

T251 / Analysis Project 1

Due in class, Monday September 17

The aim of this assignment is to analyze William Byrd's motet "Ego sum panis vivus" (I am the living bread"). In this high Renaissance style of composition, each phrase of text is treated separately, usually in imitation. The beginning of a new phrase in one voice overlaps the end of the previous phrase in other voices, so that the texture is basically continuous. Important points of articulation are marked by full cadences, but even so the overlapping voices ensure that there is rarely a literal break at these points, unless a special change of style is called for.

William Byrd (c. 1540-1623), the contemporary of Palestrina and Lasso, is widely regarded as the greatest of English composers. A Catholic in a Protestant country—at a politically fraught time when it was illegal to publish the Roman liturgy in any form—he walked a dangerous line, writing music for both the Catholic and Anglican liturgies. "Ego sum panis vivus" was published in 1607 in Byrd's second book of *Gradualia* (a massive two-volume cycle of 109 Mass propers for use throughout the Catholic liturgical year). It shows some typically English traits of the era—more distinctive and angular lines than in Continental sacred compositions—and the text-painting is quite clear, too. So it makes for an interesting analytical project.

Paper

Your paper should be 1,000–1,250 words long. Print it double spaced in 12 point type. You'll need to attach a sheet of manuscript paper, and possibly an annotated score of the piece. This is not a research project, so you won't need to consult any external sources. If you *do* make use of any work that is not your own, you must cite your source. Consult me or your AI if you're not sure. University rules on plagiarism will be strictly enforced.

Score and recording

Score: attached to these instructions (pp. 4-6)

Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4Uumt7jq7A>

Text and translation

Ego sum panis vivus, qui de coelo descendi. Si quis manducarevit ex hoc pane, vivet in aeternum. Alleluia. [John 6:51]

I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever. Alleluia.

Preparing the analysis

- Listen to the piece many times, to become familiar with it!
- Identify the main cadences and cadential activity. Look for our familiar underlying two-part structure: 8-7-8 (the cadential suspension) and 2-1. In four voices, and in a complex imitative texture, these may not always be present in their "pure" form (2 might move to 3, for example, or something else might happen at the goal), but the main indicators, especially the cadential suspension, should be evident. Remember too that the nature of style is to create continuity of texture: be on the lookout for voices dropping out at

cadential goals. You should find five main sections, punctuated by five cadences (look at the text: can you find five subdivisions of the text that make sense?). Notice which pitches form the local “tonic” (goal-note) of the particular cadence.

- A word about mode: the piece begins with a strong emphasis on C, but the overall mode is *not* a C-mode. This seems odd to our ears, as if the piece begins “in one key” and ends in another. But it’s not actually so unusual (for instance, another piece we looked at this term, Victoria’s “O Magnum Mysterium”, begins with a duet that strongly emphasizes D—but the composition is actually in a G-mode). In figuring out the modal organization (which is not the main point of the assignment anyway), the end of the piece is the most important factor, together with the major cadential points (which pitches are they made on?).
- A word about accidentals: the accidentals here are given by Byrd (this is quite late music), so no extra “ficta” is needed. The false-relation between the outer voices in m. 32 (F natural then F sharp) is often found in the music of English composers at this time.
- Identify the points of imitation—the motives that are passed through each voice. Look for the introduction of a new phrase of text to help with this task (the two will go hand-in-hand). On a separate piece of manuscript paper, write out the main points of imitation together with their words. Generally the most distinctive point of imitation is heard when the text is first introduced; if you need to choose between two different presentations of a snippet of text (e.g., in different voices), pick the one that seems most distinctive or most frequently used in that section (it’s usually quite clear after a few entries which one is the main one). Note that, unlike with the other sections, you’ll need *two* separate motives for “Alleluia”.
- Look at the way the music is coordinated with, or portrays, the words: this is often called “text- painting”, and in this style it’s often quite local and conventional: specific words get a particular and quite obvious treatment. Look here for the way word “coelo” (heaven) is set (examine its placement within each voice: where does it lie in a given line?). What about the word “descendi” (descended, came down)? “Vivet” (will live)? Look for things like rhythmic values, contour of line (ascending, descending), pitch placement (high note, low note).

Writing the paper

- a) As an overview, create a little “map” that shows the divisions of the text, location of main cadences (include measure number), and each cadence’s focal pitch. You can create this map by hand or use the computer, and you can place it in the main text of your paper or attach it at the end on a separate sheet. A sample map for the first few sections of Sermisy’s “D’amour je suis desheriteée” (CP, p. 32) is attached at the end of these instructions, as an illustration.
- b) On a separate piece of manuscript paper, attach an inventory (that is, a list) of the five or six main points of imitation used in the piece, with text.
- c) Write a brief account of the piece, devoting a few sentences for each section in order. With each section, describe its main motivic material, what text it uses, where the cadence is, and how cadence is handled (is the main scaffolding complete? Does one voice drop out? Does another voice enter with a new piece of text while the section is closing? Etc.). Describe any notable text-painting, or anything else you find interesting (e.g., textural variety, location of climax points, range of voices).

- d) Hint about “Alleluia” section (m. 29ff): it’s basically divided in two subsections, with a separate motive for each. What’s the overall contour of each subsection? What familiar technique does Byrd use? What’s the relationship between the outer voices in mm. 31-33?
- e) If it helps to make your points, feel free to attach an annotated score of the piece too.

Sermisy, Chanson, “D’amour je suis deshéritée”. Sample map of text/cadences (first four sections only)

m. 13 (cadence to) F	m. 27 (cadence to) A	m. 41 (cadence to) C	m. 55 (cadence to) F	<i>Etc.</i>
D’amour je suis deshéritée,	Et plaindre je ne scay à qui,	Hellas! J’ay perdu mon amy,	Seulette suis,	

Ego sum panis vivus

William Byrd (c.1540-1623)

Cantus primus [Alto]

Contratenor [Tenor]

Tenor [Tenor]

Bassus [Bass]

E - go sum pa - nis vi - - vus, e - go

E - go sum pa - nis vi - -

E - go sum pa - nis vi - -

E - go

10

sum pa - nis vi - - vus, pa - nis vi - vus, qui

- vus, pa - nis vi - - vus, vi - vus, qui de cœ - lo, de cœ - lo de - scen -

- vus, pa - nis vi - - vus, qui de

sum pa - nis vi - - vus, qui de cœ - lo de - scen -

de cœ - lo de - scen - - di, qui de cœ -

- di, de - scen - di, qui de cœ - lo de - scen - - di,

cœ - lo de - scen - - di, qui de cœ - lo de - scen - di,

- di, qui de cœ - lo de - scen - - di, de -

-lo de - scen - - di, si quis man-du-ca - ve -

de - scen - - di, si quis man-du - ca - ve - rit,

de cœ - lo de - scen - - di, man-du-ca - ve - rit, si

-scen - di, si quis man-du-ca - ve - rit, si

20

-rit, si quis man-du-ca - ve-rit, ex hoc pa - - - -

si quis man-du-ca - ve-rit, ex hoc pa - - - -

quis man-du-ca - ve-rit, ex hoc pa - - - - ne,

quis man-du-ca - ve-rit, ex hoc pa - - - -

-ne, vi - vet in æ - ter - num, vi - vet in - - - -

-ne, vi - vet in æ - ter - - - num, vi - vet in - - - -

vi - vet in - - - æ - ter - - - num, vi -

-ne, vi - vet in - - -

30

- æ - ter - num. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - - - -

- æ - ter - - - - num. Al - le - lu - ia. Al -

- vet in æ - ter - num. Al - le - lu -

- æ - ter - - - - num. Al - - - le -

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I am the living bread, that came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever. Alleluia.

Source: William Byrd: *Gradualia, seu cantionum sacrarum... Liber secundus* (1st edition, 1607, 2nd edition, 1610), no. 17.

Text: John 6:51

Liturgical function: Benedictus Antiphon, Lauds, Corpus Christi.

Part of my complete edition of the published vocal works of William Byrd made available through the Choral Public Domain Library (<http://www.cpd.org>). For general editorial notes, please visit my user page at <http://www.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/User:DaveF>. All scores are made freely available according to the CPDL Licence for downloading, printing, performing and recording. No further conditions are or can be attached, although it's always good to hear of any performances. Please do not, without consulting me, make copies of my scores available through other websites - there's no need, first of all, as CPDL is always here, and secondly by doing so you put these editions beyond my control and so will miss out on any updates and revisions.