

KALAMAZOO CONGRESS

Due to upcoming surgery, Carson Cooman, organist and scholar at Harvard University will be unable to attend the Kalamazoo conference, but Pat Morehead has kindly agreed to make a presentation in his place. We extend our wishes for a speedy recovery to Prof. Cooman and our thanks to Prof. Morehead.

Abstracts of the presentations at the ISHBS Session at the 46th International Congress on Medieval Studies of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo are as follows:

Prof. Michael Gardiner, University of Pittsburgh, PA. “**Mapping Medieval Spaces: Thronotopes of the *Ordo Virtutum***”

The temporal landscape unfolded by the chants of the *Ordo Virtutum* of Hildegard von Bingen coordinates three phases of the space-time of the work: the tangential, radial, and cumulative. These three terms refer to elements of the musical space, musical time, and musical language; and the shifts in the spiritual intentionality of the main character, the Soul of the drama. The first 21 chants of the *Ordo Virtutum* correspond to the tangential phase and depict the Soul’s existential confusion and limited world view. This is paralleled by an equally limited musical design characterized by a narrow range of the music and severe restriction of pitch centricity. In opposition to this, what follows, chants 22-57, offer what I name the radial phase of the *Ordo*. This is seen/heard from the individual responses to the Soul from the virtues, a section where all narrative development is suspended and in its place a process of interiorization is opened along with novel pitch centers and registral apexes. What finally follows is the cumulative phase of chants, 58-87. Here we witness the emergence of the Soul as a fully-developed spiritual warrior, now capable of defeating the serpent; and structurally makes use of sonic rupture as a form of non-dual embrace, one that transcends and includes prior materials in its reorganization.

Prof Katherine Brazelton of Bennington College, VT: “**Living in the Sphere of Hildegard’s Harmony**”

In the late 1990s, I and three other New York women composers called ourselves “Hildegurlls” and performed our “Electric *Ordo Virtutum*” opposite Sequentia’s version at the Lincoln Center Festival. My fourth of the quartet collaboration was a 15-minute reduction of Part II, Hildegard’s extensive introduction of the Virtues as individual characters and as a mandala-like group or *Ordo*.

I chose to pre-record each solo Virtue (so that we could answer their disembodied “calls” live, a huddled “schola” or novice Virtues reacting and learning as the Soul/Anima herself must). I chose to sing each Virtue into the soundtrack myself in my own colloquial, rock-tinged vocal style. While I’m a fan of contemporary medieval performance practice, taking this stylistic gamble exposed me to Hildegard, the Singer, on a raw, intuitive level, revealing melodic intent I’d never have guessed through more old-school methods of analysis.

Collaborative constraints forced me to edit Part II down to less than half its original length. Omitting as little as possible, I followed Hildegard’s own dramatic build, gradually compressing, stacking call and answer until I was running as many as eight chants simultaneously during the climactic entrance of the Virtue Victory. Thus the sacrilege of my reconstruction brought me into direct contact with Hildegard, the musical architect.

In this paper I will recall my experiences within the living mind of Hildegard: hitherto hidden melodic hierarchies and non-tonal modular harmonic progressions, for instance, and underlying all, her clear and guiding mastery of musical space and purpose. I learned that her music is as earthy, practical, and well-crafted as it is celestial. Her breath, in and out, across 900 years was palpable and audible in my mind.

Prof. Pat Morehead, of Columbia University/Chicago. “**From the Twelfth Century to the Twenty-First Century on Being a Composer**”

To be a woman composer today means looking back and learning about the ones who have offered us this very special world. Hildegard von Bingen did it and my presentation will discuss the comparison of today to the time of the 12th century, when the compositional arena was developing through a Catholic path of sponsorship and performance. I will discuss this, pointing out my own path and experience as a teacher, player, and composer.

NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

Prof. Francisco Buide wrote to us from his home in Spain to say how much he enjoyed presenting his paper at Kalamazoo last year, saying “I felt immediately right and good at Kalamazoo, meeting old friends from years ago and new friends from many American universities. I thank the Society for this opportunity.”

Prof. Karan Schneider was originally inspired by Hildegard’s writings on medicine, has been studying work done in the field of cancer prevention at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. She runs Babs Bakery, which uses ingredients proscribed by Hildegard. For more information visit her Web site at <http://www.babsbakery.com/hildegard>

Prof. Maria Eugenia Gongora of Santiago, Chile is working on aspects of Hildegard’s autobiographical fragments, which she hopes to present at Kalamazoo next year.

Amelia LeClair, Music Director and **Alexandra Borrie**, Stage Director, of The Cappella Clausura, recently presented Hildegard’s *Ordo Virtutum* at the First Lutheran Church of Boston and the Church of the Parish of the Messiah in Newton, Massachusetts. They described the work as “the first opera in history” and received exceptional reviews.

For more information about Cappella Clausura,

visit their Web site at www.clausura.org

WIESBADEN CODEX ONLINE

The Hildegard von Bingen Wiesbaden Codex is now available online through the Hessisch Landesbibliothek in Wiesbaden. It contains almost all of Hildegard’s work, including numerous letters.

Work on the Codex began around the year 1200 at the instigation of Hildegard’s secretary Guibert of Gembloux. The only segments of her work that are missing are her medical texts. During World War Two the Codex survived the bombing of Dresden, where it had been taken for safety, and was eventually restored and returned to Wiesbaden in 1948.

For more information about the site in both English and German, visit <http://www.hlb-wiesbaden.de/index.php?p=202> .

HILDEGARD AND THE ARTS

This one-day conference is being organized by Kathy Luethje and will be held on Saturday, June 11, 2011, in St Petersburg, Florida. It includes the following presentations:

- Melinda Gardiner, keynote speaker, is founder and president of the Music for Healing and Transition program.
- Linn Maxwell, performing her one-woman show.
- Soprano Margaret Waddell performing Hildegard chants as a meditative activity,
- Dr. Stephen Salamone, a Jungian expert formerly of Boston University, speaking about mysticism.
- Dr. Lynn Carol Henderson, of Eckerd College, will make a presentation about visionary art.
- Linn Keller and a new women's ensemble, The Hildegard Singers, will launch their new CD at the conference and give a short performance
- The day culminates with the premier staged reading of the original musical play, “A

Brightness in Bingen”, about 3 modern women investigating the life of Hildegard.

During the day, there will be displays of visionary art, herbal remedies, and crystals used for healing. Baked goods will be available, using Hildegard's recipes.

There is still room for more presenters during the day. Anyone who would like to present will be offered room, board, and transportation for the weekend. If you are interested in this opportunity, please send me an email as soon as possible to katluchi@yahoo.com. Presenters' art work, books, or CD's for sale are welcome, with all proceeds going to the creator of the work.

The cost of the entire conference is \$75 if paid before May 1, and \$100 after that date. (Meals and hotel are not included). Tickets for the evening or late afternoon sessions, which are open to the public, are available at \$20 each.

Checks or money orders can be mailed to:
Hildegard Committee/Kathy Luethje
11302 102nd Court North
Seminole, FL 33778

Please include your name, address, phone number, and email address with your check, and let me know at that time if you need help finding room accommodations or transportation. We will attempt to help you in any way we can. Confirmation will be mailed back to you with further details, and information packets will be available on the day of the conference.

PUBLICATIONS

H. Feiss and **C. P. Evans** of the University of Dallas publishing department Dallas Medieval Texts and Translations are looking for reviewers of their new publication *Hildegard of Bingen, Two Haglographies*.

If any readers are interested in reviewing this document or would like more information, contact the publishers at www.udallas.edu/dmtt

ISHBS President **Pozzi Escot** and composer, **Robert Cogan**, have transcribed *Four Books of the Chants of Hildegard von Bingen*.

They may be purchased from:
Cynthia Crawford, Manager
Publication Contact International
24 Avon Hill
Cambridge, MA 02140
For more information, go to:
demeslon@verizon.net or
www.sonicdesign.org/publications

AN ESSAY

Verbal Dynamics and Rhythmic Segmentation in Hildegard's Sequence *O Ecclesia*

Dr. Marie Formarier, Department of Classics,
University of Lyon, France

The sequence *O Ecclesia* belongs to the cycle of songs dedicated to virgins in Hildegard's *Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum*. It is specifically addressed to St. Ursula, the fifth-century British princess who was martyred with eleven thousand maidens in Cologne. Its structure lacks the regularity typically associated with the sequence type and more generally with the twelfth-century lyric. Indeed it is neither based on versified stanzas nor on rhythms. No regularity can be detected neither in the number of syllables nor in the stress setting. This sequence seems therefore close to what Guido of Arezzo calls *cantus prosaicus*. According to Guido, measured chant (*cantus metricus*) keeps up a constant segmentation into *partes* (parts or sections) and *distinctiones* (phrases) because, as R. I. Crocker explains in his excellent paper, “the concept of particular length, a finite group in sound, is referred to as a *metrum* or measure. The length of a verse of poetry is described as being of a certain measure, specifying the kind and number of feet therein, e.g. *dactylic hexameter*, in which each verse contains six dactyls (or their equivalent in terms of time and proportion).” By *cantus metricus*, Guido actually refers to the Ambrosian hymns. On the contrary, the *cantus prosaicus*, although segmented into *distinctiones* and *partes*, is based on both variety and modulation: “indeed,

there are certain prose-like songs which pay less attention to this, in which there are small and large parts (*partes*) and *phrases (distinctiones)*, found with no care paid to their articulation by pauses, in the fashion of prose.” By *prosa*, we should understand an inventive expression based on a consistent use of rhetorical tools: stylistic figures of repetition and opposition, syntactic markers and clear punctuation and, most of all, rhythmic segmentation into sense units.

My aim in this paper is therefore to address the rhetorical and melodic structure of this song, based on constant features and salient irregularities too. The relationship between words and music does much to clarify this structure. In fact, although Hildegard in her *Vita* attributed her prophetic and musical skills to a divine gift, her works confirm how much she mastered Latin, the “living language of worship” in the twelfth-century monasteries. This interaction between text and melody has been already studied by J. Martin and G. M. Hair. In their paper, J. Martin successfully elucidates Hildegard’s biblical imagery and more specifically the use of metaphors in this sequence. She accurately asserts that Hildegard in *O Ecclesia* “writes a highly organized prose, or, if one prefers, free verse” without however lightening this irresolution between poetry and prose. Then G. M. Hair studies the melodic structure and suggests a rhetorical segmentation into “sections” divided in “antecedent”, “consequent” and “closing phrase.” Nevertheless, her system shows significant inconsistencies: she often presumes breathing pauses between words that work syntactically together (*hoc/ saeculo, iuuenem/uocauit, caelestibus/ nuptiis, Ursula/ sic dixerat*). Consequently, the relationship between text and music, between rhetoric, rhythm and melody, has to be addressed once again. I will therefore propose in this paper some basis for a new analysis of this chant. I will take into account syntagmatic and paradigmatic parameters in order to elucidate linear structure and repetitive patterns – the first step for the better understanding of the challenging relationship between rhetoric and music.

1—Narrative Structure and Rhetorical Units

The text of this sequence is set on a perfect linear structure, characterized by successive stanzas. Each stanza forms a complete episode. The first one begins with the preliminary apostrophe *O Ecclesia*, uttered by a singing narrator. Thus, it rather corresponds to Hildegard’s loving vision of the Church, based on an enumeration of corporal qualities:

oculi tui... aures tuae... nasus tuus... os tuum
”your eyes... your ears... your nose... your mouth”

This description is built on poetic images, which imply synesthetic process. The comparison with “a mount of myrrh and incense” (*mons mirrae et thuris*) is emblematic of the imagery of the precious scents and perfumes, which often occurs in the descriptions of the Bridegroom and the Bride in the Song of Songs. In this biblical “allegorical dialogue between bridegroom and bride, medieval Biblical scholarship interpreted the bridegroom as Christ, his bride as the Church, or, alternatively, as the individual soul.” Here in Hildegard’s song, the couple Church/Christ is however dissociated in two successive visions. Indeed, Hildegard’s opening vision of the church introduces and includes at the same time Ursula’s vision of Christ (stanza 2) and her engagement to him (stanza 3):

in multo desiderio desideravi ad te uenire et in caelestibus nuptiis tecum sedere
“with great longing I have longed to come to you and to dwell in heavenly marriage”

The preliminary nuptial imagery is therefore reinforced by this promise full of desire. By the way, the same words of love can be found in the song *O dulcissime amator*, uttered this time by Hildegard herself and her nuns:

nos desideramus ardentem te sequi (...) o suauissimus odor desiderabilium deliciarum
“we long ardently to follow you () o sweetest odor of desired delights”

Ursula consequently symbolizes the monastic rule by leaving behind everything connected to flesh and by dedicating herself to the love of God, embodied in Christ. The following stanzas (5, 6 and 7) depict people's reaction to Ursula's vision. Following P. Dronke, who considers that people want to bring Ursula back to normality by playing music, J. Martin interprets the sentence *et ceperunt ludere cum illa in magna symphonia* as an allusion to games and music ("they began to play with her, with much music"). But contextual and textual clues prove that it cannot be the case. First, the Latin verb *ludere* often means "to mock somebody", "to joke somebody". Moreover, the ironic direct speech "the innocence of girlish ignorance does not know what she is saying" (*innocentia puellaris ignorantiae nescit quid decit*) and also the expression "this rumor" (*rumor iste*) tend to prove that the expression "in the great symphony" (*in magna simphonia*) actually means that the whole crowd addresses the same sarcastic words to Ursula. This confirms that this offensive reaction is a verbal aggression against the Word of God, uttered by Ursula. Then, the prodigy described in stanzas 6 and 7 illustrated God's first victory:

usque cum ignea sarcina super eam cecidit
 "until a fiery burden fell upon her"

The fire is indeed a symbol of divine power. In the same period, Hildegard tells in her first visionary work *Scivias* how she was inflamed by a fiery light (*igneum lumen*) from Heaven that gave her the ability to interpret scriptures. Stanza 8 depicts the second aggression, led this time by the Devil himself:

tunc diabolus membra sua inuasit, quae nobilissimos mores in corporibus istis occiderunt
 "then the Devil entered into his allies, who slew the eminently noble virtues in those bodies"

This means that the Devil is accomplishing his demonic wishes through the crowd ("his allies"). The phrase *nobilissimos mores in corporibus istis occiderunt* is both euphemistic and metonymic: the verb *occiderunt* actually reveals that Hildegard here refers to Ursula and her maidens' martyrdom.

Moreover, the effect of abstraction – the Huns slew, not the mortal bodies but the *nobilissimos mores* in those bodies – is to stress the qualities rather than the person who possess them (...) Hildegard effectively adapts this stylistic convention to the poetic purpose of underscoring the moral excellence that was destroyed in the martyrdom" Finally, stanzas 9 and 10 illustrate God's paradoxical triumph. The martyrdom is placed into a cosmic context:

et hoc in alta uoce imnia elementa audierunt et ante thronum Dei dixerunt. Wach! Rubincus sanguis innocentis agni in desponsatione sua effuses est

"all the Elements heard that by a high cry, and before the throne of God they said: Ah! The ruby blood of innocent Lamb has been poured out in betrothal."

The expression *in alta uoce* lays stress on the killers' cruelty: the world is full of the virgins' cries. Apparently more expressive than Latin, the vernacular exclamation *Wach* wholly exteriorizes an unspeakable horror. P. Dronke rightly emphasizes the deliberate ambiguity of the sacrifice: the "innocent Lamb" can indeed refer to Ursula herself or to Christ. Therefore, "the maiden's sacrifice is fused with that of Christ and her union with Christ in dying, as well as in the mystic marriage it conveyed." The last stanza eventually corresponds to a focus change:

hoc audiant omnes caeli et in summa simphonia laudent agnum Dei
 "let all heavens hear this, and in the greatest symphony let them praise the Lamb of God."

Hildegard encourages the World to praise and to sing for God. This *iubilatio*, evoked by the verb *laudent*, takes place in the Heaven, in the City of God. It achieves the victory of the *caelestia simphonia* above the maleficent *simphonia*. The imagery of the preciousness ("these pearls" *istis margaritas*) and the allusion of God's Word (*uerbi Dei*) definitely celebrate the celestial wedding and "plac[e] [it] firmly in the history of salvation." This closing *simphonia* clearly recalls the heavenly vision given in *Sciuias*: "for, as the air

encloses and sustains everything under the heavens, so the wonders of God, which you have already been shown, are enveloped for you in a sweet and delightful song (*suavis et dulcis simphonia*). It sings with joy of the wonders of the elect who dwell in the heavenly city and eternally express their sweet devotion to God and it laments over the wavering of those the ancient serpent is trying to destroy.”

All this narrative can be partitioned into sections of meaning, akin to rhetorical units: *exordium*, *narratio*, *argumentatio* and *peroratio*. First, the two preliminary visions are clearly unified by the nuptial imagery but also by the repeated use of the coordinative mark *et*, characteristic of prophecy’s style. This coordinative indeed specifies the opening enumeration:

et aures (...) **et** *nasus (...)* **et** *os (...)*
 “**and** your ears (...) **and** your nose (...) **and** your mouth (...)

It also characterizes the prophetic process in Ursula’s vision:

amauit (...) **et** *reliquit (...)* **et** *aspexit (...)* **atque** *uocauit ()*
 “she gave her love (...), **and** she left behind (), **and** she gazed (...), **and** she summoned”

Moreover, the use of comparisons and metaphors:

similes saphiro (...), *sicut mons (...)* **quasi** *sonus (...)* **uelut** *nubes*
 “**like** a sapphire (...), **as** a mount (...), **as** the sound (...), **like** clouds

is clearly associated with the visionary character of this sequence. Therefore, the three first stanzas draw the devotional frame of this sequence and thus play the role of an *exordium*. Then, when the confrontation between Ursula and the crowd begins in stanza 4 (*et postquam...*), syntactic temporal markers elucidate the succession of events which lead to the final martyrdom: the first reaction to Ursula’s vision (a), the fire prodigy (b) and finally the Devil’s assault (c):

- (a) *postquam Ursula sic dixerat*
- (b) *usque dum ignea sarcina eam cecidit*
- (c) *tunc diabolus membra sua inuasit*
- (a) “**after** Ursula had so said”
- (b) “**until** a fiery burden fell before her”
- (c) “**then** the devil entered into his allies.”

Syntax also elucidates the argumentation made-up to prove God’s supremacy upon the Devil. Markers basically reveal the consequences of the fire prodigy on the crowd (a) and its cause, the superiority of monastic life (b):

- (a) *unde omnes cognoscebant... et cognouerunt*
- (b) *quoniam contemptus mundi omnia ascendit*
- (a) “**therefore** they all realized... and they also recognized”
- (b) “**for** despising this world rises above all things”.

All these episodes, clearly articulated through a distinct syntactic progression, provide a *narratio* and an *argumentatio*. Indeed, they tell the story of Ursula’s martyrdom and also prove God’s supremacy. The last stanza is isolated by the focus change. It plays the role of a conclusion, a *peroratio*. It is a passionate exhortation to join the celestial *iubilatio*, justified by God’s victory:

quia guttur serpentis antiqui... suffocatum est
 “**because** the ancient serpent has been suffocated.”

This causal marker *quia* hence achieves Hildegard’s wish to fuse the specific devotional context of Ursula’s story and the roots of Christianity.

To sum up, here is the narrative and rhetorical structure of this sequence:

- Stanzas 1, 2, 3: exordium**
- Stanzas 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10: narratio + argumentatio**
- Stanza 11: peroratio**

Moreover, this rhetorical structure definitely goes together with the use of melodic patterns, characteristic of Western plainchant.

The rest of this essay, which includes the sections on Melodic Punctuation, Stylistic Figures of Repetition, and Painted Words, will be published in the next edition of *Qualelibet*.

This and other editions of *Qualelibet* are always available on our Web site:
www.hildegard-society.org

REMINDERS

Please remember to mail or email news items, comments, and calendar entries to

**Frances Flynn, Editor,
Qualelibet
155 Brookwood Drive
Tryon, NC 28782 USA
Email: frances@trafford-flynn.com**

The publishing deadline of the next edition of *Qualelibet* is September 15, 2011

Dues of \$10 per year (\$5 for students) and address changes should be sent to our Treasurer and Web Master:

**K. Christian McGuire
787 Iowa Avenue West
St. Paul, MN 55117, USA
Email: kmcguire@bitstream.net**

or via our Web site:
www.hildegard-society.org
