irae melody on page 85 of the score.

Ex. 78 - Ernest Schelling's A Victory Ball, Tempo di marcia.



The above quotation is immediately followed by a passage in which the first half of the melody is sung by the horns and trombones and the second half by the contra-bassoon, third trombone and tuba.

Ex. 79 - Ernest Schelling's A Victory Ball, Tempodi marcia.



In the valse tempo of this work there is frequent use made of the auxiliary figure, composed of the first three notes of the liturgical melody.

"The program of A Victory Ball shows the gaiety of the dancers, interrupted by the sounds of war, as the spirits of the fallen return, to the roll of drums and the distant sound of Taps."[18] Since this composition is based on the desolation, suffering and death of a marching troop one can readily see why Schelling introduced the Dies Irae theme in this fantasy.

Sir Granville Bantock (1868-1946)

Bantock is a noted English composer who excels in programmatic music.

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18. Spaeth, Sigmund, Op. Cit., p. 411.

According to Grove's Dictionary[19] he has written Incidental Music to Macbeth in which the Dies Irae theme is employed. Since a score of this work was not available to the writer, she cannot be sure how or to what extent the sequence is used. Nevertheless, the title of the work would suggest that the Romanticists' interpretation of the use of the sequence could very well be applied here since the subject deals with the supernatural, with witches, with wicked powers, and the lower elements of darkness.

Nikolai Miaskowsky (1881-1950)

Miaskowsky brought the Dies Irae into his Sixth Symphony, Op. 23, which was designed and completed between 1921 and 1923. At this time Miaskowsky was deeply impressed by the passing of two persons who had been very dear to him; consequently, one perceives a mournful mood in this work, especially in the slow movement.

The quotation of the Dies Irae which appears in the last movement gives one a strong sinister feeling which may have been brought about by the composer's revolutionary ardor. Adding to the despair of this movement Miaskowsky introduces a chorus singing a wordless chant. Thereafter, the symphony closes as it began, with the same doleful feeling.

In the following quotation the harp, 'cellos and double-basses have been assigned the first two verses of the Dies Irae melody which begins with the seventh measure of the Allegro Vivace, page 222 of the score.

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19. Bloom, Eric, Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Vol. II, P. 715.

Ex. 80 - Nikolai Miaskowsky's Sixth Symphony, fourth movement.



Somewhat later, with the same instrumentation, only the first verse of the plainchant melody is utilized.

Ex. 81 - Nikolai Miaskowsky's Sixth Symphony, fourth movement.



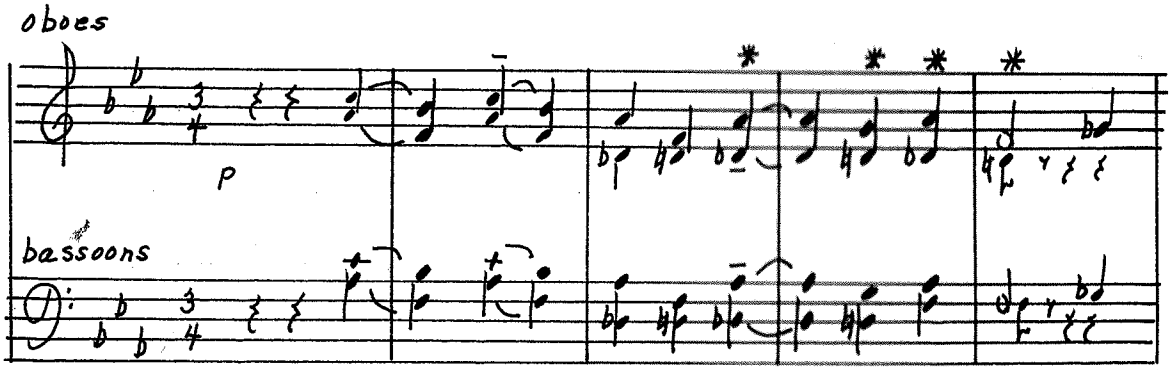
The liturgical melody gradually decreases in extent. This time the composer sees fit to use only the first four notes of the sequence as has been done so frequently, again with the same instrumentation.

Ex. 82 - Nikolai Miaskowsky's Sixth Symphony, fourth movement.



With a change of instruments the oboes and bassoons sing a fragment of the melody.

Ex. 83 - Nikolai Miaskowsky's Sixth Symphony, fourth movement.



One finds the earlier works of this composer, for the most part, melancholy in character but his later works radiate optimism. This symphony as a whole is sober, although passionate and virile in the fast pages.

Igor Stravinsky (1882 --)

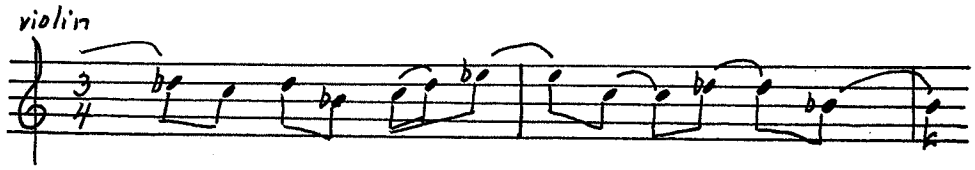
An outstanding figure in twentieth century music is Igor Stravinsky whose rhythmic eccentricities, harmonic harshness, and deficiency in lyrical warmth have made his music difficult to assimilate. It is but fair to add that his more recent compositions have greater warmth and a more personal feeling.

In 1914 when war broke out this composer settled in Switzerland where he wrote Histoire du Soldat (The Soldier's Tale). This orchestral suite is composed of nine parts and the music is played either as an accompaniment to the recitation or without it. An interesting feature of this work is the combination of instruments with which Stravinsky composes his small orchestra. Each instrument is treated as a solo instrument; the chief part, in accordance with the plot of the Soldier's Tale, falls to the violin. Its combination with the percussion in the Tango is quite novel. Part VI is composed of three dances, Tango, Waltz, and Ragtime in which occasional use of jazz, ragtime rhythm and dance are ingeniously incorporated into the score. It is in the Tango that the characteristic four-note fragment of the Dies Irae melody is again heard, this time in the violin. Just why Stravinsky chose to use the plainchant melody as a pattern in this particular dance has not been gleaned by the writer; however, it is understandable that the composer used it in this work since the story deals with the power of darkness; the devil offers the soldier a magic book, capable of answering any question, in return for his violin.

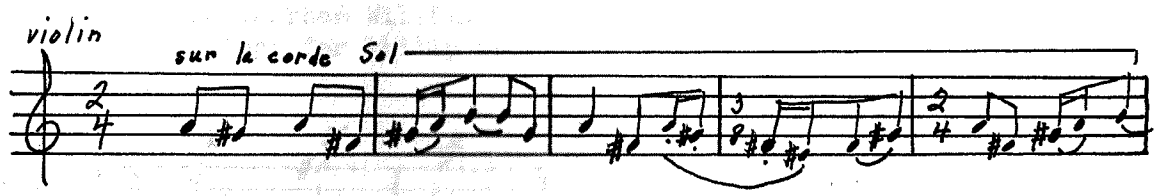
Ex. 84 - Igor Stravinsky's Histoire du Soldat, Three Dances, Tango.



Ex. 85 - Igor Stravinsky's Histoire du Soldat, Three Dances, Tango.



Ex. 86 - Igor Stravinsky's Histoire du Soldat, Three Dances, Tango.



Although it has been said that Stravinsky broke away from the dreams of the Romantic school still it seems here he reverts to the interpretation that school gave to the Dies Irae.

It cannot be denied that future composers have profited from Stravinsky's revolutionary idea of tonality and unrivalled mastery in blending orchestral sonorities and colors such as used in the Histoire du Soldat.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 --)

The Five Tudor Portraits by Vaughan Williams depict a renewed youthfulness and divulge to us the composer's attitude toward the national character of our ancestors in Tudor times. That his writings betray a deep and close relationship with the contrapuntal Tudor School, and also show an active part in the revival of the old English folk song, is a known fact. That Vaughan Williams has humor can be seen from the music in these Five Tudor Portraits. Although the composer used a Gregorian chant melody

in his first portrait, in this thesis we are especially interested in number four, described as a Romanza, since in it the Dies Irae melody has been used by the composer. The fourth portrait is the longest of the group and its subject is Jane Scroop and the lament she uttered for the death of her tame sparrow, Philip.

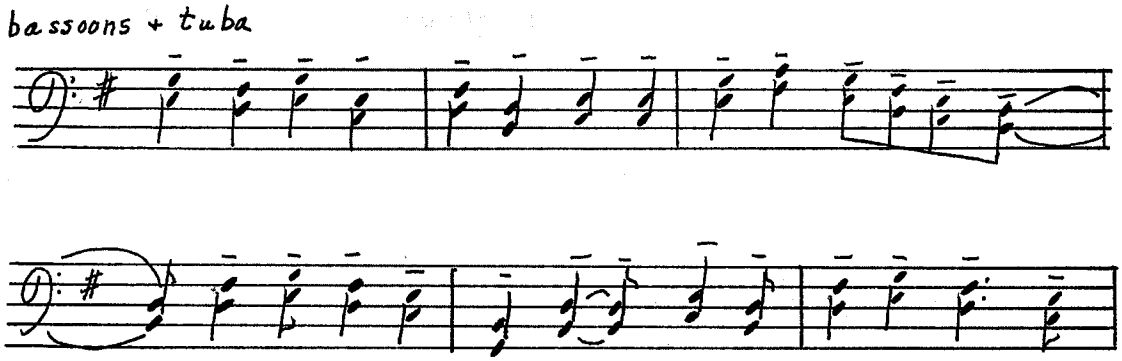
At the Largamente the first verse of the sequence is utilized in the following manner.

Ex. 87 - Ralph Vaughan Williams' Five Tudor Portraits, Lament of Jane Scroop for Philip Sparrow.



The bassoons and muted tuba have the first two verses of the Dies Irae. Later in the composition there is an exact repetition of this portion of the sequence with the third verse added.

Ex. 88 - Ralph Vaughan Williams' Five Tudor Portraits, Lament of Jane Scroop for Philip Sparrow.



Somewhat later in the score the liturgical melody takes the following form. Since only a vocal score was available it cannot be stated just what instruments are engaged in playing the following melody, presumably flute and upper strings.

Ex. 89 - Ralph Vaughan Williams' Five Tudor Portraits, Lament of Jane Scroop for Philip Sparrow.



Fragments of the plainchant melody consisting of four notes are occasionally employed in the course of the music for this portrait. At times the four-note pattern is introduced with a whole step instead of the customary half.

In the Five Tudor Portraits the plainsong is used purely for symbolic

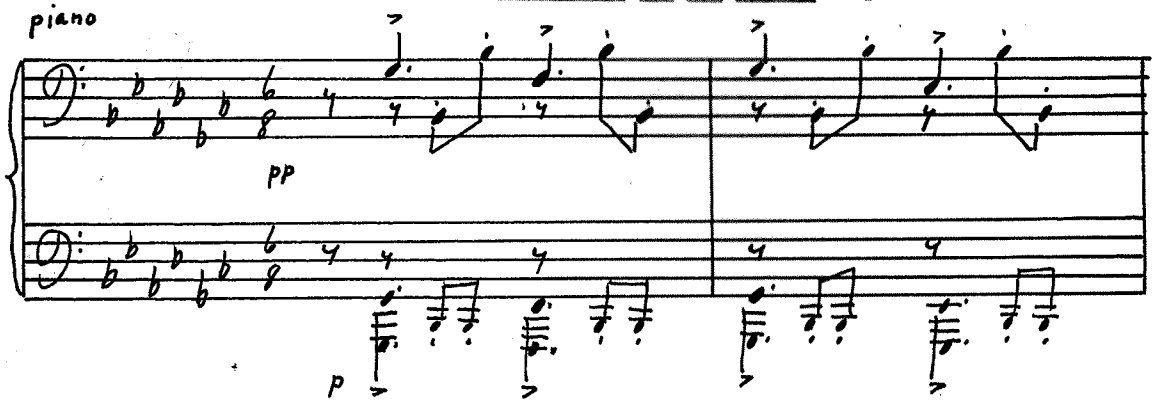
effect and has no bearing upon the general melodic structure of the songs. The following quotation gives emphasis to this point.

> Even Vaughan Williams has been accused of parody in his Lament of Jane Scroop for Philip Sparrow, the fourth of his "Tudor Portraits", though in fact he uses a phrase from "Dies Irae" most imaginatively; first, as the funeral procession begins, it is gently shared between orchestra and chorus, later, as the birds congregate for the last rites and the chorus intone the words, "And Robin Redbreast, he shall be the priest, the requiem mass to sing," the same phrase creeps in quietly in the bass, while soft twitterings sound above. There really is no hint of parody here, all is intensely serious, as Vaughan Williams indicated that he intended it to be when he said, 'Jane saw no reason, and I see no reason, why she should not pray for the peace of her sparrow's soul.'[20]

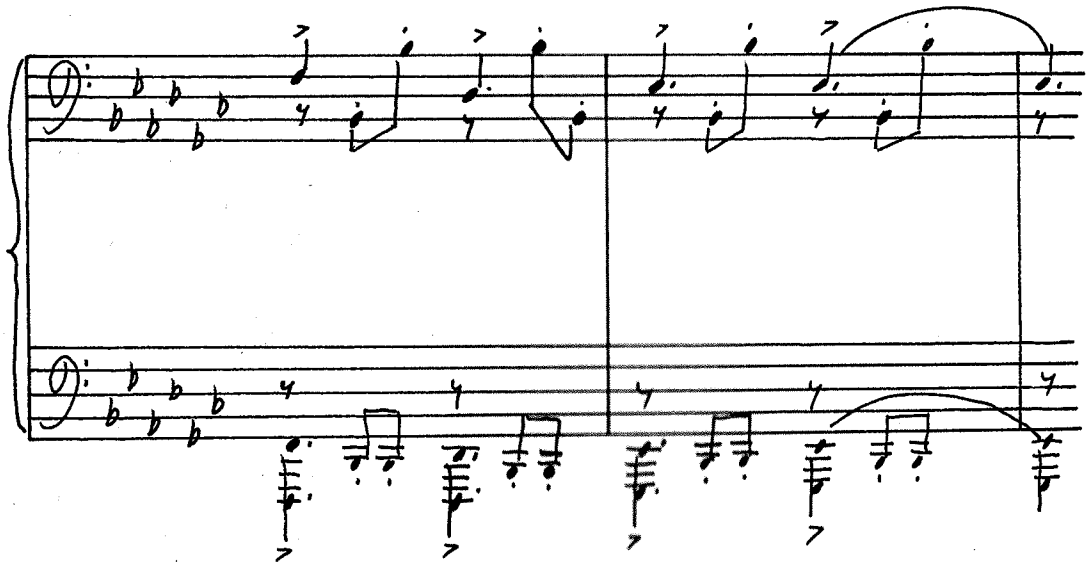
Ernst von Dohnányi (1877 --)

A fine piano example of the use of the Dies Irae is the Rhapsody in E flat minor, No. 4, Op. 11 by Dohnányi. Although it has been said that this composer was greatly fascinated by Brahms, Dohnányi's sound technic and spontaneous lyricism have given his works a certain charm of their own. The above named Rhapsody seems to have been composed somewhat on the style of a theme and variation form. After two measures of introduction, the first two verses of the Dies Irae melody appear in the upper and lower staves of this piano composition.

Ex. 90 - Ernst von Dohnányi's Rhapsody in Eb minor, Op. 11, No. 4.



20. Gregory, Robin, Op. Cit., P. 136.



The following example shows the use of the sequence in chordal style.

Ex. 91 - Ernst von Dohnányi's Rhapsody in Eb minor, Op. 11, No. 4.



In the third variant we have only the first verse of the plainchant melody after which there is a contrasting middle section with the Dies Irae

melody returning again at Tempo I. At the return there are again three different variants of the sequence although the melody itself is not distorted.

Emerson Whithorne (1884 --)

New York Days and Nights, originally a piano suite but later orchestrated, was composed by Emerson Whithorne. It portrays a vivid tonal picture of several facets of life in New York: On the Ferry, Chimes of St. Patrick's, Pell Street, A Greenwich Village Tragedy, and Times Square. It was this composition which brought the composer to the public's attention, having been written after his return to America.

It is in the second movement, Chimes of St. Patrick's, that Whithorne makes use of the Dies Irae sequence, utilizing more of the melody than any composer so far mentioned in this chapter. In this picturesque work, Whithorne imitates the chiming of bells, in the tall twin steeples of the New York Cathedral, accompanied by the great organ intoning the solemn Dies Irae. After ten measures of introduction, the 'cellos, tenor trombones and bass clarinets sing the following melody covering the first strophe of the sequence.

Ex. 92 - Emerson Whithorne's New York Days and Nights, Chimes of St. Patrick's.



After the above six measures only the first verse is played by the horns; this is followed by a chime effect of four measures. Then the "Tuba mirum spargens sonum" is introduced by the oboe and English horn. Immediately following this there is an interesting arrangement of the same melody. This time the oboes, English horns, clarinets in Bb, and horns are given the "Tuba mirum spargens sonum" melody while simultaneously the strings have been assigned the "Per se pulchra regionum, Coget omnes ante thronum." The composition ends with the composer utilizing the last two dimeters of the sequence, "Judicandus homo reus. Huic ergo parce, Deus: Pie Jesu, Domine, Dona eis requiem. Amen." Beginning three measures before the "maestoso" this tune is played simultaneously by the flutes, oboes, English horns, clarinets in Bb, horns in F and first violins; however, only the first violins and flutes carry the melody of the "Amen."

Ex. 93 - Emerson Whithorne's New York Days and Nights, Chimes of St. Patrick's.



The "Amen" is followed by four measures of chime effect which is especially outstanding in the harp.

Whithorne's style is a combination of the Romantic and the Impressionistic schools. On occasion he uses polytonality and never hesitates to insert sharp dissonances in his writing to attain his desired end. It is not clear just what Whithorne's intentions were in using the Dies Irae in this particular movement of his work. It seems, however, that it was not intended to create a weird and gruesome mood but rather one of hope and prayer.

Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji (1892 --)

Sorabji, a rather obscure Indian composer, deserves mention here since he has written two lengthy compositions in which the Dies Irae melody has been employed, Sixty Four Variations and Fugue on the Dies Irae for Piano, and also his Sequentia cyclica upon Dies Irae. Since these compositions are in manuscript form no score has been available to detect in what manner and how much of the sequence is used. A. G. Browne has stated that:

> In a letter of the 11th of June 1925 Mr. Sorabji says, 'Since this visit (about two years ago) my work has greatly increased in quality and mastery of means, as well as maturity of expression. I have now finished the Dies Irae Variations for piano.'[21]

Sorabji is an impressionist and his works bear a certain resemblance to Alexander Skryabin. His style is atonal and polychromatic and he achieves his effects by experiments with tonal masses and tone values while even his longest works possess an unusual organic unity. Because of his insuperable technical difficulties his works have been kept from the performer's platform.

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21. Brown, A. G., "The Music of Kaikhosru Sorabji," Music and Letters, Vol. II, P. 8.

> His pianoforte writing is such that very few, even among virtuosi, can attempt it, while the music's intellectual qualities demand gifts of interpretation that are even rarer. . . Instrumentation is rich and highly particularized in its sonorous effect, and--despite some natural French influence--quite individual.[22]

Arthur Honegger (1892 --)

Arthur Honegger, although of Swiss parentage, received his entire cultural background in France and spent the greater part of his years in Paris. He belongs to the group of composers known as the Les Six, and has been stamped as the most serious composer of this group. Honegger is a great figure in French twentieth century music, maintaining an equal balance between romanticism and classicism.

Honegger has provided explanatory Latin subtitles to all three movements of his Third Symphony known as the Liturgique. These are the Dies Irae, De Profundis and Dona Nobis Pacem. The entire symphony is a religious work and offers much inspirational melody, especially in the violin portion of the closing movement. Here, just as in the Fourth Symphony of Howard Hanson, one looks in vain for a portion of the Dies Irae melody. Because its mood is one of panic and trepidation, abruptness and yet ever-present lyricism, there seems to be an implied use of the plainchant melody. The minor third, the most popular interval of this first movement, is outstanding in the second violins, violas, 'cellos and double basses for five successive pages, beginning on page 10 of the score. The semitone also finds a prominent place in the first movement. Worthy of citing is the horn melody on pages 34 and 35 of the score.

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22. Bloom, Eric, Op. Cit., P. 971.

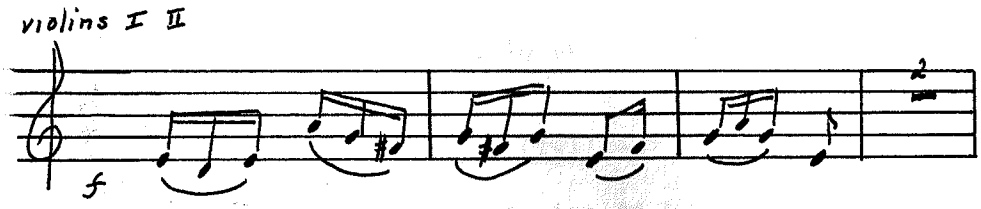
Ex. 94 - Arthur Honegger's Symphonie Liturgique, first movement, Dies Irae.



Howard Hanson (1896 --)

The Fourth Symphony, Op. 34, by Howard Hanson, an American composer, was written in memory of his beloved father. It is an elegiac symphony, a sombre tone pervading the entire work. The lines are broad and this breadth is enhanced by the instrumentation used. The four movements bear Latin subtitles; Kyrie, Requiescat, Dies Irae, and Lux Aeterna. A xylophone and snare drum are added to the regular instrumentation in the third movement, Dies Irae, which is a vehement and bitter scherzo. Because of its title one would expect the composer to use some portion of the sequence as thematic material in this movement, however, one may go no further than to conjecture that the plainchant melody is indirectly expressed. Hanson does make frequent use of the axuiliary figure composed of the initial three notes of the sequence melody, and also the minor falling third which contribute to the mood of this particular portion of the symphony. An example of the composer's use of the auxiliary is shown below.

Ex. 95 - Howard Hanson's Symphony No. IV, third movement, Dies Irae.



Aram Khatchaturian (1903 --)

Khatchaturian, an Armenian composer, wrote his Second Symphony during World War II, in 1943, and his music is a reflection of the times. The score was later revised. Since there has been no score of this work available, the information regarding it has been gleaned from other sources. David Ewen has this to say:

> The third movement is of tragic import. Basically, it is a funeral march featuring a doleful theme of Azerbaijan folk origin. Shouted quite frenetically over the march is the Dies Irae. The music increases in power, and it ends in a great climax with the 'bell' motive.[23]

Another quotation from the Musical Quarterly has added information regarding this symphony.

> The prevalent mood is that of sing-song in minor keys, with chromatic alterations creating characteristic sesquitones--i.e. homonymous minor thirds and augmented seconds. The device immediately conjures up an oriental atmosphere familiar from the scores of the Russian masters of the 19th century music. . .The surprise of this Symphony is the use of Dies Irae as a symbolic theme in the third movement.[24a]

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23. Ewen, David, The Encyclopedia of Musical Masterpieces, P. 329.

24.[a] Slonimsky, Nicolas, "Symphony No. 2 of Aram Khatchaturian," Musical Quarterly, Vol. XLI, P. 267.

This work is written in C major, a key which seems to have an astounding appeal to all Russian composers as a redeeming power for whatever chromatic deviations have been used in the composition.

Benjamin Britten (1913 --)

Britten wrote his Sinfonia da Requiem in 1940 while in the United States. The New York Philharmonic Symphony under the direction of John Barbirolli gave a performance of the Sinfonia in March of 1941. This work was inspired by the death of the composer's father. Concerning the Latin titles prefixed to each movement, Britten himself makes this explanation: "The Latin titles, indicating the mood and scheme of the work, derive from the Catholic Requiem Mass, though the relation of the Sinfonia to the Catholic ceremony avowedly is emotional rather than liturgical."[24b] Lacrymosa, Dies Irae, and Requiem Aeternam are the three Latin titles chosen by the composer. Since the last three dimeters of the Dies Irae sequence begin with the Lacrymosa, the latter is really a part of this plainchant melody. Note in the extract here given the manner in which the composer utilizes the first four notes of the Lacrymosa melody.

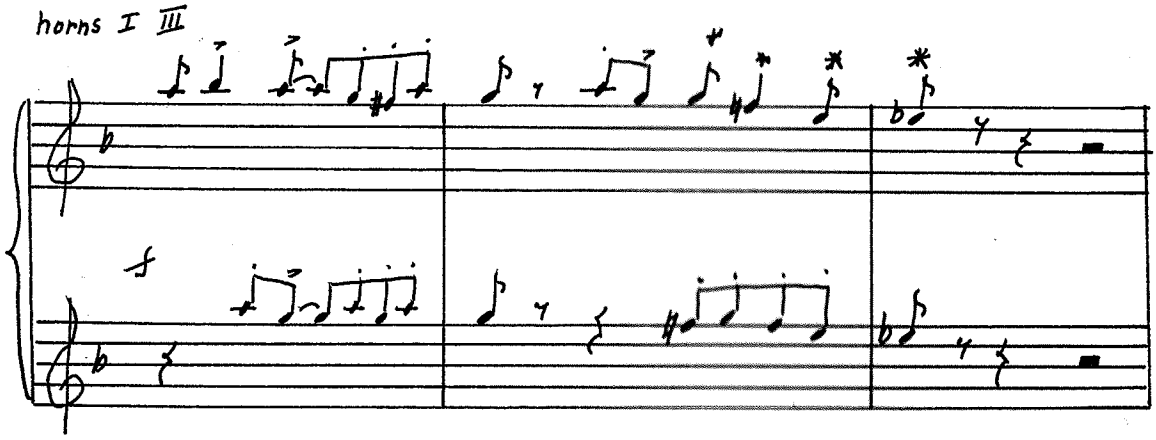
Ex. 96 - Benjamin Britten's Sinfonia da Requiem, first movement, Lacrymosa.



24b. Cross, Milton and Ewen, David. Milton Cross Encyclopedia of Great Composers and Their Music, p. 148.

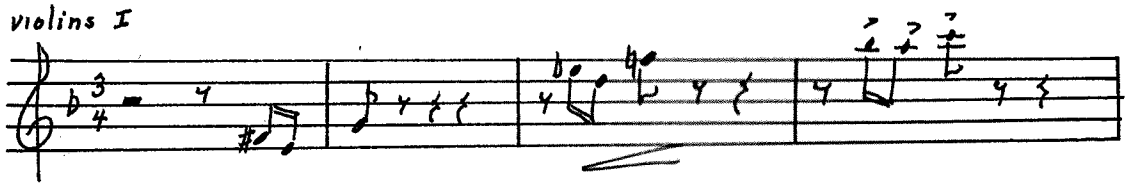
It is also interesting to note that the pattern of the initial part of the Dies Irae, half-steps and broken thirds, is to be found in the composer's Lacrymosa. Another melody worthy of mention is that sung by the horns on page 42 of the score and which contains the last four notes at the end of the second verse of the sequence, "in favilla."

Ex. 97 - Benjamin Britten's Sinfonia da Requiem, second movement, Dies Irae.



The first violin section of the score has this pattern which may be said to consist of the second, third and fourth notes of the Dies Irae, by inversion.

Ex. 98 - Benjamin Britten's Sinfonia da Requiem, second movement, Dies Irae.



The last movement, Requiem Aeternum, apparently begins with the first motive of the Introit of the Requiem Mass, which is in the Lydian Mode with a flatted B. This might be further evidence that the composer is using fragments of material in his Sinfonia.

Samuel Barber (1911 --)

The December 20, 1954 issue of Time magazine contains an article on Prayers of Kierkegaard, the latest composition of Samuel Barber. The quotation which follows is from this article.

> The work begins with plain chant, moves on to orchestral fortissimos, a restrained soprano solo, joyous choral passages and occasional Dies Irae trumpet blasts. But the overall effect is quiet, without either the sweetness or the grandeur expected of religious music. It is clean rather than austere.[25]

Because this composition would have been an up-to-the-minute contribution to this thesis the writer asked for more information from the composer regarding Prayers of Kierkegaard. Samuel Barber graciously replied:

> As for the trumpet blasts which reminded Time magazine of the Dies Irae, I can see no connection: I would call this mere Time magazine terminology and would not take it seriously.[26]

Samuel Barber is one of the outstanding composers of our times and has won a number of the prizes most coveted by young composers. Because of the great number of compositions he has already written he may be termed a prolific writer. Barber is a romantic composer, in fact he is drawn to the romantic virtuosity of Strauss and his works may be compared to the later-Straussian style of Respighi. Barber's music stands for power and stamina and he is considered to be a connecting link between the old and the new.

Ramiro Cortés (1934 --)

Our most recent example of the use of the Gregorian Dies Irae in an orchestral work is found in the Sinfonia Sacra by Ramiro Cortés, a young Mexican composer. This twenty-one year old writer submitted the above

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25. Music, "Next to Godliness," Time Magazine, Vol. LXIV, No. 25, (December 20, 1954).

26. Barber, Samuel, Letter, March 28, 1955.

orchestral composition to the annual George Gershwin Memorial Contest and obtained the following result:

> After three months with the 45 entries (all sent in anonymously), the judges picked Sinfonia Sacra, by Ramiro Cortés. Last week, in Manhattan's Carnegie Hall, Conductor Mitropoulos played Cortes' work with the Philharmonic-Symphony. Its first movement (Kyrie) was a slightly stolid development of an old Mexican tune in slow tempo; its second (Sanctus) was as reedy and antique sounding as a drafty baroque organ; its finale (Dies Irae), driven by busy motoric rhythms, included some fine furious flights of imagination and a paraphrase of an ancient Gregorian Dies Irae. . . .Explained Contest Judge Smith: 'There were strong assets in the work; it was absolutely clear what the boy wanted to do, and the sacred nature of the piece appealed to the committee as a change from some of the radical things we have had.'[27]

That contemporary composers seem to be reaching for religious themes may be seen from the last two compositions cited. Rev. Thomas J. Higgins, S.J. says on this point, "Prayer, which the savants of yesterday derided as weakness of the head, has become a modern necessity. . .a reasonable palliative to the piercing unhappiness which the twentieth century has unloaded on man."[28]

Ramiro Cortés was awarded $1,000 in addition to his trip to New York for the coveted Philharmonic performance. Since additional information from the composer regarding the use of the Dies Irae has not been forthcoming, and since no published score exists, one must be guided for the present by the above knowledge concerning the Sinfonia Sacra. However, this last example is a proof that present day composers are making use of the Gregorian Dies Irae as thematic material.

The large number of compositions in which the Dies Irae melody has been borrowed in proportion to the other four sequences is a certain proof

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27. Music, "In the Prize Ring," Time Magazine, Vol. LXV, No. 16, (April 18, 1955).

28. Higgins, Thomas J., S.J., Perfection is For You, P. 122.

that the Sequence for the Mass of the Dead has been a favorite among composers, and fills a notable place in the world of music.

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing pages of this thesis the gradual growth of the sequence has been traced from its very beginning to the great masterpieces of the thirteenth century. It has been seen throughout this study that the Five Great Sequences of the Church have established themselves as poetic gems in literature; that they are the most sublime creation of the hymnody of the Latin Church; that they have now become priceless jewels of Catholic liturgy; that they have given us the earliest indication of a sense of key-relationship, balance of tonality, and of musical form. They have given to composers of sacred concert music an outlet for their noblest inspirations; and especially, have they furnished composers of instrumental music of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with thematic material for some of their most outstanding compositions. The various ways in which these writers have utilized the melody of these sequences has been an interesting study. Only two have employed every note of a certain sequence; others have chosen a portion of the melody; and still others just a fragment.

Doubtless there are still a number of orchestral works, unknown to the writer, that could profitably be added to this thesis. It is the hope of the author that future composers, in their search for thematic material, will avail themselves of the fine melodies of these sequences and the other Gregorian Chant melodies.

Many centuries separate us of the twentieth from that of the thirteenth, when the sequences were at their height, but the music of the latter century as has been seen in the course of this thesis, is still very much with us. "Only that which is forgotten is dead."

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