

Jerome of Moravia's Rules for Performing Chant

ヒエロニムス・デ・モラヴィアの聖歌唱法論

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日本語要旨

ヒエロニムス・デ・モラヴィア (Hieronymus de Moravia[羅], Jerome of Moravia[英]) は、13世紀の末にパリで活躍した音楽理論家である。モラヴァ (チェコ) 出身のドメニコ会修道士だった彼は、当時の文化の中心地のひとつであるパリに出て、ここで『音楽論 Tractatus de musica』を著した。同僚の修道士のために書かれたと思われるこの理論書は、この時代にあって、実践的アプローチを採っている点で注目される。

彼の『音楽論』は、全体としては、既成のさまざまな音楽理論書の集大成のような形をとっている。しかし、随所に、彼独自のユニークな音楽論も組み込まれている。とくにユニークな論述としては、キリスト教典礼聖歌の作曲法を論じた一節 (第24章)、典礼聖歌の歌唱法を論じた一節 (第25章)、中世の楽器の調律方法を論じた箇所などがあげられよう。今回の論文では、このうち、第25章の〈聖歌唱法論〉に焦点をあてた。

中世キリスト教会の単旋律聖歌の演奏に関しては、〈リズム解釈〉の問題が、従来から論争の的となってきた。この問題に関しては、現在もなお対立する、2つの立場がある。ひとつは〈等価リズム〉を主張する立場。もうひとつは〈計量リズム〉を主張する立場である。このうち、〈計量リズム〉の立場を支持する証拠として、かつてヒエロニムス・デ・モラヴィアの『音楽論』がとりあげられたことがあった (MacClintock, 1979)。

しかし、はたして、それは正しいだろうか? ヒエロニムス・デ・モラヴィアの『音楽論』は、本当に〈計量リズム〉の立場を支持する証拠となりうるだろうか? そうした観点から、今回、この音楽理論書を再読。さらに、その唱法論を実際の聖歌にあてはめて検討した。その結果、ヒエロニムスはたしかに計量音楽の理論用語を用いているが、単旋律聖歌を計量音楽と考えていたわけではなかったことが確認された。彼は、単旋律聖歌を、あくまでも等価リズムのものとして考えている。しかし、それを歌うさいの微妙に装飾的なニュアンス付けについて、彼は論じたかった。そしてその目的のために、当時最新流行の、計量音楽の理論用語を〈借用〉したのである。

JEROME AND *TRACTATUS DE MUSICA*

Jerome of Moravia, or Hieronymus de Moravia, was a theorist active in Paris at the end of the thirteenth century. He was of Czech origin and a member of the Dominican order. His treatise is considered to have been written to educate other Dominican monks. The aim of the treatise, therefore, is essentially practical.

His treatise, titled *Tractatus de musica*¹, is encyclopedic in its nature: it covers a wide range of topics. The discussion includes music as a liberal art, mathematical aspects of music, theories on ecclesiastic chants, and the problems of polyphonic music. In some of the chapters, his treatise looks like a compilation or anthology of others' thoughts: for example, in the section on polyphonic music, he cites and redacts *Discantus positio vulgaris*, Johannes de Garlandia, Franco of Cologne, and Petrus de Picardia. In other chapters, however, his treatise is quite original and very unique.

His treatise is unique in the following three points: first, in his chapter 24, he shows his way of composing chants. Secondly, in the next chapter (chap.25), he describes performance practice of ecclesiastic chants. Thirdly, he discusses the way of tuning medieval string instruments. It is the second point that is going to be discussed here in this paper.

One of the central problems of performance practice of ecclesiastic chant is its rhythm. There have been two groups of scholars, namely "equalists" and "mensuralists." Equalist scholars, including J.Pothier, A.Mocquereau and other Solesmes monks, consider that all neumes are assigned basically equal duration. On the other hand, mensuralist scholars, which include G.L.Houdard, H.Riemann, A.Dechebrens, A.Fleury and P.Wagner, insist that chants were sung with a change of note value.

Thirteenth-century musical treatises provide evidence for both groups of scholars. In the writings of Johannes de Garlandia (*fl.c.*1240) and Johannes de Grocheio (*fl.c.*1300), for example, music is divided into "measured music" and "unmeasured music," and plainchant is classified as "unmeasured music." Among such thirteenth-century theoretical writings, however, Jerome of Moravia's writing, and especially its chapter 25, is a very peculiar and puzzling example. In this chapter, Jerome describes performance practice of ecclesiastic chant using the terms of theory of

measured music. Did Jerome think that ecclesiastic chant belongs to a genre of measured music? Is it possible to use his writing as evidence in support of mensuralist theory? This paper intends to reexamine Jerome's writing from these viewpoints.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAPTER 25

From Jerome's introduction to his chapter 25, the following two points are clear.

First of all, all the rules given in this chapter are concerned with chants which are sung monophonically, i.e., not polyphonically. It is clearly stated in the passage below:

ecclesiastic chant, which is either *cantus firmus* or *cantus planus* ... is sung by one or two or more voices or even by the whole chorus without any *discantus* ... The way of singing and composing the notes and pauses of ecclesiastic chant is of primary concern here.²

[firmus sive planus, praecipue ecclesiasticus cantus, ... est sine discantu ab uno, duobus aut a pluribus vel etiam a toto choro cantitur ... id est de modo cantandi et formandi notas et pausas ecclesiastici cantus principaliter hic intendimus.]

The second point is of special importance. From Jerome's introduction, we also know that he was *not* thinking of plain chant as a genre of measured music. Instead, he says that all music, including plain chant, *could be* measured. He writes:

the way of singing every song could be related (or could be extended) to measured music ...

[modus cantandi omnem cantum ad musicam mensurabilem pertineat ...]

It should be noted that this expression is quite different from saying "*omnis cantus est mensuratus* [every kind of song is measured]."

The whole contents of Jerome's Chapter 25 will be divided into three parts:

I. general explanation about note values

II. rules on ornamentaion

III. general advice for the singers³

The first two parts concern chant rhythm. The third part, though it consists of good and valuable advices, does not have anything to do with rhythm.⁴ This final part will be excluded from the following discussion.

I. GENERAL EXPLANATION ABOUT NOTE VALUES

A. Note Values and Figures:

Jerome starts with the definition of values and figures of various notes. It is summarized as follows:

note	figure	value
<i>nota longissima</i>	not shown	4 <i>tempora</i>
<i>nota longior</i>	not shown	3 <i>tempora</i>
<i>nota longa</i>	┐	2 <i>tempora</i>
<i>nota brevis</i>	▪	1 <i>tempus</i>
<i>nota brevior</i>	not shown	2 <i>instantiae</i> (=2/3 <i>tempus</i>)
<i>nota brevissima</i>	not shown	1 <i>instantia</i> (=1/3 <i>tempus</i>)
<i>nota semibrevis</i>	◆	(1/2 <i>tempus</i> ?)

Here, *instantia* is the smallest duration of time and is indivisible. Three *instantiae* make one *temporem*. As for the length of *nota semibrevis*, he does not specify it.

B. Basic Rules:

Basic rules for performing chant starts with a very important rule. The rule (which will be called "I/B/1" from here on) is part of the evidence which suggests that Jerome was basically an "equalist."

The rules of Part I, Section B are:

1. All notes are equal and have the value of *nota brevis*, i.e., of one *tempus*.

Exception to this rule are the following 5 notes:⁵

2. Exceptional 5 notes above mentioned are:

a) The first note of the chant: it is *longa*.

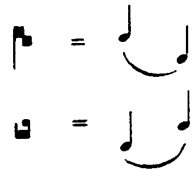
b) *Secunda syllabae* (i.e., the second of the several notes sung against one syllable): it is *longa*.

c) *Plica notes*:

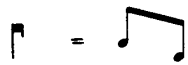
i) *Plica longa simplex*: it is *longa* (2 breves).



ii) *Plica longa et ligata*: it is *longa* (2 breves).



iii) *Plica brevis simplex*: it is *brevis* (2 semibreves).



iv) *Plica brevis et ligata*: the first note is *brevis* and the second note is either *brevis* or *longa*.



d) Penultimate note:

(Jerome says that it is not *brevis*, but he does not specify its note value.)

e) The last note just before a pause:

If the line of text is not complete at that pause, the last note is *longa* and the pause is *brevis*.

If the line of text ends at that pause, the last note is *longior* and the pause is *longa*.

If the text is divided into sections at that pause, the last note is *longissima* and the pause is *longior*.

II. RULES FOR ORNAMENTATION:

In addition to the above summarized basic rules, Jerome presents six more rules on ornamentation and some remarks on the performance practice of French singers.

A. Six Rules for Ornamentation:

1. Notes in succession:

- a) Whenever four notes ascend or descend in succession, four notes are *longa-brevis-longior-longior*:



- b) If another such four-note group should follow immediately after, the second four-note group should be *brevis-longa-longior-longior*:⁶



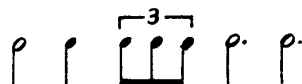
- c) When five notes ascend or descend in succession, they should be *longa-brevis-semibrevis-longior-longior*:



- d) When six notes descend (or ascend) in succession, they should be *longa-brevis-semibrevis-semibrevis-longior-longior*:⁷



- e) In case of more than six notes, they should be *longa-brevis-brevissima-brevissima-longior-longior*:



2. Grouped notes should be tied and sung as tied, while separated notes should be separated. But this separation is different from a pause. It is called *suspirium* and is nothing other than the existence of *instantia*.

3. Reverberation (*appoggiatura*):⁸

Reverberation (*appoggiatura*) occurs on *longa* note only. Reverberation has a value of *brevissima* and resolves quickly to the main pitch.

4. *Flos harmonicus* (trill):

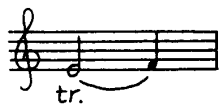
A kind of ornament called *florem harmonicum* is nothing other than a trill.

There are three kinds of trills:

- a) *longi flores*: slow trill by semitone.
- b) *aperti flores*: slow trill by whole tone.
- c) *subiti flores*: trill by semitone, which starts with slow vibration and becomes faster toward the end.

5. *Flos harmonicus* can be used only at certain special places:

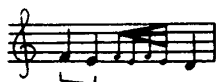
- a) *longi flores* occur when the first, the penultimate, and the last notes ascend by semitone:⁹



- b) *aperti flores* are used on *secunda syllabae*:



- c) *plica longa* uses *flores subitos*. Between the *plica longa* and the next tone, *brevissimae* notes are inserted:

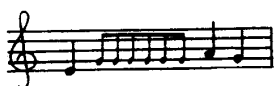


- d) Reverberation (*appoggiatura*) must precede the *flores* (trills).

B. Some Additional Remarks about the Performance Practice of French Singers:

The following remarks should be taken as optional rules since Jerome writes as follows: "some of the French singers observe this manner of singing in some chants — not in all chants."¹⁰

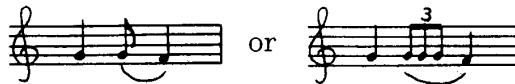
- 1. When more than two notes are sung in succession on the same pitch, all the notes are semibreves:



- 2. When two notes are on the same pitch, one of them receives a reverberation (*appoggiatura*):



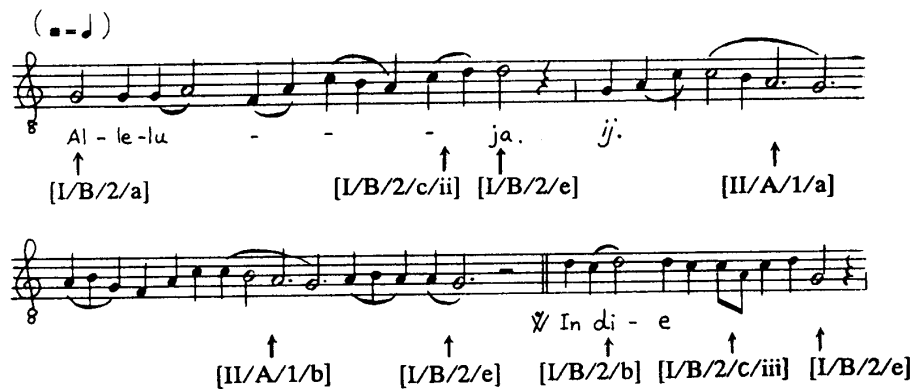
3. When two notes stand apart a semitone or a whole tone, the third note, which is called *nota mediata*, is put between the two notes. *Nota mediata* is sung on the same pitch as the first note, and it is tied with the second note. It has a value of either semibreve or breve. When it is breve, *nota mediata* is divided into three *instantias*:



Seven more similar remarks follow in the original text. They are explanations how the passing note and the appoggiatura are put to the various intervals, namely the third (both major and minor), the fourth, and the fifth.

APPLICATION OF THE RULES TO A CHANT:

The rules summarized above are now applied to a chant. The chant chosen is the alleluia *In die resurrectionis meae*. This is the chant which was chosen by Jerome (in the chapter 24) as an example of "beautiful chant."¹¹ In the realized version below, a sign given under the melody refers to a rule which was applied. "I/B/2/a" means that the rule is listed in this paper in "Part I, Section B, under the heading of 2-a":



re-sur-recti-o-nis me-ae di-cit Do-mi-nis
 [I/B/2/c/iii] [I/B/2/c/iv] [I/B/2/e]

præ-ce-dam vos
 [II/A/1/c] [I/B/2/c/iv] [II/A/1/c]+([II/A/1/b]) [I/B/2/e]
 [I/B/2/c/ii]

in Galilæ-am
 [II/B/1] [I/B/2/e] [II/B/2] [II/A/1/a] [I/B/2/e]

Here, it should be noticed that the realized melody does not appear as measured music. It is hard to find any characteristic rhythmic figures in it. Long notes occur rather sporadically and they accentuate various different points.

CONCLUSION:

Jerome is not thinking that ecclesiastic chant belongs to a genre of measured music. It is clear from:

- a) the introduction passage which says “the way of singing every song could be *related* (or could be *extended*) to measured music.
- b) the rule I/B/1, which says “all notes are equal and have the value of *nota brevis*, i.e., of one *tempus*. Exceptions to this rule are the following 5 notes ...”
- c) the result of application of the rules to a chant: no clear rhythmic characteristics nor rhythmic patterns are found.

For these reasons, it seems more likely that he attempted to describe various rhythmic nuances and ornamentation practices, which were fashionable in Paris around 1300, using the terms of theory of measured music.

NOTES

¹ Manuscript Paris B.N. lat 16663, which once belonged to Pierre de Limoges, contains the *Tractatus de musica* of Jerome of Moravia.

² English translation is by the present writer.

³ Carol MacClintock has translated only Part II and part III in her *Reading in the History of Music in Performance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979). But the discussion of Part II without any reference to Part I is highly misleading and actually does not make sense at the essential points. For example, when Jerome writes "aforesaid five notes" in Part II, he is apparently referring to the "five exceptional notes" which are discussed in Part I. In this regard, MacClintock's footnote no.2 (p.4) is also a mistake.

⁴ Among the bits of advice given are, "the chant should be studied carefully by the singers," "good singer must be chosen," and "the singers should choose their conductor (or leader)."

⁵ "Omnis cantus planus et ecclesiasticus notas primo et principaliter aequales habet ... id est breves, exceptis V."

⁶ Jerome says this is for the purpose of variety: "quod variatio modi fastidium tollit et ornatum inducit."

⁷ The original text of this rule reads: "when there are 6 notes, then the first, second, third and fourth are semibreves just as before, and the 5th and the 6th are same as before. [si autem VI notae fuerint, tunc prima, secunda, tertia et quarta sunt semibreves *sicut prius*, quinta et sexta, sicut antea.]"

This passage is problematic. Actually two different interpretations are possible:

(1) 

(2) 

If the first interpretation is taken, that contradicts with the expression "sicut prius," since the first and the second notes were not semibreves in the preceding example. On the other hand, if the second interpretation is taken, the first and the second notes are "sicut prius (just as in the preceding example)," but that contradicts with the expression "prima, secunda, tertia et quarta sunt semibreves."

The present writer prefers the second interpretation for the following two reasons:

i) The next rule (rule "e") reads: "si vero plures fuerint in descensu tali, tunc prima, secunda, paenultima et ultima sicut prius, ceterae existunt brevissimae," and from this rule, it is obvious that Jerome thinks the opening two notes and the final two notes as being consistently fixed through the rules regardless to the number of the notes.

ii) Musically speaking, the second interpretation makes more sense than the first one. By adopting the second interpretation, the five successive rules ("a" through "e")

appear as variations of one rule.

⁸ "Reverberation" is modern "appoggiatura" according to the *New Grove*.

⁹ This rule poses a question since "the last note" does not ascend any further.

¹⁰ "Hunc cantandi modum non quidem in omnibus, sed in aliquibus quidam gallicorum observant ..."

¹¹ When discussing the composition of chant (chapter 24), Jerome classifies chants into 6 grades: "gradus pulcherrimus," "gradus pulchrior," "gradus pulcher," "gradus turpis," "gradus turpior," "gradus turpissimus." Jerome says the alleluia *In die resurrectionis meae* is beautiful since the upward motion at the beginning is well counterbalanced by the succeeding melodic line.

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