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Rubbra’s "Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici", Op. 66

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The University of Arizona, 1992
RUBBRA'S MISSA IN HONOREM SANCTI DOMINICI, Op. 66

by

Arthur Lee Botley, Jr.

A Document Submitted to the Faculty of the
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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the document prepared by Arthur Lee Botley, Jr. entitled Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici, Op. 66 and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts.

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SIGNED: ___________________________
DEDICATION

This document is dedicated to my father, the late Arthur L. Botley, Sr. for his initial investment in my education; to my mother, Mrs. Helen White Mitchell for all of her spiritual support; to my beloved teacher and friend, the late Mrs. Ruthabel Rollins; to a friend and trusted librarian in the School of Music, Mr. Charles King; and to my friends and mentors, Dr. Josef Knott and Dr. James O’Brien.
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ABSTRACT

The liturgical music of Edmund Rubbra has been generally neglected by choral conductors. This neglect may be explained by his indifference toward twentieth century trends, and a style of composition that may be elusive.

The purpose of this document is to present Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici, Op. 66, as an example of a twentieth century liturgical mass that was influenced by the principle of the Motu Proprio of 1903, and to provide conductors with an insight on Rubbra's style, with the hope that it will generate interest among conductors to perform the mass. By focusing on aspects of Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici and his style, the following questions will be answered: How does Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici fit within the framework of liturgical music as outlined in the Motu proprio of 1903? What is the link between Renaissance practice and twentieth century thought in Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici?

The document is organized in four parts: part one is a historical perspective which gives an overview of efforts at
reform in Roman Catholic church music during the nineteenth century; part two is a brief biography of Rubbra and a discussion of the aspects of his style; part three is a discussion of the mass; part four is a synthesis of the preceding parts that forms a background against which the questions presented may be answered — How does Rubbra’s Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici fit within the framework of liturgical music as outlined in the Motu Proprio of 1903? What is the link between Renaissance practice and twentieth century thought in Rubbra’s Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici?
INTRODUCTION

The problem that exists between music and the liturgy of the Roman Catholic church has been a long standing one. The central issue lies in the different ideals of music and their relation to the liturgy. Catholic church officials stressed that music used in the liturgy should be void of secular suggestions and should emphasize the ethical rather than the aesthetic function of music. The composer views music as an expressive art, and restrictions imposed by liturgy and liturgical concerns impede artistic freedom. In an analysis of these ideals Fellerer defined the character of two forms of church-related music, i.e. church music and sacred music. Church music is characterized by liturgical limitations that place music in the Catholic church as a practical art; sacred music is characterized as a free expression of religious feeling.¹

The years around 1560 were a critical period for church music. The secularism of church music, evidenced by masses based on secular canti firmi or parodied from chansons, and

complicated polyphony which made it impossible to understand the words, was under constant scrutiny. There were complaints of excessive use of noisy instruments, bad pronunciations, carelessness, and a generally irreverent attitude of the church singers. The complaints were addressed by the Council of Trent in 1562. The final pronouncement of the Council was general; it called for the avoidance of anything "lascivious or impure," such as the basing of liturgical music on material of secular origin; suggested a choral style that was lucid, sober, and stressed text intelligibility.

The model for the Council's ideal of church music can be seen in the stylistic achievement of the Roman School of the late Renaissance. The Roman School elevated music to a high ecclesiastical and artistic level. Palestrina was its greatest representative.

Cultural development since the Renaissance, and the progress of secular music, brought music continually under the influence of a subjective art of expression and an emotional creativity. By the nineteenth century church music reforms gained momentum. Efforts at reform were generated both inside

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and outside of the church. Those inside the church who generated efforts at reform included ecclesiastics and church musicians; those outside the church included scholars and composers. The collective activities of the reformers were known as the Cecilian Movement. The culmination of the work done by the reformers contributed to the publication of the Motu proprio of Pope Pius X (1903) — a papal bull that stressed the integrity of Gregorian chant and classical polyphony as models for liturgical music.

The publication of the Motu Proprio of 1903 spearheaded what Fellerer describes as the Liturgical Movement. The Liturgical Movement endeavored to steer church music back to the liturgical and artistic ideal of medieval worship and to emphasize the artistic unity of a service accompanied exclusively by Gregorian chant. This artistic unity was achieved by unifying the singing of the priest, the choir, and the people into a single stylistic homogeneity. The impact of the primary principle of the Motu Proprio—the closer a church composition approaches plainchant in movement, inspiration, and feeling—was far reaching. The Motu Proprio made it possible for the twentieth-century composers to use liturgical

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4 It was only after World War I that the Liturgical Movement gained any prominence.

5 Fellerer, 200.
styles of a traditional nature without depriving their work of validity as the creation of a twentieth century mind.⁶

Twentieth century composers, Stravinsky and Vaughan Williams, for example, were influenced by the principle of the Motu Proprio of 1903 as they composed liturgical music. Although the composers' styles were varied, their compositions were representative of the stylistic trends pervading the early twentieth century, e.g. serialism, neo-classicism, and neo-modalism. Consequently, composers of masses and other forms of liturgical music who are identified as proponents of the various stylistic trends have been favored by choral conductors.

The liturgical music of Edmund Rubbra has been generally neglected by choral conductors. This neglect may be explained by his indifference toward twentieth century trends and a style of composition that may be elusive.

The purpose of this document is to present Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici, Op. 66 as an example of a twentieth century liturgical mass that was influenced by the principle of the Motu Proprio of 1903, and to provide conductors with an insight on Rubbra's style, with the hope that it will generate interest among conductors to perform the mass. By focusing on aspects of Rubbra's Missa Sancti in Honorem

Dominici and his style, the following questions will be answered: How does Rubbra's Missa Sancti in Honorem Dominici fit within the framework of liturgical music as outlined in the Motu Proprio of 1903? What is the link between Renaissance practice and twentieth century thought in Rubbra's Missa Sancti in Honorem Dominici?

The document is organized in four parts: part one is a historical perspective which gives an overview of efforts at reform in Roman Catholic church music in the nineteenth century; part two is a brief biography of Rubbra and a discussion of the aspects of his style; part three is a discussion of the mass; part four is a synthesis of the preceding parts that form a background against which the questions presented earlier may be answered - How does Rubbra's Missa Sancti in Honorem Dominici fit within the framework of liturgical music as outlined in the Motu Proprio of 1903? What is the link between Renaissance practice and twentieth century thought in Rubbra's Missa Sancti in Honorem Dominici?
Although problems in Roman Catholic church music were evident as early as the sixteenth century, the concern about music and its liturgical function was most apparent in the period between the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Part I of this document is a historical perspective that presents an overview of reform efforts in the nineteenth century and reviews the activity of selected reformers during the period. Reference will be made to the Motu Proprio of 1903 which had the greatest impact on reform efforts.

Efforts at Reform

During the nineteenth century, music for the church was either neglected or was less favored because composers’ interest shifted to composing symphonies, operas, concertos, and chamber music. In instances where liturgical text was set to music, primary focus of the music shifted from the church to the concert hall.

Several factors contributed to this shift: (1) the combination of orchestral music and the liturgy raised basic questions of appropriateness. The continued cultivation of
the symphonic mass, a form that had its beginnings in the eighteenth century, rendered it too long for use in the church; (2) the growing inclination of composers of church music to dramatize the liturgy—texts used in the mass for the dead, for example, fueled the imagination of many composers. Composers who took advantage of the dramatic sentiment of the Requiem text included Berlioz, Verdi, Cherubini, Dvořák, Saint-Saëns, and Fauré.⁷

Concurrent with the development of symphonic and dramatic sacred music of the nineteenth century, there was a return to a simple style of music for the church that was based on liturgical forms from the past. Promoters of the old style were scholars, composers, and church musicians who set as their goal the return to musical forms that were liturgical in spirit and true to Christian worship. The activities of these reformers collectively were known as the Cecilian Movement after Saint Cecilia, the patron saint of music.

The proponents of the Cecilian Movement considered classical polyphony, the type of polyphony that pervaded the sixteenth century, and Gregorian chant as the primary liturgical models for their church music ideal. To add credence to

their efforts for reviving older liturgical forms, the proponents initiated historical studies of music.

Historical studies of the a cappella style were manifested in the works of Alexandre-Etienne Choron and Abraham Niedermayer in France, Giuseppe Baini and Pietro Alfieri in Italy, and Justus Thibault and Karl Proske in Germany. The study of Gregorian chant was illustrated chiefly in the work of Dom Prosper Guéranger and the monks at the Abbey Saint Pierre de Solesmes. The effort at practical reform in church music was embodied in the work of Franz Xaver Witt in Germany. While this is not a comprehensive list, it will illustrate the nature of the efforts at reform.

In France, Alexandre-Etienne Choron (1771-1834), French writer on music, instructor, publisher, and composer, had a widespread influence on teachers, organists, choral singers, and scholars of music history. His extensive writings on plainsong and church music earned him the nomination for the task of reorganizing church music in French cathedrals and the royal chapel after the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy. Choron's earliest publications, the three-volumed Principes d'accompagnement des école d'Italie (1804) and Principes de composition des école d'Italie (1808), include courses in thorough bass and instruction in counterpoint and fugue, implemented by exercises from Sala, Martini, and Fux. To promote interest in the study of music history and the ideal
of strict Italian polyphony, Choron founded his Institution Royale de Musique Classique et Religieuse (Royal Institute of Classical and Religious Music) in 1817.\(^8\) Due to the withdrawal of royal support and declining enrollment, Choron's school was forced to close in the 1830s.

The school was reopened in 1836 by one of Choron's followers, Abraham Louis Niedermayer (1807-1861), and renamed Ecole Niedermayer. The school quickly established itself in the forefront of French musical education—Saint-Saëns was one of its teachers, Fauré one of its pupils. Collaborating with Joseph d'Otique in 1857, Niedermayer published Traité théorique et pratique (Treatise on the practice of plainsong) in Paris. The two also founded a periodical for sacred music, La Maîtrise (1857-1863), whose purpose was to uphold the liturgical traditions of church music practice.\(^9\)

In Italy the revival of classical Italian polyphony was pioneered through the research of Pietro Alfieri (1801-1863), and Giuseppe Baini (1775-1844). Baini published a paper on Palestrina, Memorie storico-critiche (1828), which was the first attempt to provide a full and systematic view—biograph-

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\(^9\) Guy Ferchault, New Grove 13:221.
ical and musicological-- of Palestrina. Alfieri, a Roman priest, dedicated his life to liberating liturgical music from what he saw as the debased theatrical style of contemporary composers. He was also concerned with the neglect and incompetence of singers and organists in regard to Gregorian chant and Renaissance music. Alfieri's major contribution to achieving his goal was the publication of his critical editions, particularly the Raccolta di musica sacra (Rome 1841-1846). This seven volume edition provided the first large modern collection of Palestrina's music.

Two examples of the work done by scholars in the revival of classical polyphony in Germany were those of Anton Friedrich Justus Thibaut (1772-1840) and Karl Proske (1794-1861). In 1811 Thibaut assumed direction of a small Heidelberg amateur chorus, gave four concerts annually of works from the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. The purpose of these concerts was to stimulate an interest in early music. Thibault published Über Reinheit der Tonknust (On the Purity of Art), 1825, in which he argued that declining contemporary musical taste could best be refined through the study of older sacred music, especially that of Palestrina and Handel and their contemporaries. Karl Proske, after being made canon at

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10 Sergio Lattes, New Grove 2:40.
11 Dennis Libby, New Grove 1:252.
the collegiate monastery of the Alte Kapelle in Regensburg (1830), devoted himself entirely to church music reform. Between 1834 and 1838 he made three extended visits to Italy to collect vocal works. His library eventually contained over 3,000 examples of fifteenth and sixteenth-century vocal music; many of the examples appear in his collection *Musica Divina* of 1853-1859.\(^\text{12}\)

With the revival of ancient polyphony came an increasing interest in the revival of Gregorian chant. Chants are called Gregorian after Pope Gregory I (590-604). Traditionally, Pope Gregory has been credited with codifying their liturgical function. Gregorian chant had been retained all through the centuries, but its meaning within the framework of the liturgy had been lost. In many places Gregorian chant lost its position of prominence with the service in favor of symphonic compositions.\(^\text{13}\)

The primary goal in chant revival was to reconstruct the melodies to their original version. The reformers' zeal to restore the chant led to a multiplicity of versions and arguments over their historical accuracy. Out of the confusion one systematic study of chant emerged in France at the abbey of Solesmes.


\(^\text{13}\) Fellerer, *History of Catholic Church Music* 185.
Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875), a Benedictine priest, was named abbot of the Abbey Saint Pierre de Solesmes in 1837. Early in his administration he decided to restore chant to its original version. He, along with Dom Paul Jausions (1834-1870) and later Dom Joseph Pothier (1835-1923), formulated the principle that when manuscripts of different periods and countries agree in a given version, it may be affirmed that the true form of the melody has been found. Under the leadership of Dom Jausion the Benedictines began the search for old manuscripts. They photographed every important manuscript in Europe which led to a comparative study of chant. The result of this extensive study, which continued under the leadership of Dom Pothier after the deaths of Dom Guéranger and Dom Jausions, was the publication of practical editions of chant, chief among them were the Solesmes edition (1895) and the Liber Usualis (1904).

Although the effort at reform in the first half of the nineteenth century clarified theoretical precepts of the relationship of music and liturgy, it barely affected actual practice, especially in the small churches. A contributing factor to the absence of actual practice was an insufficient supply of printed music. To correct this situation, Franz

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Xaver Witt (1834-1888) founded the Cecilian Society in Bamberg in 1868. Papal approbation was obtained in 1870. Witt published his reform ideas in two publications, *Musica Sacra* (1868) and *Fliegende Blätter für katholischen Kirchenmusik* (1886). In addition to promoting the ancient a cappella style, the ideal of the Cecilian movement, Witt also wanted to promote new church music that utilized organ and instrumental accompaniment and to include it within his reforms.

Witt composed church music that was based on his ideals. The compositions were widely disseminated through the advertisements in the "Catalog of the Society of Saint Cecilia." Other composers contributed compositions to the catalog; however, the compositions were usually of a poor quality. Nevertheless, publishers eager for financial success, continued to publish large quantities of compositions. Along with the more valuable works a great deal of poor Cecilian music was printed. The only criterion for judging the quality of the music was that it was advertised in the Cecilian catalog, the text was complete, and the composition was diatonic and simple. This had a devastating impact on the movement. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Cecilian movement had lost its momentum and became an organization in place of a

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15 Witt's organization became a model for similar organizations in Belgium, Ireland, Holland, Bohemia, Hungary, and North America.
movement. The original purpose of a return to classical polyphony and the revival and reappraisal of old sixteenth century works was abandoned.

**The Motu Proprio of 1903**

The secular nature of church music in Italy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries caused much concern among some of the ecclesiastics of the Church. Music in the Church was increasingly being imbued with secularism, particularly in the churches of Italy, even at the larger churches in Rome. Although many papal documents addressing secularism in church music had been issued since the Council of Trent, none seem to have made a significant difference on musical practices in the church.

On August 9, 1903, Cardinal Giuseppe Sarto was elected Pope and he took the name Pius X. Recognizing the problem of the very nature of church music, Pope Pius X, on November 22, 1903, issued his *Motu Proprio*, an encyclical that clearly defined the place and qualities of church music. The most important points of this document were:

A. Abolition of the theatrical and worldly style of church music which had spread during the nineteenth century, particularly in Latin countries.

B. Return to Palestrina's music as the model of polyphonic church music.
C. Restoration of Gregorian chant in divine worship and its recognition as the supreme model of church music.

D. Suppression of instrumental music—save for special occasions—and reduction of organ playing to a modest role.

E. The introduction of modern compositions (vocal) provided their character was in agreement with the spirit of the service and the liturgical functions.\(^\text{16}\)

The summary of these five points is stated in the basic principle of the document: "The more closely a church composition approaches plainchant (plainsong) in movement, inspiration, and feeling, the more holy and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with this supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple."\(^\text{17}\)

Guidelines for the composition of church music may be extracted from Pope Pius’s description of the qualities of church music:

Sacred music, therefore, possesses in the highest degree the qualities which characterize the liturgy, and in particular holiness and goodness of form, from which two equal qualities will spontaneously arise its third quality namely, universality.

It must be holy, and therefore excludes everything that is secular, both in itself and in the way in which it is performed.


\(^{17}\) *Motu Proprio* of Pope Pius X, 1903, Introduction.
It must be real and true art, since no other way can it have on the mind of those who hear it the efficacy which the Church desires in admitting into her liturgy the art of sound.

But it must be universal, in the sense, namely that although each country may use in its ecclesiastical compositions those special forms which may be said to constitute its native music, these forms must be so subject to the proper nature of sacred music that no person of another nation may suffer from any impression that is not good.18

The document outlines church music as being of three types and rankings: first is the traditional Gregorian chant; second is ancient classical polyphony, particularly that of the Roman School of Palestrina; third is modern music with its many stylistic forms, insofar as they are appropriate to the liturgical texts, and insofar as they avoid all that is theatrical and unseemly:

Among all kinds of modern music the theatrical style that was so much in vogue during the last century, for instance, in Italy, is the one least fitted to accompany the service of the church.19

With regards to the treatment of the text, the document states:

The Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei of the Mass must represent in the music the unity of the text. They may not be made up of separate pieces, each of which forms a complete musical composition which should be taken away from

18 Motu Proprio, Article 2.
19 Motu Proprio, Article 8.
the others and followed by something quite different.20

The importance of the text and the vocal character of church music demand a curtailment of instrumental accompaniment, although recognition is given to the organ.

In combining polyphony with Gregorian chant, the search for artistic unity must be based on the principle of the Motu Proprio: that a composition is more fitting the closer it comes to Gregorian chant. This is the effort which characterized modern church music since World War I, when it had to break from the older tradition. The detachment of modern church music from romantic sentimentalism complements the contemporary artistic development which has changed the emphasis from harmonic elements to melodic lines, from exaggerated external manifestations to real inward expression.21

20 Motu Proprio, Article 11.

21 Fellerer, History of Catholic Church Music 201.
EDMUND RUBBRA AND ASPECTS OF HIS STYLE

Edmund Rubbra was born May 23, 1901 into a working class family in Northampton, England. His father was employed in a boot factory. At age twelve, Rubbra began to work as an errand boy to augment the family income. He also worked in his uncle’s music and piano store. His spare time was spent studying music.

Rubbra received his first piano lessons from his mother at the age of eight. While working in his uncle’s music store, he discovered the music of French composer, Claude Debussy, and English composer, Cyril Scott. Rubbra was enthused by Scott’s music and at age seventeen organized a concert devoted entirely to the music of Cyril Scott. The pastor of Rubbra’s local church sent a copy of the program to Cyril Scott who was living in London (Rubbra had no knowledge of this); Scott took Rubbra as a student, both for piano and composition.

At nineteen, Rubbra won a composition scholarship to Reading University; the following year he received an open scholarship to the Royal College of Music. At the Royal
College of Music Rubbra studied harmony and counterpoint with R.O Morris, composition with Gustav Holst, and piano with Evelyn Howard-Jones. Although Vaughan Williams was a member of the faculty, Rubbra did not study with him, except occasionally when Holst was abroad.

In 1925, after leaving the Royal College of Music, Rubbra took whatever work he could find; this included teaching school; playing for ballet as well as a traveling theater group; and music journalism—for many years he reviewed new music for the "Monthly Music Record." He also toured as a pianist and gave recitals in Italy and Paris.

During World War II Rubbra played in a trio which later became known as the Rubbra-Grenberg-Pleeth Trio. From 1947 to 1968 Rubbra served as lecturer in music at Oxford University. He embarked upon an exhaustive analysis of the "Forty-eight Prelude and Fugues" of J.S. Bach. In addition to his duties at Oxford, Rubbra taught composition at the Guildhall School of Music (1961); in 1963 he became a Fellow at the Guildhall School of Music.

Rubbra received honorary doctorates from two universities: Durham (1949) and Leicester (1959). Other honors included a Collard Fellowship (1938) and the Cobett Medal of Musicians (1955). Edmund Rubbra died on February 15, 1986, at the age of 84.
Rubbra's compositional style developed slowly and when it reached maturity, his first symphony, written in 1937, is considered representative of his maturity, it could not be classified under any of the trends that were pervasive during the early twentieth century, e.g. serialist, neo-classicism. To understand Rubbra's style one must look at the many influences that shaped his writings. Some of these influences were from his teachers, his study of other composers, his interest in oriental philosophy and music, his study of comparative religion, and his philosophy of music. In addition, one must investigate some aspects of his style—the germinal unit, melodic construction, contrapuntal writing, texture, use of harmonies and tonality, text setting, and form.

The earliest influence upon Rubbra was Cyril Scott from whom he received early studies in harmony and counterpoint. In addition to the formal training Rubbra received from Scott, he guided Rubbra's compositions and exercises. At the same time Scott provided Rubbra with an environment in which to explore his musical idiom. Concurrent with his study with Scott, Rubbra studied piano with Evelyn Howard-Jones, a specialist in the performance of Bach and Brahms.

Rubbra credited Gustav Holst as most vital to his early musical development as well as inspiring him to read generally in the areas of trends in political thought and literature.
Holst also introduced Rubbra to the works of the Elizabethan and Tudor composers. Rubbra pays homage to Holst, saying:

He left no followers or imitators, but those of us who were privileged to be his pupils, know that the most valuable thing he gave us was a sense of direction from within.\(^{22}\)

Throughout his college years Rubbra studied intensively modern music of Stravinsky and Schönberg, on the one hand, and that of Vaughan Williams and Holst on the other; none, in the end, would dominate his style. The greatest influence on Rubbra's writing was the result of his study of the works of Tudor composers and Bach. The influence of the latter was not so much from the point of view of harmony as from the contrapuntal textures.

Early in his life Rubbra developed an interest in oriental philosophy and music. At fourteen, Rubbra heard a sermon by a Chinese Christian missionary and shortly thereafter was inspired to compose a set of piano pieces which he titled "Five Chinese Impressions." Later in Rubbra's life the interest and work of three teachers further increased his fascination for oriental cultures. Cyril Scott's interest in Eastern culture was manifested in his incorporation of microtonal composition and the abandonment of time signature and bar lines. Gustav Holst's music was influenced not only by

English folk song but also by Hindu mysticism. His Choral Hymns for the Rig-Veda, Op. 260 provides us with an example of Holst's eastern interests. R.O. Morris introduced Rubbra to the writings of Ouspensky, specifically Tertium and A New Model of the Universe.

Further oriental influence came through Rubbra's introduction to the Theosophical Society. He met G.R.S. Mead, an authority on Gnostic Literature, who later helped Rubbra in his adaptation of the text for his The Secret Hymnody Op. 1. Other experience in oriental music came when Rubbra was employed to play the piano and compose incidental music for a Japanese play performed by a theatrical touring group (1924 and 1925). Although interest in Eastern music lasted throughout his life, Rubbra's music does not reflect any outward influence of eastern music:

One can be influenced by the exteriors of music and the interiors. It is the interior view of oriental music that has influenced me the most--the controlled improvisation on limited material that eventually builds up, in the hands of a fine oriental musician, into a big satisfying structure...The exterior exoticism of mode and rhythm are fascinating, but for me they are not as important.

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23 Gregory K. Lyne, "Edmund Rubbra: The Man and His Choral Works," diss., University of Northern Colorado, 1976, 7. Except in those places where indicated, the discussion on Rubbra and the aspects of his style are drawn from this work.

Rubbra's study of comparative religion included Buddhism and Taoism; however the study and interest in Eastern philosophy did not cause Rubbra to abandon Christianity, particularly Catholicism:

My chance association with so many who were directly or indirectly influenced by the Theosophical Society led naturally to comparative religious studies and the study of Buddhism. But I never "embraced" the latter, for, except for a temporary rebellion against Christianity in my "teens," I have always remained deeply involved with the religion of the Western tradition. 25

Both catholicism and oriental philosophy had lasting influence on Rubbra's style:

Behind the music is his absorption in the contemplative aspects of the Catholic tradition and of oriental philosophy, and this has profoundly influenced his musical character. 26

A global view of Rubbra's philosophy of music can be seen in two dimensions, that of creating music and that of a composer's purpose and reason of being. Rubbra expressed his belief that the composer's responsibility is one of creating music for the glorification of God, an attitude not different from Bach. He states:

...whether as composers, teachers, or performers, the work of guild members should be shot through with the light and wisdom of the Christ's teaching,


26 Ottaway, *Recent Works* 766.
so that music is again the Handmaid of the Lord and
not a means of self-aggrandizement.27

With regard to a composer's purpose and reason for being,
Rubbra states:

A composer's work entails a constant scrutiny not
only of what comes to him from his own center but
of what is given from outside, whether belonging to
the present or to the past, so that all he writes
shall conform to an inner standard.28

Before discussing the aspects of Rubbra's style, two
factors that contribute to the framework in which Rubbra
worked should be mentioned. The first factor is his approach
to composing. The approach is grounded in existing musical
elements, e.g. diatonic melodies and harmonies, in which he
sought to express his ideas in a new setting:

My search has always been to find new relationships
between harmonies and the combination of melodies
that will give an added luster to old concepts.29

These relationships between harmonies and melodies are based
on diatonicism:

My basic musical thinking has always been diaton-
ic...I am in no way convinced that nothing further
can be built on diatonic foundations. Diatonicism
is not a static concept, and it can continually

27 Edmund Rubbra, "Chronicle and Comment." Catholic
Choirmaster, 41 (1955): 40-41. This statement was made in 1954
while Rubbra was president of the Catholic Musicians
Guild.

28 Edmund Rubbra, "Letter to a Young Composer," The

29 Rubbra, British Composers in Interview 67.
reveal fresh things by finding new and unexpected relationships...30

The second factor is Rubbra’s approach to styles of composition. It was mentioned earlier that through the encouragement of Holst, Rubbra studied the works of Tudor and Elizabethan composers. He did not, however, consciously use Elizabethan works as models for his compositions. Rubbra states:

Writers have said I’ve been influenced by the Elizabethans. Whenever they say this I’m surprised for it has never occurred to me that analogies might be drawn. I simply take what is relevant without knowing the sources. Sometimes a conscious return to the past may be rewarding...but often it brings about an element of falsification and pastiche. I have never been conscious of selecting anything from the past in order to make use of it in my own work....When I study the music of the past, the antennae of my imagination automatically dwells on certain interesting features of the music I am studying, and later, unconsciously, some of these may find expression in my own music. I never take over an idea or a musical formula from an earlier epoch and use it as though it were a fixed and unalterable fact in its own right. Material of the past should be regarded as fertilizer for the imagination and if one assimilates it unconsciously, one avoids the danger of disrupting one’s work through a conflict of styles.31

In general, Rubbra’s style displays his propensity for meditative subjects and settings, fragmentary themes, contrapuntal textures, developments in which there is growth but little dramatic conflict, and formal extensions which seldom


31 Rubbra, British Composers in Interview 68.
have very clear-cut shapes. The last point of this broad assessment of Rubbra's style is based on his achievement in combining the classical principle of expanding variation with a continuously polyphonic texture.

Rubbra's musical expression begins with a thematic or germinal unit. The unit is usually a simple interval or succession of intervals. There is a tendency to exploit the intervals of the second, third, fourth, and fifth. The germinal unit is flexible enough to allow for the varied extensions and developments of thematic material. The character of Rubbra's thematic material is fragmentary which depends upon textural and formal development for its actualization.

Rubbra introduces and expands the germinal unit in his music in different ways. The method of introduction and expansion, in most instances, depends on the genre. In larger instrumental works, his symphonies for example, there are long introductions where the germinal unit appears in its most basic form from the start. The unit is transformed as it migrates through the different instrumental parts by fragment

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33 Payne, "Some Aspects of Rubbra's Style" 206.
34 For an in depth look at Rubbra's treatment of the germinal unit, see the Elsie Payne article "Some Aspects of Rubbra's Style."
added to fragment and by the addition of new material. In short lyrical works and vocal works (the mass under study is an example) the germinal unit often appears immediately as the first phrase of the main melody and possesses a tendency for greater development of formal melody.\(^{35}\)

Melodic lines in Rubbra's music, especially the vocal works, display a close affinity to the melodic character of Renaissance composers. His melodic lines are conjunct and diatonic with leaps often followed by stepwise motion of at least two successive tones. There are instances where two leaps are found in succession, but they normally outline the intervals of a chord and are followed by conjunct movement. The exception to this basic procedure exists where a tone is used as a phrasal pivot, i.e. immediately following a leap the line returns to the original pitch. This includes leaps involving the tritone. Melodic leaps are generally confined to the perfect fifth and its inversion, the ascending minor sixth and seventh. Seldom is the major seventh used.

Rubbra's melodies also share an affinity to plainsong. Lyne outlines the similarity as follows:

> Like plainsong, Rubbra's music is essentially a melodic expression, and is not dependent upon harmonic control. Secondly, his melodies are frequently of a prose-rhythmic type. Next, his initial germinal units are most often modally conceived and bear a close relationship to plain-  

\(^{35}\) Payne, "Some Aspects of Rubbra's Style" 200-201.
chant. Finally, even the smaller thematic germs themselves illustrate a definite relationship to plainsong in that the germinal idea becomes increasingly more elaborate and melismatic as the melodic idea undergoes its expansion process.\footnote{Lyne, Diss. 25-26.}

Rubbra’s melodies neither derive from any previously existing melodic material nor any particular modal structures or modal techniques. His melodies are derived from the germinal unit which is expanded and developed and is treated without harmonic, modal, or tonal control. This is done in several ways.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{kyrie_mm_10-12.png}
\caption{Kyrie mm 10-12}
\end{figure}

One way is to use mixed scale or mode, such as the inclu-
sion of the ascending major and descending minor third or sixth in the melodic line.\textsuperscript{37} An example of this can be seen in the Kyrie of the Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici at the words "Christe eleison" (Figure 1). It can be assumed with some accuracy that the mode used here is built on the note A, the major and minor form of the third (C) is used alternately according to the rise and fall of the melodic line. This example of Rubbra's melodic construction gives the appearance of a chromatic procedure; however, the chromaticism is not used for modulatory purposes or chromatically altered non-

\textsuperscript{37} Payne, "Some Aspects of Rubbra's Style" 205.
chord tones. In Rubbra's style the alternate use of major and minor forms of scale degrees is based on melodic considerations, i.e. the ascent and descent of the melodic line.

Another way in which the melodies are independently constructed occurs where the melody is modally or tonally undefined. At the beginning of the Kyrie (Figure 2) the basic notes of the germinal unit are the fifth and third (E and C) of the mode built on A. The fourth degree of the mode, D, is added as a subsidiary note. The unit expands and centers on the dominant (E), and neither is the sixth (F) or the seventh (G) degree used. The alternating E naturals and E flats, and B naturals and B flats produce a tonal ambiguity and an added mystical character to his music.38

Rubbra's writing is primarily contrapuntal in character, if the term contrapuntal is used in its widest sense, including all music marked by linear supremacy.39 This facility at writing in the contrapuntal idiom was influenced by his studies with R.O. Morris and was apparent to those observing his musical progress:

Naturally the harmonic idiom of his early compositions varied as he came under first one influence

38 These two procedures are not the only ones that Rubbra uses, but are the ones frequently found in the Saint Dominic Mass. For an in depth comparative look at procedures used in other choral works, see Gregory Lyne's dissertation.

and then another; but throughout it all there is felt a contrapuntal tendency. He has always been able to think more clearly in a contrapuntal medium than in a vertical harmonic one, and he holds that the way out of the present-day harmonic [stagnation] is by means of a vivid new contrapuntal technique.  

Two types of contrapuntal writing frequently appear in Rubbra's music. One has its origin in counterpoint and the other in organum. Counterpoint in Rubbra's music is a free use of the various kinds of counterpoint—strict counterpoint, combined counterpoint, and imitative counterpoint. The most

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salient type of counterpoint that appears in Rubbra's music is one that had its origin in canon, a form of imitative counterpoint. In the Gloria at the words "Domine Deus" Rubbra sets the text to a double canon (Figure 3). Similarly, but in a different texture, a double canon is found at the opening of the Benedictus (Figure 4).

Contrapuntal writing that has its roots in organum, a type of medieval polyphony in which the plainchant melody was harmonized by the addition of 1, 2, or 3 parts, usually parallel, is in the form of parallel lines moving at a certain intervallic distance. Often they appear as chordal lines with
harmonic reference, or as an accompaniment to a melodic line. The *Sanctus*, where the bass and alto move in parallel fifths, provides us with an example (Figure 5). There are instances where the parallelism is fuller. In the *Credo* at the words "Et in spiritum sanctum", the parts are arranged so that perfect fourths and fifths are maintained between two consecutive parts (Figure 6). The triads are in root position, but by using the raised fourth degree alternately with the natural fourth degree, the interval of a perfect fourth is retained between the soprano II and alto I, and between tenor I and tenor II.

![Figure 5 Sanctus mm 6-8](image)
An additional feature of Rubbra’s contrapuntal writing is the relationship between theme and counter-theme. The counter-theme serve as a contrast to the main theme, but is not totally unrelated. Often the counter-theme either quotes the main theme or makes use of variants of the main theme. Rubbra frequently presents the theme and counter-theme in close proximity; this gives the appearance of imitative counterpoint.\footnote{Lyne, Diss 54.} However, aside from canon, strict counterpoint is seldom found in Rubbra’s music.

Rubbra’s melodic lines are rhythmically irregular; the lines are prose-rhythmic, i.e. rhythm is governed by the natural accent of the words, and is, consequently, unmetrical. Another contributing factor to the irregularity of rhythm is the fragmentary nature of the themes.

Sensitivity to the beauty of words is characteristic in Rubbra’s setting of text. The features of this sensitivity lie in the inflection of the language and the consistency to set a given text with correct accentuation. The result is textual clarity and understanding. Word emphasis is achieved through agogic accents, mirroring the rise and fall of phrases, and text inflections of words. Except to stress important text, verbal repetition is rare.

Rubbra’s textures are contrapuntal in character. The
different types of contrapuntal textures are differentiated according to subject-matter, medium, and genre. They are intricate and seldom are there dramatic contrasts or sharply separated episodes. Two general observations can be made about the aspects of Rubbra’s contrapuntal textures. Firstly, the textures are complex but not complicated; this is primarily due to Rubbra’s expansive scoring in which his contrapuntal lines cover a wide range. Secondly, for each different idea or phrase of thought there is new textural construction. This construction is particularly evident in Rubbra’s vocal works in which text plays an important role in determining textural
changes. In all instances these changes in textural construction are usually connected by some common element of structure or harmony. 42

Although harmony has a place in Rubbra's music, its role is secondary. The harmonies in Rubbra's music evolve from melodic and polyphonic techniques rather than stable tonalities, including the presence of dissonance. Lyne posits that the use of dissonance results from the use of tonal and modal ambiguities rather than from the use of contemporary harmonic techniques.

It should not be construed that Rubbra writes without a tonal center in mind. Indeed he does. However, it is a method that does not clearly establish a tonal center; in other words, he writes with a particular key in mind but it is obscured by the absence of certain important notes within the key. The Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici begins with the suggestion of A major (or minor), but the absence of the third of the chord leaves the tonal center in question (Rubbra's ubiquitous use of the open fifth is also one of many elements that are central in the ambiguity of key).

Placing Rubbra's musical expression in any conformity to modern practices is difficult. A chief feature in his music is a thorough integration of compositional elements. His

42 Payne, "Rubbra's Contrapuntal Textures" 144.
compositional discipline is a melodic one, and his melodies are independent of any tonal or modal system. In his search for ingenuity and creativeness, he has consistently attempted to use common musical tools, e.g. diatonic scale, tertian sonorities, conjunct melodies, in rather uncommon ways.\textsuperscript{43}

Three generalizations can be drawn about Rubbra's style: (1) It expresses great assurance and a dignity of spirit as epitomized by his simple and direct thematic ideas. (2) It is spacious and expansive and his contrapuntal lines move over a wide space without a feeling of compression; his melodic fragments are knitted together into multi-phrase tunes, or woven into imitative textures in which cadences are avoided. The result is a feeling of continuity. (3) It possesses an inherent unity and singleness of style due to the unity which exits between the elements of his expression. It is a unity which allows the inclusion of certain heterogeneous elements as well as dissonance or tonal ambiguity. These heterogeneous elements become, by virtue of some aspect of structural affinity, organic parts of the consummate texture.\textsuperscript{44}

In summary Rubbra's creative process is spontaneous and inspired. Each composition generates its own formal structure. A quote from the composer will better explain this.

\textsuperscript{43} Lyne, Diss 64.

\textsuperscript{44} Payne, "Aspects of Style" 216-217.
point:

I never know where a piece is going to go next. My method of working at a lengthy work is to continue steadily from the opening idea. The excitement of discovery would be lost if I graphed out where certain climaxes would be. When I begin, my only concern is with fixing a starting point that I can be sure of. I work each bar as I go along until I have expressed exactly what I want. When I am at work on one bar I never have any idea where the next is going to lead. But I have a feeling that it is there and will be discovered as I need it. My imagination discovers the architecture for me. I never force it to conform to formal rules. I never, for example, consciously search for a second subject; I’m only happy if this comes spontaneously, unexpectedly, and in the right place.45

45 Rubbra, British Composers in Interview 71.
PART III

DISCUSSION OF MISSA IN HONOREM SANCTI DOMINICI, OP.66

Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici, OP.66 was composed in 1948 as an offering for his conversion to Roman catholicism. The first performance of the Mass was given on October 27, 1949, at the Royal Academy of Music, by the Fleet Street Choir. The personnel of this choir consisted of English journalists.

The Mass is scored for SATB unaccompanied choir and is described by Rubbra as being in two movements, each of three sections--movement one Kyrie, Gloria, Credo; movement two Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei. The three sections of the first movement are linked by key, rhythm, and interval. The sections of the second movement are linked by the note A as the primary starting point and the interval of a third as the predominant melodic movement.

The following are explanatory remarks about the short hand used in the graphs and the narrative:

Bar Numbers: 4(3) = the third beat of measure four.
Text: Only the beginning and ending

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Rubbra, Composer's Point of View 104.
words of the textual phrase are given.

Keys: Small letters stand for minor keys; capital letters stand for major keys.

This part of the document should be read with score in hand. 47

KYRIE (23 mm)

The Kyrie is through composed, subdivided into three sections that coincide with the divisions of the textual phrases (Graph I). The thematic material and textures are based on the three intonations of each textual phrase: "Kyrie eleison," "Christe eleison," "Kyrie eleison."

Section I mm 1-10 (1)

The first section consist of three phrases: phrase one mm 1-4 (2); phrase two mm 4(3)-7(2); phrase three mm 7(3)-10(1).

Mm. 1-4 (2): The voice distribution at the beginning of the first phrase of this section forms an open fifth. This is a contributing factor to an ambiguity of key. The thematic unit, in the soprano line, is an example of Rubbra's way of introducing a germinal unit as the first phrase of the main theme. The structure of the unit is tonally ambiguous (see

The unit can be divided into two motives—that which correspond to the word "kyrie" (motive x), and to the word "eleison" (motive y). Each motive will be a factor in the unity of the Kyrie. In voicing the alto, tenor and bass lines against the soprano line, Rubbra employs note-against-note counterpoint. The lower voices move in contrary motion to the soprano. On motive x the tenor and alto lines move in parallel fourths, resulting in the B flat in the alto; the bass leaps an interval of a fourth. The combination of the four voices on the first beat of measure two forms a B flat major chord in first inversion, harmonically non-functional to the tonality that is implied at the opening.

Mm. 4(3)-7(2): In the second phrase as the thematic unit is expanded, the bass and tenor move in parallel fifths on motive x (m4(3)-5(6)). Harmonic color is provided to the texture by the independent alto line. The texture is thickened at the beginning of motive y (m. 5(5) because of the divisi bass line. The combination of the tenor and bass lines

48 In tertian harmony it is the third of a chord that gives it integrity. Since there is no third between the open fifth at the beginning of the Kyrie, the tonal center is unclear—A major or a minor.

49 It is speculation on the part of this writer that the B flat is used to avoid the tritone. Lyne points out that Rubbra uses the tritone almost exclusively as a type of phrasal pivot.
Graph 1 Kyrie Section Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section I</th>
<th>Section II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bar Numbers:</td>
<td>1----------10, 10-----14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text:</td>
<td>Kyrie......eleison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key:</td>
<td>A(a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section III
| Bar Numbers: | 14----------23 |
| Text: | Kyrie.........eleison |
| Key: | A(a) | A(a) |

results in a series of seventh chord sonorities. The seventh chord sonority is common in Rubbra’s style. The open fifth is reinforced at the end of the phrase with divisi bass and tenor lines.

Mm. 7(3)-10(1): The soprano line is chromatically altered at the beginning of the phrase, E to E♭, typical of Rubbra’s propensity for creating contrast. In addition, contrast is more evident because, for the first time in this section, a sonority in root position occurs at the beginning of a phrase. The combination of parallel fifths in the bass and tenor lines, and the alto line, in inversion to its initial appearance, results in a succession of chords in root position.

\footnote{See Lyne Diss 13-14.}
position on motive x (c minor, D major, E major). The cadence of this phrase is similar to that of phrase two; each suggests a subdominant relation, at m. 6(1) a d minor-minor seventh and at m. 9(1) a D major.

Section II (MM 10(2)-14(2))

The open fifths at the end of the preceding section, measure 10(1), serve as an accompaniment to the thematic material in the "Christe" section. The "Christe" theme emphasizes the interval of a third, A and C, with the note B as an auxiliary note, a similar procedure is used in the initial thematic unit. Tonal fluctuation is increased as the theme progresses. Sung at first by the altos then by the tenors and again by the altos, it is chromatically set against the chromatic movement of the parallel fifths, up by half step (m. 11(3)) and down by half step (m. 12(3)).

Section III (mm 14(3)-23)

This section is a return of the earlier "Kyrie". Like the first section it consists of three phrases: phrase one mm. 14(2)-16(4); phrase two mm. 16(5)-19(1); phrase three mm. 19(2)-23.

Mm. 14(2)-16(4): The open fifth again is the starting point. The phrase begins with what appears to be new thematic material. Actually, it is a variation of the motives of the initial thematic unit. In the alto I line the word "kyrie" is set to a diminution inversion of motive x; the word "eleison"
is set to a rhythmically reversed form of the alto line at the end of the preceding phrase (m 13). The bass I line, moving in contrary motion to the alto I, offers another variation of the thematic material. Bass II and alto II move in similar motion to form divisi. The result is a succession of seventh chords.

Mm. 16(5)-19(1): The soprano entrance, a sequence at a diminished fifth higher, causes a harmonic shift, i.e. from an area that implies A major (minor) to an area that implies g minor.

Mm. 19(3)-23: Through octave displacement, the melodic material found in the opening phrase is placed in the basses and tenors. The tenors and basses are set canonically against the alto and soprano lines where the initial unit is at the octave. The Kyrie ends with the open fifth, thereby maintaining ambiguity.

GLORIA (74MM)

The Gloria begins with unison voices singing to a rhythm that is a diminished version of the rhythm at the end of the Kyrie. Rubbra describes this as the rhythmic linkage between the Kyrie and Gloria. The Gloria consists of four sections that correspond to the major divisions of the text (Graph 2).

Section I (mm 1-11)

Mm. 1-4(1): The opening phrase, "Gloria in excelsis Deo", is declamatory with unison voices on C. The fact that
Graph 2 Gloria Section Analysis

Section I
Bar Numbers: 1----------------------------------11
Text: Gloria....................voluntatis
Key: C(c) D♭

Section II
Bar Numbers: 11(3)----------------------------------48(1)
Text: Laudamus te...............Filius Patris
Key: D♭ c♯

Section III
Bar Numbers: 48(2)----------------------------------66(1)
Text: Qui tolis...............Jesu Christe
Key: C

Section IV
Bar Numbers: 66(2)----------------------------------74
Text: Cum Sancto...............Amen
Key: C C

the phrase is centered on the note C along with the leap of a fourth down to its dominant (G) would appear to emphasize C major as the key center, but this is obscured with the inclusion of B flat. Also, the interval of a fourth created by the C to G and the F to B♭ will be a unifying element throughout the Gloria.

Mm. 4(3)–8(2): In the second phrase the texture is thickened. Rubbra constructs divisi in the voice lines in a series of
tertian sonorities; he ends the phrase again on unison C.

Mm. 8(3)-11(1): In this phrase there is a chromatic shift by halfstep from C to D flat. New melodic material is introduced. The melodic material is based on a germinal unit that emphasizes the interval of a second, D♭-E♭. Rubbra uses the E♭ as an embellishment; the D♭ is actually a pivot tone. The soprano line is a diminished form of the tenor, the bass is an inversion of the tenor line. The phrase ends on a perfect authentic cadence in D flat major.

Section II (mm 12-48)

This section begins in D flat major.

Mm. 11(2)-20(1): The melodic material in each voice line is related to material found in section one. The soprano line is based on the interval of a second, F and E♭; the F is a pivot tone, the E♭ an embellishment. The tenor line is a variation of the main theme and acts as an counter-theme to soprano. The bass line descends within an interval of a fourth, D♭-A♭, making a link with the fourths in the opening of the movement (C-G, F-B♭); the alto line ascends within the fourth (A♭-D♭).

Mm. 20(2)-26(2): The second phrase is a variation of the material used in phrase one and centers on the dominant of the key. The interchange of material among the voices is constant and creates unity in texture throughout the phrases.
Mm. 26(3)-37(1): Using the note D♭ as a pivot and employing enharmonic spelling, the key is now C♯ minor. The first phrase is a double canon four in two with exact imitation between the bass and alto, and the tenor and soprano. It is apparent that the material in this phrase is based on the interval of a second and a fourth. The voice lines merge in a pyramid fashion to cadence on an open fifth, C–G.

Mm. 37(3)-48(1): The second phrase begins on an octave displacement of the open fifth of the previous section. Here the interval of a fourth comes into play. The contour of the phrase is achieved by leaps of fourths. The phrase consist of two segments--one beginning in measure 37(1) and the other measure 42(1). The first segment begins in the tonic C♯ minor, while the second on the subdominant F♯ minor, the interval of a fourth.

Section III (mm 48-66)

Mm. 48(2)-57: The first phrase of this section begins with the alto and soprano lines moving in parallel fourths, the bass part is in counterpoint with a conjunct melodic line. Against the alto, soprano, and bass is an independent and highly expressive line in the tenor. In the remainder of the phrase the three voice lines move more independently as the tenor line continues in the same expressive manner.

Mm. 58-66(1): In the second phrase there is a sudden
shift to f minor. The phrase is homophonic in texture. The alto and soprano lines move in parallel motion similar to that found in organum, alternating between fourths and fifths; the bass and tenor lines move primarily in thirds. At measure 63(2) the voicing is expanded as the bass and tenor move in parallel fifths in contrary motion to the parallel fourths in the alto and soprano lines. At the words "Jesu Christe" there is a sudden shift to a D major sonority followed by a florid passage as the phrase moves to its cadence on an open fifth, C-G.

Section IV (mm 65-73)

In the final section the theme is in the alto line. The melody spans the interval of a fourth. The accompanying soprano line is a bell like motive emphasizing a second; the bass and tenor line, a sixth apart, move within an interval of a fourth. The Gloria concludes in C major.

CREDO (B3MM)

In setting the Credo Rubbra states: "The Credo, like the Te Deum, is very difficult to make into a formal unity when set to music, unless it is divided into many self-contained sections. This is not possible in a liturgical setting. I have, therefore, been content to let the general style of the work, with its many bare unison, fourths, and fifths, create
its own unity of feeling." The Credo is subdivided into three sections that coincide with the major divisions of the text (Graph 3).

Section I (mm 1-31)

Mm. 1-9: Following an intonation for the priest, the chorus enters with the words "Patrem omnipotentem". The bass and alto lines are on unison C. Rubbra sets the tenor and soprano lines in canon a fifth above the bass and alto; this breaks up rhythmically what would be two uninteresting consecutive fifths. The motive that is set to the word "Patrem" is based on the interval of a fourth as in the beginning of the Gloria. There is the presence of an Eb which suggests the key of c minor. In measure 3(4) through 7(4) Rubbra sets the text to a two line musical phrase expanded to a four voice texture—an octave between bass and alto, tenor and soprano—that focus on the note C.

Mm. 10-21: The phrase begins on an open fifth and proceeds to a cadence, in measure fourteen, on E major. In measure 14(2), at the words "Deum de Deo", the melodic material is similar to that of measure ten. The open fifth, inverted to become a perfect fourth, is in a higher register by a fourth. Measures 18-21 is a repetition of measures 10-14, but with different cadence.

51 Rubbra, Composer Point of View 109.
Graph 3 Credo Section Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intonation</th>
<th>Section I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bar Numbers:</td>
<td>1———30(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text:</td>
<td>Credo..Deum: Patrem........de caelis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key:</td>
<td>c ( F^# )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section II

| Bar Numbers: | 30(2)———51(3) |
| Text: | Et incarnatus..........erit finis |
| Key | \( b^b(B^b) \) \( B \) |

Section III

| Bar Numbers: | 51———83 |
| Text: | Et in spiritum..........Amen |
| Key: | \( b \) \( c \) |

Mm. 21(3)-30(1): In this phrase the texture is imitative counterpoint. There is a suggestion of \( b \) minor. The preceding phrase, measure 21, ends on an open fifth, \( F^\#-C^\# \), which is sustained to measure 22. In the soprano line, m 21(3), there is a leap from \( F^\# \) to \( B \). This clarifies the dominant-tonic relationship between the end of the preceding phrase and that of the beginning of this one. The points of imitation alternate between the dominant and tonic. In measure 23, through melodic leaps, the tenor and soprano lines extend in
range; the bass and alto remain in close proximity. The phrase cadences on a F sharp major chord measure 30 (1), the dominant of b minor.

Section II mm 30(2)-51(4)

Mm. 31-44: The "Et incarnatus" is a three part homophonic texture. The soprano line is a pedal on F; the tenor and alto lines are voiced in two-part counterpoint. The phrase ends with the alto and soprano lines sustaining an open fifth (B flat and F) that leads into the "Crucifixus" (m 34(5) and acts as a double-note pedal. Below this double-note pedal the text is set in two-part counterpoint in contrary motion. The "Et resurrexit" (m. 39(4), in homophonic texture, is based on the melodic material found in the double-pedal of the preceding phrase. At measure 42(4) the phrase is a two in four canon with the pairing of the tenor and soprano lines, the bass and alto lines. In measure 48 the texture is homophonic and functions as a transition to the next section.

Section III (mm 54-83)

The words "Et in Spiritum" begins this section, set in organum fashion. The Credo concludes in C minor.

SANCTUS (12MM)

As stated earlier the Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei make up the second movement of the mass. The Sanctus is a two-part form (Graph 4). Unity between the parts is achieved
through two factors that govern melodic movement, that of an interval of a third, and a second.

Section I (mm 1-6)

The first phrase consists of the three statements of the word "Sanctus" (mm 1-4). The first segment of the phrase (mm 1-2) is set as a double canon. Canon I occurs between bass and tenor where the melodic movement is that of a second and canon II between soprano and alto where the melodic movement is that of a third. The entrances and cadences of the points of imitation are overlapped. The starting point for each entrance of both canon is the note A. As in the beginning of the Kyrie where the open fifth is the source of ambiguity, A at the beginning of the Sanctus is also a source of ambiguity. The second segment (mm 2(4) begins in similar manner to that
of the first segment, points of imitation occurs between alto and bass. The final statement of "Sanctus" is homophonic texture (m 4). The second phrase, "Dominus Deus Sabaoth" (mm 5-6), is homophonic; its cadence is on a C major chord.

Section II mm 7-12

"Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua, Hosanna in excelsis", is homophonic, declamatory, and in accordance with tradition, faster in tempo. The musical phrases coincide with the textual phrases, "Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua" and "Hosanna in excelsis." In each phrase the melodic material is related to that of part one. The melody, in octave, is given to tenor and soprano. It is structured on a melodic movement of an interval of a third, similar to that of canon I in the first part of the Sanctus. The bass and alto, which function as an accompaniment to the melody, move in parallel fifths to a melodic movement of a second, similar to the that of canon II in the first part of the Sanctus.

The first phrase (mm 7-10) begins in c minor. At measure 10(3) each voice line begins a minor third below that of the first phrase. The "Hosanna" phrase begins in a minor and cadences in F major.

BENEDICTUS (11MM)

The Benedictus is through composed in two sections. (Graph 5). Section one (mm 1-4(3)) is a double canon. Canon
I occurs between soprano and alto; and canon II between bass and tenor. In the canon I the starting point is the note A in the soprano line; the prominent melodic movement is that of a minor third. The alto line answers an augmented fifth below. The soprano line enters in measure 2(3) on the note C, and answered by the alto at a diminished fifth below (m 3(3). In canon II there is divisi in the tenor and bass lines. Moving in parallel fifths the tenor lines and bass lines form a quasi-organum episode. The melodic movement, like the soprano in canon I, is that of a third.

The overlapping entrances and cadences of each voice line create a feeling of forward momentum. In addition, the entrances at each point of imitation, combined with their cadences, create a harmonic effect that approximates polytonality, a contributing element to the ambiguity of key.

Mm 4(4)-9(1): In section two the entrances of the voices with the words "qui venit" are characterized by the progressive expansion of the interval that begins the section. The points of entry are as follows:

- D sharp to E: minor second, tenor
- G sharp to B: minor third, bass
- B to E: fourth, soprano
- E to B: fifth, alto
- A to F sharp: sixth, tenor
- C sharp to B: minor seventh, bass
- B to B: octave, soprano

The section ends with the return of the "Hosanna" (m 9) where the voice lines are paired--soprano and alto, tenor and bass.
Graph 5: Benedictus Section Analysis

Section I
Bar Numbers: 1----------------------------4(3),4
Text: Benedictus......................
Key: (?) \( G'=v/e' \)

Section II
Bar Numbers: 4(4)----------------------11
Text: qui venit....................in excelsis
Key: \( C' \), \( C'' \)

The Benedictus ends in C sharp major.

AGNUS DEI (18MM)

The Agnus dei is a through composed form. The musical phrases coincide with the three textual intonations (graph 6). As in the Sanctus and the Benedictus, the prominent melodic movement is a third. The open fifth at the beginning of each phrase is another example of Rubbra's penchant for creating ambiguity. Each phrase ends with an antiphonal passage between the paired voice lines of alto and soprano and bass and tenor. The final cadence of the Agnus Dei at measure 18 resolves the key ambiguity, heard at the beginning of the mass, concluding in A major.
**Graph 6 Agnus Dei Section Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section I</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bar Numbers:</td>
<td>1-------------------</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text:</td>
<td>Agnus dei..............</td>
<td>nobis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key:</td>
<td>A(a)</td>
<td>E=V/A(a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section II</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bar Numbers:</td>
<td>7-------------------</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text:</td>
<td>Agnus dei..............</td>
<td>nobis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key:</td>
<td>A(a)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section III</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bar Numbers:</td>
<td>13-------------------</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text:</td>
<td>Agnus dei..............</td>
<td>pacem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FORMAL STRUCTURE**

Formal consideration for the total concept of the mass is explained by Rubbra:

The intention in writing the Latin Mass was to provide a contemporary work that could be used liturgically. This meant each movement had to be as concise as possible, each point being made with the utmost economy and clarity, with no word repetition beyond that permitted by the liturgy.\(^52\)

It is very likely that Rubbra’s decision to compose the mass in this manner was influenced by one of the dictates in the *Motu Proprio*:

\(^52\) Rubbra, *Composer’s Point of View* 104.
The Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei of the Mass must represent in the music the unity of the text. They may not be made up of separate pieces, each of which forms a complete musical composition which could be taken away from the others and followed by something quite different.53

Structural features and integrating factors within the mass include text, dynamics, tempo, and textures. In setting the text in this mass Rubbra is conservative. The setting is syllabic and there are no instances of melisma. Primarily the settings conform to the natural flow and accent of the text, a basic principle inherited from the Greeks and carried through the Renaissance. To allow the music to fit the inflection of the words, particularly in those sections where the text is more prose than poetic, e.g. Gloria, Credo, Rubbra regularly changed the meter.

It was earlier stated that Rubbra uses different textural construction for each different idea or thought. This is not, of course, unique to Rubbra, but his treatment of textural construction and its relation to form is rarely extreme. In the Credo the text "sub Pontio Pilato" and "et resurrexit" are usually treated by most composers in a dramatic manner. "Sub Pontio" is restrained and "et resurrexit" is jubilant. In Rubbra's mass the phrases "sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est" and "et resurrexit tertia die secundum

53 Motu Proprio, Article 11.
Scripturas" (mm 36(4)-42(2) offer no sudden contrast, but are part of continuous expansion of the texture. Another example can be found in the Gloria measures 26-27 where the change of texture is accomplished by a pivotal cadence. The continual changes of thought and musical structures that occur throughout Rubbra's Latin Mass are made without loss of continuity.

Perhaps the most salient of the factors used in formal structure throughout the mass are tempo and dynamic changes. These changes appear to be influenced by mood of the text. In the Kyrie the mood between the "Kyrie eleison" and "Christe eleison" phrases is heightened by a sudden piano along with a slower metronomic marking, going from $\frac{\text{d}}{\text{f}}=72$ to $\frac{\text{d}}{\text{f}}=52$. In the Gloria a more obvious contrast is offered. At measure 47 the tempo changes from $\text{o}=104$ to $\text{o}=72$. There is also a change in meter from four to six.

Texture development is done by a process known as additive form. The process is similar to principle features found in the Renaissance motet. Successive phrases of text are presented with a new musical motif, either by extension of the preceding texture or a contrast; the treatment may be either chordal or imitative. An example of this type of structure can also be found in the middle section of the
Magnificat of Halsey Stevens, a twentieth century composer. In addition, formal structure is developed by Rubbra's propensity to extend his themes into complex melodies. Melodic fragments are knitted together into larger units or there may be instances of a chain of phrases which are expanded into larger units.

PART IV
CONCLUSION

Music and its relation to the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church has been a central issue surrounding music and its place in the liturgy. Social changes, changing interpretation of the liturgy, and the artistic development of music are among the factors that have contributed to the questions concerning music and its liturgical function.

By the nineteenth century concerns about the nature of church music gained momentum. Solutions to the problem of music and its liturgical function were manifested in the work of reformers of church music whose collective activities were known as the Cecilian Movement. The primary goal of the Cecilian Movement was the development of music for the church that was liturgical in spirit, i.e. music that was modeled after classical polyphony and Gregorian chant.

The culmination of this goal and its impact on church music reform was seen in the publication of the Motu Proprio of 1903. The document stressed the liturgical virtues of the Gregorian chant and of classical polyphony of the age of Palestrina. The document was the impetus for twentieth century composers to compose music in the tradition of older
liturgical music without abandoning twentieth century thought. The twentieth century thought in music encompasses a large scope in the revolution of sound. The revolution of sound may be based on a principle set by Béla Bartók—"the ultimate and complete exploitation of all possible available tonal material" or by John Cage—"any sounds may occur in any combination and in any continuity."  

Twentieth century liturgical compositions that were influenced by the principle of the Motu Proprio of 1903 include Ildebrando Pizzetti's *Messa di requiem* (1922); Francis Poulenc's *Mass in G* (1937); Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Mass in G minor* (1921-22); Igor Stravinsky's *Mass* (1948). For various reasons, these composers and their representative compositions have been placed at the forefront of their place in history. As a result, some twentieth century composers who also composed in this medium but who may not be part of an accepted stylistic trend have gone unnoticed.

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55 As quoted in Daniel Moe, "The Choral Conductor and Twentieth-Century Choral Music" *Choral Conducting Symposium*, 151.

56 Throughout the history of western music certain composers have been placed at the forefront of their place in history, e.g. Renaissance--Palestrina and di Lasso; Baroque--Bach and Handel; Classical-- Mozart and Haydn, etc. The reasons for this are too numerous, if not impossible, to enumerate. Generally, these composers are considered as being representative of groups that share similar approaches to melodic, contrapuntal, and harmonic usage.
It has been stated that the purpose of this study is to present Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici, Op.66, as an example of a twentieth century liturgical mass by focusing on the aspects of the mass and Rubbra's style to answer the following questions: (1) How does Rubbra's mass fit within the framework of liturgical music as outlined in the Motu Proprio of 1903? (2) What is the link between Renaissance practice and the twentieth century thought in Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici?

To answer the first question it will be necessary to consider Rubbra's mass within the two dimensions of the Motu Proprio - its basic principle and its regulations for composition technique. The basic principle of the document is "the more closely a church composition approaches plainchant in inspiration, and feeling, the more holy and liturgical its becomes."

While the Motu Proprio does not stipulate a literal use of plainsong melody, the operatives it does sanction are inspiration, and feeling. Regulations on composition technique insist on universality of form. The answer to the second question can be drawn from aspects of Rubbra's style.

As stated in the principle of the document, the conditions under which liturgical music must fall are inspiration

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57 Motu Proprio "Introduction"
and feeling of plainchant. The term inspiration as used here refers to a composition in which plainsong or aspects of plainsong is the basis for the thematic material. Twentieth century composers have met this condition in varied ways. Some have used direct quotes of plainsong melodies in their work while others have done so through a personal idiom. Vaughan Williams, for example, uses an impressionistic neo-modal method in his Mass in G Minor. In Rubbra’s thematic material there are no direct quotes of plainsong. His thematic material, like plainsong, stems from the simplest unit. The germinal unit thus becomes increasingly more elaborate as the melodic idea undergoes its expansion process.

Feeling is a difficult term to verbalize; however, feeling implies the nature of the chant, i.e. it has an impersonal, objective, other-worldly quality in which sensuous beauty and emotional appeal are largely subordinated to expression of religious content. The spirit of Rubbra’s liturgical music, as well as most of his non-liturgical music, tends to suggest the mystical; the basis of music is used to symbolize the quality and completeness of a mystical experience and to suggest an atmosphere of other-worldliness. Rubbra achieved this by writing melodies that are independent of tonal control.

The second dimension involves several ecclesiastical regulations that were stipulated in the Motu Proprio.
Tortalano, in his study, *The Mass and the Twentieth Century Composer*, lists them as:

1. Maintaining an intact text with no deletions of any type.

2. Requiring the intonation of the "Gloria" and "Credo" to the celebrant, and not as an incorporation in the body of the choral setting.

3. The avoidance of unnecessary word repetition.

4. The absence of external solos.

5. The control of musical length from a practical point of view.

6. The judicious use of instruments other than the organ.\(^{58}\)

In expressing his total concept of the Mass Rubbra is in accordance with the regulations (see page 66). One clarification is necessary at this juncture. In the score there is an intonation for the celebrant at the beginning of the "Credo" but not at the beginning of the "Gloria." Rubbra explains: "I did this because I felt I wanted a strong choral opening, should the work be given a concert performance. Liturgically, the opening three measures can be left out and replaced by the intonation."\(^{59}\)

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\(^{59}\) Rubbra, *Composer's Point of View* 107.
In Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici the link to Renaissance practice can be attributed to several factors. One factor is a stylistic approach that was typical of composers in the Renaissance—contrapuntal writing and expanding variation with a continuously polyphonic texture. Gregory Lyne also points out other factors that can be found in Rubbra's music and those of the Elizabethan composers:

1. Length and plasticity of line.
2. Singleness of textual style.
3. Basically non-metrical melodies of the prose-rhythmic type.
4. Avoidance of cadences over a long period of time.
5. Linear independence.\(^\text{60}\)

Similar factors, but with less concentration, can be seen in works by Vaughan Williams and Holst.

As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to classify Rubbra's style under any particular twentieth century stylistic trend. Indeed, stylistic trends in the twentieth century in themselves are not easy to classify. Rubbra has chosen to take existing musical elements and to transform them in new and different expressions without being guided by any standing rule. Using his idiom, Rubbra has set the Latin mass to fit

\(^{60}\) Lyne, Diss 17.
within his ideal sound. Within this framework Rubbra uses an idiomatic approach to tonality, an approach that involves melodic material that is neither based on a particular scale nor on a particular harmonic progression.

The life of a musical composition begins in the composer's imagination. From this source, the composer then has to work within a context in which the performer and listener can understand his musical expression. The context in which melody, rhythm, harmony, tone color, texture, and form are manipulated in ways that some unity of expectation is possible on the part of the perceiver is called style. Among the components of a composer's style are intellect and idiom. Intellect includes such elements as structural and formal systems; idiom is the composer's temperament which forms an intimate link between composer and listener.

The intellect underlying Rubbra's Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici shows skill, variety and complexity in scope. It is a direct, unpretentious statement of intent to musically express his concept of a religious experience. Rubbra's idiom on the other hand is not an easy one. To fully understand it, one must become intimately acquainted with his music. It is from this point of view that this writer feels that conductors will find the value of an idiom that is both old and new. Old

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to the extent that Rubbra is a composer who used traditional methods; new to the extent he used them in a fresh context.

The experience of studying this mass has revealed that in Rubbra one finds a consistency of style, craftsmanship, and inventiveness. These qualities are important to any composition that is to be judged as good. In addition, the uniqueness of Rubbra’s mass will test both the intellect and the imagination of the conductor.
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